

20 years on, 10 resolutions later...Resolution 1325

Well, thank you very much indeed, Madam President, and thank you for coming here today. And thank you, particularly along with the German Minister, for creating an environment where over two thirds of the people sitting around this table are women. So that is fantastic, a taste of things to come, and I hope you will visit us often.

I also wanted to congratulate you for the fantastic record of South Africa with that 30 percent figure that you gave us and your military colleagues sitting in the chamber. That's incredibly impressive. Thank you for your commitment to carry on producing women for these peace support, peacekeeping operations. The United Kingdom joins you in that commitment. Sadly, we're only at 17 percent so you have a march on us, Madam President, but I think nevertheless, there is all more that all of us can do in that regard.

As other speakers have said, this is a timely debate a year ahead of the 20th anniversary of Resolution 1325. It's a good opportunity for us to reflect on the achievements and challenges in fully implementing that resolution. But as we've heard from all the fantastic briefers today and as the Executive Director of UN Women eloquently made clear, we must raise our ambition. We must commit to even more radical change and we need to ask ourselves, 20 years and 10 resolutions later, why is there still such a stark implementation gap when all the evidence suggests that incorporating gender perspective helps achieve sustainable peace and security? So I think, again, as the Executive Director of UN Women said, that's a question we need to ask ourselves all the time as we design any peace process or any international mechanism, project, programme; how can we make sure that we're living up to the full implementation of 1325? And this obviously means putting a particular focus on designing inclusive processes from the outset. Arms and territory shouldn't be the only reason that negotiators get a seat at the table. That's not right morally, it's not sensible economically, and it's not sensible and feasible if you want a just and a lasting peace settlement.

Madam Chairman, this year the UK funded the Gender Action for Peace and Security to deliver consultations with civil society in our nine National Action Plan focus countries and we did this because we wanted to better understand how we can identify and therefore, overcome those gaps. So we are taking concrete steps to promote and protect women peace builders and human rights defenders. We are providing sustainable multi-year funding and we're ensuring that we practice what we preach in terms of representation and policy.

As I look ahead to 2020, I hope we can have an effort right the way across the United Nations, not just in New York, but right across the whole UN system in the field and in the other headquarters buildings to focus efforts on full implementation of 1325. For our part, we will be particularly working on increasing women's meaningful participation in peace processes, notably in

Afghanistan, South Sudan and Yemen and the German Minister explained very eloquently what was happening in Afghanistan so I won't repeat that. In Yemen, the United Kingdom is funding a Gender Advisor and other senior inclusion positions within the US Special Envoy's Office so that we can build on his work to take forward women's participation in the peace process. In South Sudan, ahead of November's deadline for a transitional government, we are continuing to work with local women's groups to advocate for an inclusive process. And of course, with my very good friend and colleague, the Afghanistan PR, we have set up a women's group in New York, of which the US Ambassador is also part of, to take forward the participation of women in that very important peace process.

If I can turn to the UN, and again a number of our speakers mentioned the UN, the UN obviously has a huge role to play in implementing 1325. On the 19th anniversary, so with a year to go to do something about it, the United Kingdom would like to invite the UN to make progress in three particular areas. Firstly, to establish a strong formal working relationship with the Global Alliance of Women Mediators. This will ensure women mediators have access to key peace actors and are systematically considered for deployment as negotiators, mediators and advisors. Secondly, UN processes need to set the gold standard for inclusion and UN Special Envoy should be held to account on their commitments to implement 1325. And finally, ensuring UN-led peace processes are closely supported by gender experts to guarantee gender perspectives and this needs to be integrated throughout the mission. This is not a desirable, it's not a nice to have, it's an intrinsic part of any successful peace process.

In conclusion, Madam President, 2020 is not just about 1325. Next year marks the 25th anniversary of the Beijing platform, the 70th anniversary of the UN, the fifth anniversary of youth peace and security, and ten years until the deadline to reach the Sustainable Development Goals. We cannot let this moment slip through our fingers. Now is the time to make progress on WPS in gender equality and the UN and the member states have a responsibility to deliver all of this next year.

Thank you.