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TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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SECURITY COUNCIL – OPEN DEBATE
WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY
STATEMENT BY STEFAN BARRIGA, MINISTER, CHARGÉ D’AFFAIRES A.I

Mr. President,

At the outset, let me join others in commending you for organizing this open debate highlighting the crucial role of women’s civil society organizations in contributing to the prevention and resolution of armed conflict and peace-building. We welcome the latest report of the Secretary-General, which measures the implementation of 1325 against specific indicators and reveals the lagging participation of women in mediation efforts and preventive diplomacy.

Mr. President,

The slow progress in ensuring adequate participation of women in peace talks and the inclusion of women’s and girls’ rights in peace agreements remains worrying. Of the nine peace agreements signed in 2012 only two contain provisions in this regard – the same low percentage as in 2010. Peace accords that fail to ensure the engagement of women in post-conflict governance often neglect their access to economic opportunities, justice and reparations. When sexual violence is not addressed in early stages of mediation, such as in ceasefire agreements, it usually remains ignored throughout the whole peace process. We therefore call on the Security Council and all relevant actors to increase efforts to promote women’s participation in peace negotiations and mediation and meet the specific concerns of

women during post-conflict reconstruction. The Security Council must also, hand in hand with the General Assembly, address the lack of women as lead peace mediators by encouraging the Secretary-General to appoint women to such positions and to ensure that adequate gender expertise is provided in relevant peace processes. Women's civil society organisations are a valuable asset in this regard. We must ensure that their unique grass roots perspective is taken into account as we rethink how gender expertise is structured and deployed in the UN system. My delegation therefore welcomes today's Presidential Statement, which highlights the important role of women's civil society organizations in the prevention and resolution of armed conflict, peace-building and post-conflict situations.

Mr. President,

My delegation has for long advocated for the consistent mainstreaming of the Council's thematic agenda into its country-specific work. A study recently published by the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security – financed by the delegations of Switzerland and Liechtenstein – reveals the inconsistency with which the Council addresses Women, Peace and Security concerns in its decisions on country situations. We believe that Council members should make greater efforts to ensure that their country-specific experts receive the necessary information to address Women, Peace and Security concerns in relevant mission mandates. To support such efforts my delegation has undertaken various initiatives. In partnership with Switzerland we supported the publication of a handbook on the Women, Peace and Security agenda by PeaceWomen. The handbook has just been released in its second edition and is available at the entrance of this chamber. Liechtenstein also organized a workshop on the implementation of the WPS agenda in Afghanistan that informed the negotiations on the renewal of UNAMA's mandate. And I am particularly pleased to inform you that my delegation will launch, in close partnership with the Liechtenstein Institute on Self-Determination (LISD) at Princeton University and PeaceWomen, a series of panel discussions dealing with different aspects of the WPS agenda. The first event at UN Headquarters will take place on December 12, in conference room 1 at 3 p.m. The Prosecutor of International Criminal Court, Ms. Fatou

Bensouda, will speak about the work of the ICC to prevent and prosecute sexual and gender-based crimes.

I thank you.