



PERMANENT MISSION  
OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**STATEMENT**

**by**

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to the United Nations**

**Open debate of the Security Council  
on  
Women Peace and Security**

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**-Check against delivery-**

Thank you Mr. President

I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this annual debate on Women, Peace and Security, and I would like to thank also all briefers for their comprehensive presentations. I would like to recognize the significant contribution of the Secretary-General António Guterres to promoting and upholding the agenda of WPS in the UN peace related efforts.

My delegation associates itself with the statement, which will be delivered later today by the distinguished representative of the European Union.

The role of women and girls in peace processes, humanitarian response, their active participation in mediation and conflict prevention, security sector reform, peacebuilding and peacekeeping is huge, but nevertheless it is often neglected or at least underappreciated. Today, I would like to highlight 3 key areas of focus for Slovakia.

First, let's look at the normative framework and reality on the ground. We have created a sufficient framework of resolutions and commitments, but their implementation is still insufficient. Women's role in sustaining peace is undoubtable. Even though we agreed to promote women's meaningful participation in UN peacekeeping operations, we haven't borne witness to the rising numbers of women peacekeepers. Actually, this number hasn't changed drastically over the recent 10 years, it only raised from 2 to 4% of women soldiers. 1 year after the Secretary-General launched the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity, we still have only about 28% of women deployed in the field, same figure as 12 months ago.

We should reflect carefully on the recently published report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security that, among other things, highlights gaps and challenges that remain ahead of us. This report, together with resolution 2242 provides a clear roadmap of what needs to be done and how to do it in an efficient and timely manner.

Secondly, women's political and economic empowerment must be at the centre of our WPS efforts. Focus must be put on ensuring women's economic rights and their full participation in economic processes, access to resources, employment and education. We need to do better in the protection of women Human Rights Defenders, women key actors in politics, public life and society. Only that way we will be able to ensure their political empowerment and their equal participation in all spheres of life. To successfully do that, we also need to ensure sufficient funding and resources of WPS agenda, mostly in conflict-affected countries.

I know that earlier today we all had a chance to congratulate the newly elected President of Ethiopia, Ambassador Sahle-Work Zewde with whom I had the privilege of working in Nairobi for three and half years. It was really a moment of importance to all of us, to have one of the Under-Secretary Generals, becoming the new first women president of Ethiopia and of course examples like that are critical and we all look forward to supporting her and continue to work with her.

Thirdly, women's role in the Security Sector shouldn't be underestimated. UNSC Resolution 2151 on SSR underscores the importance of women's equal and effective participation and full involvement in all stages of SSR processes. Slovakia as a co-chair of the Group of Friends of SSR works closely with the Group of Friends on Gender Parity, to explore opportunities for strengthened UN support to gender-responsive national SSR processes, enhancing gender parity and gender equality, and improving programming and advocacy efforts. Therefore, UN approach to security sector reform must be gender-sensitive, in its planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases. Only with increased female participation in civilian oversight and SSR processes, we can achieve wide trust of the public in the security sector, in particular in post-conflict societies.

Just last week the Group of Friends of SSR organised a dialogue on SSR in Central African Republic with the participation of Her Excellency the Minister of Defence of CAR. Among

the key messages was also the need to build not only efficient but also fully inclusive security sector. Strong commitment of the Government is crucial in that regard.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, the more we focus on practical implementation of what we have politically declared and agreed upon, the sooner we will observe more tangible and positive results on the ground and in everyday lives of people, and this is what should be in the centre of our attention.

I thank you.