

Joint Press Stakeout by the Security Council signatories of the Statement of Shared Commitments for the principles of Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) (Albania, Brazil, Ecuador, France, Gabon, Japan, Malta, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom) 29 March 2023

We, the Member States that have endorsed the shared commitments on Women Peace and Security, Albania, Brazil, Ecuador, France, Gabon, Japan, Malta, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and in their national capacity, Ghana, Mozambique and the United States of America would like to make a few remarks after the Security Council field visit in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As you know, we are committed to ensuring that the WPS agenda is mainstreamed throughout the work of the Security Council and that a gender perspective is consistently applied to country situations. This was the case for the field visit to the DRC, where we met with women leaders and civil society representatives.

We were able to hear their perspectives on the recurring cycles of conflict in eastern provinces. The dire humanitarian situation, particularly in North Kivu, continues to have a disproportionate impact on women and girls. We heard from women leaders their appeal for more robust response from the international community, including support for local women's organisations.

In this context, we continue to be appalled by the prevalence of conflict-related sexual violence. This violence is, often used as a tactic of war, with a tremendous impact on the survivors, their families and their communities. We encourage the authorities of the DRC to continue their efforts to end the cycle of impunity for these crimes as part of a holistic national strategy on transitional justice. Investigations must continue to be carried out and perpetrators held accountable. In parallel, we must continue to impose sanctions for those responsible for acts of sexual violence.

We would like to pay tribute to the many civil society actors, and especially the women's movements, who are working in this challenging context to end and prevent sexual violence and support survivors.

At the same time women leaders reminded us of the importance of addressing the WPS agenda in all its dimensions and pillars. In this regard, we must not forget that full, equal and meaningful participation is a cornerstone of the WPS agenda. Women leaders are counting on our support to ensure women's participation and the inclusion of youth in peace and decision-making processes. They also stressed the necessity to protect women human rights defenders and women taking part in public and political life. We will ensure that this remains a priority, especially in view of the coming elections.

Friends, we are here today to share the messages of these courageous women leaders. We are here to illustrate concretely how their action can be translated into our work here in the Security Council. We are also here to demonstrate our support and continued mobilization before today's meeting. We would like to conclude by saluting the dedicated UN actors on the ground for their

work on this shared priority. We are strongly committed to ensuring that MONUSCO can continue to implement its mandate on Women, Peace and Security.

We would also like to share a message in French for the women leaders of DRC : Mesdames les représentantes de la société civile. Nous vous avons entendues. Nous partageons aujourd'hui votre message au Conseil de Sécurité. Nous ne ménagerons pas nos efforts pour traduire en actes vos recommandations. Nous vous confirmons depuis ici tout notre soutien.

Merci beaucoup.