



SECURITY COUNCIL
8234TH MEETING (AM)

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16 APRIL 2018

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setting up and creating the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Ser

root causes of conflict, the international community must actively help post-conflict countries to promote education, economic and social development. In that regard, the Catholic Church had a long history of emphasizing access to quality education for young women and girls, who constituted the majority of students in Catholic educational institutions. That was particularly true in regions where women and girls still suffered discrimination and in areas suffering from ongoing conflict.

Mr. A. M. M. (A. M. M. R. Sudan), associating himself with the African Union, said the heinous crime of sexual violence in conflict required a comprehensive approach and coordination among all stakeholders. Calling for stronger prevention and efforts, including mediation and the imposition of sanctions on those who obstructed peace, he said cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations would also be critical. Urging Member States to support the victims' reparation fund and work to empower women, he also drew attention to the need to address root causes of conflict, provide victims with access to health care and psychological support, and pay more attention to the issue of sexual violence committed by peacekeepers. Outlining Sudan's national policies, including the appointment of a new prosecutor to ensure justice and hold perpetrators accountable, he recalled that Special Representative Patten had visited Sudan in February, at which time she had met with stakeholders and visited refugee camps in north and west Darfur. That visit was proof that Sudan was engaged in a constructive dialogue with the international community and that normalcy had returned after an exceptional 20 years of conflict. Nevertheless, he voiced concern over the contents of paragraph H of the Secretary-General's report, which alleged that Sudanese border guards had committed crimes involving sexual violence that was impossible because no such guards had existed in many years.

Mr. M. A. R. (M. A. R. Bangladesh) called the challenges faced by displaced Rohingya women and girls in Bangladesh a race against time. There remained considerable unmet needs in terms of providing humanitarian assistance and protection to the displaced, and reproductive health care and services to survivors of sexual violence. He called on community leaders and service providers to help affected women and girls come forward and articulate their needs, adding that concerns over stigma must be addressed. The Security Council must be in a position to gather further insights into the possibilities for the Rohingyas' voluntary repatriation during their forthcoming visit to Myanmar and Bangladesh. The culture of impunity often surrounding conflict-related sexual violence also perpetuated a vicious cycle. Against the backdrop of a crisis faced by the Rohingya women and girls, Bangladesh was working to develop a plan to protect them and ensure their inclusion in peace and security mechanisms.

Ms. M. A. (M. A. South Africa) said systemic and widespread sexual violence was one of the most despicable acts of evil that occurred during conflict; women and girls continued to be disproportionately affected by conflict situations, particularly regarding sexual abuse and violence. Many survivors bore not only the physical scars, but also hidden trauma and unwarranted stigma. He encouraged the Council to address the risks, factors and early warning signs of systemic sexual violence. Underscoring the importance of deploying a greater number of female peacekeepers, he called on Member States to support the inclusion of such posts in the peacekeeping operation mandates. (Or its part, South Africa had one of the largest contingents of female peacekeepers deployed in United Nations peacekeeping missions. Allowing women to talk to other women about their experiences created a more conducive and safe environment for women to report instances of sexual abuse. Access to justice and legal recourse was also essential to peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives.)

Ms. R. A. (R. A. Ireland) said women had made a critical difference to peace and conflict resolution in her country. Underscoring the need to address conflict-related sexual violence, she said, "we are ashamed that women and girls are routinely used as a currency of conflict." The Security Council must be consistent and timely in its use of sanctions against perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence. Rural women were particularly vulnerable as they often lived beyond the reach of law enforcement and protection. They were also more vulnerable to displacement stemming from conflict. She outlined various measures taken by Ireland to mainstream women, peace and security in its policies and to ensure the strict enforcement of zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse. Among those steps, engaging men and boys was critical to preventing sexual violence in conflict.

Mr. L. A. (L. A. Paraguay) outlined the prominent role women had played in his country's peacekeeping contingent, more than 100 troops to United Nations peacekeeping missions. Based on that experience, he underscored the importance of specialized training for troops, including on the prevention of sexual violence in conflict, which soldiers now received prior to deployment. He also called for the inclusion in peacekeeping mandates of civilian protection against sexual violence, particularly in countries where such risks ran high. More broadly, there was a need to frame sexual violence initiatives in the context of efforts undertaken to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 5. A lasting response was not possible if there was an inequality gap between men and women and the economic exclusion of women and girls.

Ms. C. A. (C. A. Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Women, Peace and Security), speaking on behalf of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), said the elevation of sexual violence as an international peace and security issue had led to an increased expectation that international actors would take a more prominent role in addressing it. Without adequate responses, conflict-related sexual violence will continue to significantly jeopardize stabilization efforts as well as sustainable post-conflict reconstruction, she said, noting that the responsibility to protect and defend women from

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