

**OPEN DEBATE OF THE
SECURITY COUNCIL:**

WOMEN AND PEACE AND SECURITY

STATEMENT

BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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Mr. President,

Since the adoption of Resolution 1325 seven years ago, the Security Council has held regular debates on the progress achieved in the effective implementation of this crucial document. We wish to thank you for organizing this debate and for preparing a concept paper which outlines the main challenges that persist in this regard. Your paper as well as the report submitted by the Secretary-General make it clear that we must considerably strengthen our efforts to guarantee the protection of women and girls in conflict-affected societies and to ensure their full and equal participation in peace processes, including negotiations and decision-making. It is a well-documented fact that civilians, particularly women and children, continue to account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and that they are increasingly targeted by combatants and other armed elements. Durable peace and reconciliation are heavily compromised if the perpetrators of such acts are not prosecuted. The Security Council therefore has a vital role to play in ensuring that targeted measures are taken to protect women and girls from rape and other forms of sexual violence in conflict situations and that there is no impunity for such acts. The referral of the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court was a landmark decision, both legally and politically. It was a strong message by the Security Council that the international community does not accept impunity for the most serious crimes under international law, including gender-related crimes. We would like to encourage the Council to continue to consider the ICC as a policy option - referrals to the ICC must, however, be accompanied by sustained political support from the Council through all phases of the judicial proceedings, and must in some situations be accompanied by other substantive measures.

Mr. President,

Within the UN system, programs have been developed to build the leadership and peacemaking capacities of women at all stages of conflict and peace. Liechtenstein has been financing such activities by UNIFEM. There is ample evidence that women are very active in informal peace processes. In spite of these developments, the official presence of women in peace processes is still minimal. There continues to be a lack of political will to recognize women's contributions to peace and to acknowledge their right to participate effectively in peace negotiations. Strengthening women's capacity as peacemakers must therefore be pursued in parallel with increasing women's participation. Creating awareness of peace negotiations as a tool for achieving gender equality is essential. Against this background, Liechtenstein has consistently been advocating the appointment of women as special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General. We therefore fully support the call addressed to the Secretary-General by the Women's Leaders Working Group on 19 June 2007 to establish, as a matter of high priority, a mechanism to increase the number of women considered for UN special representatives and envoy positions, including as heads of peace operations. Such

appointments would go a long way towards promoting the full potential of women as peacemakers.

Mr. President,

This open debate presents another important opportunity to promote the effective, coherent and systematic implementation of resolution 1325 through better accountability mechanisms. Several member States and many civil society organizations have highlighted in the past the need for the Security Council to develop a reporting and monitoring mechanism to ensure the systematic integration and implementation of resolution 1325 in its own work. Such a mechanism could address implementation gaps at the international level, such as inadequate monitoring and reporting on implementation by field missions, particularly on grave violations of human rights, such as sexual violence, and improve the information basis for Council deliberations. It would also strengthen the accountability for the implementation of the resolution at the national level, while allowing for better informed definition of relevant capacity building needs. We support this idea and call upon Council members to provide the Security Council with more effective oversight on the implementation of resolution 1325, including through the establishment of a monitoring mechanism with appropriate leadership to ensure its active engagement with all aspects of the work of the Council. We are of view that - after seven years - the time has come to realize the establishment of such a mechanism. Strengthening the protection of women and girls in conflict-affected societies from rape and other forms of sexual violence should be important enough to translate the many calls for such a mechanism into concrete action.

I thank you.