



# Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

**8649**<sup>th</sup> meeting  
 Tuesday, 29 October 2019, 3 p.m.  
 New York

*Provisional*

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<i>President:</i>	Mr. Matjila/Mrs. Pandor . . . . .	(South Africa)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium . . . . .	Ms. Boels
	China . . . . .	Ms. Yan Bingham
	Côte d'Ivoire . . . . .	Ms. Niamke
	Dominican Republic . . . . .	Mr. Trullols Yabra
	Equatorial Guinea . . . . .	Mrs. Mele Colifa
	France . . . . .	Ms. Mayol
	Germany . . . . .	Mrs. Saxinger
	Indonesia . . . . .	Ms. Kristanti
	Kuwait . . . . .	Ms. Alzouman
	Peru . . . . .	Mr. Solari
	Poland . . . . .	Mrs. Zaworska-Furgala
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Kuzmin
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . . .	Mr. Clay
	United States of America . . . . .	Mr. Farid

## Agenda

### Women and peace and security

Towards the successful implementation of the women, peace and security agenda: moving from commitments to accomplishments in preparation for the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000)

Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2019/800)

Letter dated 8 October 2019 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2019/801)

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*The meeting resumed at 3 p.m.*

**The President:** As previously announced, given the financial constraints currently being experienced by the Organization, this afternoon's meeting will conclude at exactly 6 p.m. As there are likely to still be speakers remaining on the list at that time, I am pleased to inform the Security Council that, if necessary, this meeting will be resumed at a date and time to be announced in the month of November under the presidency of the United Kingdom, hopefully soon.

The representative of the United Kingdom has asked for the floor.

**Mr. Clay** (United Kingdom): Given the high level of interest in participation in this debate and the importance of respecting the requests under rule 37 and rule 39 received by the Council, the United Kingdom is delighted to be able to offer to schedule the conclusion of this meeting during our presidency. We will inform all Council members and all members of the General Assembly of details in due course.

**The President:** I thank the representative of the United Kingdom; that is appreciated.

I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber. The red light on the collar of the microphone in front of speakers will begin to flash after four minutes have elapsed. Please respect that.

I now give the floor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala.

**Ms. Jovel Polanco** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): First, I would like to congratulate the Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa for convening this important debate and for the concept note prepared for this meeting (S/2019/801, annex). It was a great honour for me to have visited Pretoria last week for the opening of the Guatemalan Embassy in that beautiful country. I thank the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN-Women for their introductory words. I would also like to thank the African Union Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security and the representatives of civil society.

As the second woman to serve as Foreign Minister in the history of the Republic of Guatemala, it is an honour to address the members of the Security Council on this subject. Undoubtedly, being the leader of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala demonstrates Guatemala's increasing commitment on this issue.

Over the years, we have seen that the significant participation of women quantifiably strengthens protection efforts, accelerates economic recovery and deepens the consolidation efforts for peace and sustainability. That is why every year the Council has been charting a path towards reducing vulnerability among women and girls under the framework of the key resolution 1325 (2000) and its subsequent resolutions. This clearly demonstrates once again that there can be no lasting peace without including women and girls, and today's valuable debate aims to ensure the full implementation of the agenda for peace and security.

It is regrettable that, in this day and age, women continue to be denigrated simply for being women, especially in the media. One could agree or disagree with certain policies, but it is unacceptable for women to continue to be vilified based on their physical appearance, their beliefs, their wardrobe or their personality. I call upon the United Nations to seriously and resoundingly emphasize the human rights of women to put an end to actions of that nature, which incite violence. We are concerned that we continue to see inequality, double standards and social injustices even in the twenty-first century, largely because of the erroneous interpretation of the freedom of thought.

Almost 20 years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), it is important that every Member of the Organization evaluate the actions they will continue to take so as to further the implementation of such an important resolution. We must review and identify the ongoing gaps in order to improve and achieve the commitments we have undertaken, nationally, regionally and internationally.

After signing the 1996 Guatemalan Peace Accords, Guatemala acquired a series of commitments under the global agenda for the human rights of women — 28 concrete commitments for advancing the rights of women, who constitute 51.5 per cent of our country's population. In that regard, we have worked towards the implementation of mechanisms, programmes and plans for the advancement of women, including our policy agenda for the period 2017 to 2026,

which are in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We have in place coordination advisory entities that guarantee public policies integral to the promotion of development for Guatemalan women and the development of a culture of democracy, one that is a product of women's demands, based on the commitment undertaken by the country by virtue of the adoption and ratification of international instruments.

My delegation wishes to reiterate that the proper implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) requires the unwavering willingness of all the relevant bodies in all States. Guatemala has its own national action plan for the implementation of the resolution — PAN 1325 — which was developed with the participation of all Government institutions representing the rights of women. We are now in the second year of implementing PAN 1325. We can say with satisfaction that we have contributed to strengthening national legislation, women's mechanisms and institutional initiatives that generated internal change in public administration. An initial report on progress made during the year 2018 was therefore drafted, which identifies key results from more than 80 training processes on women's issues. Guatemala is currently drafting the report for 2019, which will be issued in 2020. At the international level, we have participated in various meetings and forums at which the Women, Peace and Security National Focal Points Network has been very successful.

The leadership and participation of women in conflict prevention and resolution is crucial. All countries must take steps to boost the representation of women at all decision-making levels in the various relevant institutions and mechanisms. We have seen first-hand that discrimination against women represents a stumbling block for our development. Gender equality is a fundamental right and means providing opportunities for both women and men in order to ensure their full human potential and true sustainable development.

The Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. To that end, we need to recognize that as women we are agents of change. We are aware that the challenge of sustaining peace requires the creation of strategic alliances among the United Nations, Governments and civil society in order to complement efforts to strengthen the role of women in decision-making processes. Experience has shown that women working

in missions on the ground have been able to transform their environment.

The State of Guatemala recognizes that all human beings are free and equal in dignity and in rights. Men and women have equal opportunities and responsibilities. In that context, my delegation prioritizes the full involvement of women in participatory processes at all levels, taking into account the fact that women play a vital role in the promotion of justice and reconciliation and in providing support for disarmament and social reintegration processes.

On this nineteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), Guatemala stresses that efforts must be redoubled to continue to achieve concrete results in the implementation of the commitments of the global agenda. This will make it possible for States and the United Nations jointly to work to ensure the full participation of women in peace processes. I urge the Council to continue deploying efforts on an inclusive agenda that will allow us to strengthen our role as promoters of peace.

We believe that the Organization must go back to its original purpose: the defence of human beings and their dignity, as this represents the bedrock of fundamental rights. In recent years the Organization has given less importance to those values, focusing on other issues that not only divide but also polarize our societies. This has also included attempts to impose initiatives that run counter to our own legislative frameworks.

**The President:** I give the floor to the representative of Liberia.

**Ms. Saydee-Tarr (Liberia):** My delegation brings warm greetings from His Excellency Mr. George Manneh Weah, President of the Republic of Liberia and feminist-in-chief, and we congratulate you, Madam, on your ascendancy to the presidency.

At the outset I should like to express our satisfaction at the adoption of resolution 2493 (2019), which Liberia proudly co-sponsored.

The year 2020 holds significance for amplifying the focus on the progress of the women's advancement agenda. The milestone commemorations of the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the tenth anniversary of the mandate on sexual violence in conflict create opportunities to undertake extensive inventories of how well we have

met our commitments to the protection and promotion of the rights and advancement of women, as well as provide an opportunity to develop practical and robust solutions for addressing the gaps and challenges.

On 23 April, Liberia joined other Member States in pronouncing a number of commitments on its women and peace and security agenda leading up to the twentieth anniversary, in 2020. I am proud to announce today that we have made good on two of the six commitments in advance of the 2020 target set. Phase two of our national action plan on resolution 1325 (2000) has been completed and endorsed, and the domestic violence bill was recently passed into law, in August. We are confident that we will see the others come to timely fruition.

In furtherance of our adherence to the tenets of resolution 1325 (2000), His Excellency Mr. George Weah, President of the Republic of Liberia, in his advocacy for advancing women in political leadership, championed a bill for an amendment to article 80 of the Liberian Constitution in order to provide additional seats for marginalized groupings, to include women, persons dealing with disabilities, and young people. That would allow for 15 more seats for women in the Senate in addition to the 30 existing seats, as per political subdivisions, and only female members of political parties will qualify to contest these seats. There will be four specialized seats in the House of Representatives for persons dealing with disabilities, and young people. Although there are hindrances, as there are with everything that comes with change, we remain optimistic that these goals will be realized under this Administration.

The development of our first national action plan in 2009, following the remarkable role women played in the restoration of peace to our war-torn country, was a logical sequence to keeping up the momentum in women's political leadership. While there were many stumbling blocks to the effective implementation of the first plan, the Government of Liberia, through the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, in collaboration with our development partners, will endeavour to ensure that phase two of the plan, which is fully aligned with our own national development framework, the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development, will apply the appropriate mechanisms to ensure a successful implementation process.

A significant aspect of the women and peace and security agenda is the role of women in the security sector and in peacekeeping; however, very little attention is given to the contribution of women in this sector in view of the full peace and security agenda. Our Government, in its efforts to elevate this platform, and as a United Nations troop-contributing country, has embarked on various initiatives to expand the presence of female officers in the Liberian security sector. Currently the security apparatus in Liberia, including the Armed Forces of Liberia, the Liberian National Police and the Liberian Immigration Service, is exerting efforts to increase the quota of female recruits and identifying effective trainings and strategies to build the needed capacity of female officers to cope with challenges that hinder their advancement or entry into the security sector. The Armed Forces of Liberia in particular are exerting every effort to increase the number of female officers in peacekeeping missions by the year 2022, with the aim of fulfilling the United Nations peace operations gender-parity requirement of 15 per cent. At this stage we are at 8 per cent.

The training provided by the United Nations and other partners has contributed greatly to building the capacity of our uniformed female officers. Nonetheless, for us to achieve the overall objectives of women's active role in peace and security, there has to be more specialized training for women in the security sector at every level. The establishment of a database on women in decision-making will be key. Identifying the gaps between male and female security officers in decision-making in the security sector will be useful, and a sustained monitoring and evaluation practice will be beneficial.

To that end, we are making frantic efforts to deliver on these initiatives. As it is with many development initiatives, the promotion of women's active participation in the security sector is marred by various factors: inadequate financial and logistical resources and capacity-building; lack of necessary equipment and apparatus and overall support; and inadequate retention and recruiting due to low financial benefits and incentives. Success in meeting these objectives hinges on overcoming these shortcomings.

In the throes of these multiple challenges, let me reassert that the Government of Liberia remains extensively committed to the implementation of the international commitments to resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, and welcomes the

adoption of resolution 2493 (2019) under this agenda during South Africa's presidency.

On behalf of His Excellency President George Weah, the Government and the people of Liberia convey their appreciation to the United Nations and our development partners for their consistent and continued support for our development efforts and in ensuring the full participation and inclusion of women and girls in the peace and security agenda.

Liberia looks forward to strengthening support for women and peace and security through its alignment as a member of the Group of Friends of the African Women Leaders Network, the Women, Peace and Security National Focal Points Network and the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security here at the United Nations. As a recipient of recognition for being the first post-conflict country to have adopted a national action plan, we would like to urge Member States that have not yet given it consideration to kindly join the global initiative.

We would like to further emphasize that in addressing issues of peace and security, it is important to deal with and hear directly from actors in the area of peace and security, including women in uniform and in peacebuilding work, from the granular level upward.

Additionally, it is critical to ensure a move into purposeful, intentional action and implementation of our national action plan.

In conclusion, I should like to reiterate that until women are a significant part of peace initiatives, whether peacemaking or peacebuilding, the processes thereof will be neither complete nor durable.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

**Mr. Lee Taeho** (Republic of Korea): I would like to express my sincere appreciation to you, Madam President, for convening today's open debate. I also appreciate the Secretary-General's strong message in his recent report (S/2019/800) on the critical importance of the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. I also welcome today's unanimous adoption of resolution 2493 (2019), which I hope will strengthen the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

A number of meaningful strides have been made since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). Among

others, the link between sexual violence and peace and security issues has been clearly established. The normative framework has also been strengthened by the nine follow-up resolutions, including resolution 1888 (2009), which created the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. However, despite strenuous international efforts and the subsequent major achievements made over the past 19 years to address the scourge of conflict-related sexual violence and promote women's participation in peace processes, the global implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) has not fully lived up to our aspirations.

To date, 83 countries have adopted national action plans for the implementation of the resolution, which represents only 42 per cent of all States Members of the United Nations. That number clearly demonstrates that the commitment reached in the Security Council has not automatically translated into reality on the ground. Now is indeed the time to renew our determination to ensure that the commitment we have made really makes a difference in people's lives. I would like to underline the three important elements that should be highlighted in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). They are participation, protection and prevention.

First, the increased participation of women in the full continuum of peace processes is essential. Women's participation should be full, equal and meaningful. Women must be adequately represented at all stages of peace processes. In line with the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy of the Department of Peace Operations, the Korean Government will continue to exert efforts to ensure women's increased participation and to achieve greater gender equality in each peacekeeping operation. Korea has already pledged to increase the current level of women's share of peacekeeping officers and observer positions from 17 per cent to 25 per cent by 2028.

Secondly, our protection efforts must be actively materialized in a way that victims and survivors in conflict zones feel they are being effectively protected on the ground. In that regard, the victim- and survivor-centred approach should be at the core of protection. As spelled out in resolution 2467 (2019), the survivor-centred approach is crucial, not only for sustainable conflict solutions but also for the prevention of secondary trauma or revictimization. That was the approach taken by Korea in providing tailored assistance to survivors in a few Asian and African countries, through the United Nations Population Fund and UNICEF, under

the Action with Women and Peace initiative it launched last year. Korea pledges to provide \$8 million by next year to further support those projects.

Thirdly, prevention should be the first priority for sustaining peace and security. As we talk about prevention in the context of the women and peace and security agenda, I would like to emphasize the importance of taking a longer-term approach to, and promoting a deep understanding of, the root causes of conflict and of making a more concerted effort to build the capacity of affected countries. In that regard, raising and promoting public awareness of the women and peace and security agenda is critical. The Korean Government promotes public awareness of the national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), online and offline. Korea is also developing education programmes for primary and secondary schools in an effort to ensure that interdisciplinary learning with regard to the women and peace and security agenda is conducted throughout the educational system. I believe that the international community must make further efforts to provide countries in need with the necessary support for developing their own national action plans, while paying due consideration to the need for improved public awareness of the agenda in their local context.

Lastly, I would like to add one more point, if I may, to the three elements I mentioned, that is, persistence. In putting women and peace and security at the heart of the global agenda, we must remain persistent. We should continue to show strong political will and full commitment to implementing resolution 1325 (2000). Last July, Korea hosted an international conference on Action with Women and Peace, the first-ever such conference in Asia. As part of its persistent effort to help strengthen the international community's collective endeavours towards the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, my Government intends to continuously host that conference on an annual basis.

For Korea, the successful implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) has a very special meaning. Korea seeks to support and help recover the honour and dignity of the so-called comfort women victims during the Second World War. It is therefore important to turn their painful experiences into lessons of history and ensure that the same tragedy is not repeated elsewhere in the world, through the full implementation of the resolution.

As we stand at the doorstep of the meaningful twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), the Republic of Korea hopes that the women and peace and security agenda is firmly put in place as a global challenge to be met by all Member States, and that all commitments made over the past 20 years are translated into tangible action by 2020. I would like to assure you, Madam President, that my country is ready to work together with the international community to that end.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Georgia.

**Ms. Agladze (Georgia):** I would like to thank you, Madam President, for convening today's meeting.

Georgia aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the observer of the European Union.

As we prepare to mark the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of landmark resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, next year, and in view of the slow progress in its implementation, accelerating our efforts to ensure women's increased participation in peace negotiations and in the decision-making process is urgent. Georgia continues to attach significant importance to the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. Our third national action plan for this agenda, covering the period 2018 to 2020, is harmonized with our national action plan on the protection of human rights, based on a whole-of-Government approach to integrating gender perspectives in the security sector, while using a gender lens in peace negotiations, protecting the rights of women and girls and promoting their meaningful participation in conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

The Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence coordinates discussions among Government agencies, as well as civil society organizations, to ensure the effective implementation of the women and peace and security agenda at the national and subnational levels. For the first time, the notion of sexual harassment, as well as sanctions for the perpetrators, has been introduced by the Ministry of Defence in the disciplinary code of the defence system. Moreover, the Ministry adopted a set of detailed procedures regarding complaints on bullying, sexual discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse.

Georgia attaches particular importance to the role of women, the use of their potential in peace processes and

the continuous facilitation of their increased involvement in the confidence-building and reconciliation process. We support the engagement of conflict-affected women's non-governmental organizations in the public diplomacy and dialogue process. There are State programmes and services for victims and regular consultations are conducted with women living along the occupation line and their families on human security, domestic violence, violence against women and sexual violence. Moreover, with the support of UN-Women in Georgia, the Government holds regular meetings to share information on the Geneva international discussions and incident prevention and response mechanisms among civil society, including women's rights activists, internally displaced persons and conflict-affected women. I would also like to recall that in April the Government submitted a list of specific commitments on women, peace and security to be implemented before October 2020.

Despite our efforts to empower conflict-affected women, Russia's occupation of the two Georgian regions Abkhazia and Tskhinvali prevents my Government from sharing the human rights protection framework with women remaining on the other side of the illegally erected fences. Alarming, the most recent so-called borderization process and closure of the occupation line in the Tskhinvali region fully isolates the occupied area and creates the risk of a humanitarian crisis, particularly in Akhgori district. Yesterday, there was yet another fatal accident when 70-year-old Margo Martiashvili, a resident of Akhgori district requiring urgent medical assistance, died as a result of the denial by the occupying regime to temporarily open the so-called crossing point in order to access the nearest hospital. She passed away in Tskhinvali.

Meanwhile, women living in Georgia's occupied regions, as well as in areas adjacent to the occupation line, continue to suffer from systemic grave violations of their fundamental rights and freedoms, including, but not limited to, freedom of movement and illegal detentions by officers of the Russian Federal Security Service.

In conclusion, let me reaffirm Georgia's commitment to advancing the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda at the national level and to contributing towards its implementation globally.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

**Mr. Bessho (Japan):** I would like to thank South Africa for convening this meeting, focusing on the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda towards the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) next year. Japan welcomes the adoption of the new resolution 2493 (2019), which we co-sponsored.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Abe, Japan attaches great importance to promoting the women and peace and security agenda as one of the three core pillars of its efforts to create a society where women shine. Resolution 1325 (2000) was a historic resolution, which recognizes women not as passive and vulnerable victims but rather as proactive participants who contribute to conflict prevention and resolution and peace processes.

Today, I would like to reiterate Japan's commitment to strengthening the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, building on the outcome of our efforts based on the landmark resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions.

Japan strongly supports the international fund for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, which will be launched at the event to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the mandate on sexual violence in conflict tomorrow. Japan wishes to be a proactive contributor and a board member of the fund. We are currently making the necessary arrangements to make an appropriate financial contribution to the fund.

Sexual violence in conflict is a great obstacle to sustaining peace. The United Nations Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict provides crucial assistance to relevant Governments, particularly in the areas of criminal investigation and prosecution, legislative reform and the capacity-building of judicial and security authorities. As a leading donor, Japan will continue to support the efforts of the Team of Experts.

Gender equality and the economic and political empowerment of women are necessary to promote meaningful participation by women in peace and security. From that standpoint, Japan has supported women affected by conflict in the Middle East and Africa regions through gender-based violence related services and vocational training in collaboration with UN-Women, the United Nations Population Fund and other United Nations agencies.

From next January, Japan will support the UN-Women project in Sri Lanka under the women and peace and security partnership initiative of the Group of Seven. The project will include support to empowering women and their participation in national reconciliation processes.

On the issue of comfort women mentioned by the representative of the Republic of Korea, Japan has been dealing with that issue for a long period of time, including through the December 2015 agreement between Japan and the Republic of Korea.

In conclusion, the women and peace and security agenda is one of the most important issues discussed in the Security Council. I believe that strong commitments from Member States and concrete actions will push forward the women and peace and security agenda during the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) next year and beyond.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

**Mrs. Schneeberger** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): The adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) 19 years ago signalled that we cannot achieve sustainable peace without women's full, equal and meaningful participation at all levels of decision-making. Collective efforts have advanced the women and peace and security agenda since then. However, we have heard not only today that the many requirements set out in resolution 1325 (2000) and the subsequent eight resolutions have yet to be fulfilled. Switzerland is strongly committed to fully implementing that normative framework, particularly with regard to the following three priorities.

First, as one of the first countries with a national action plan, Switzerland adopted the fourth version last year. The action plan is a key instrument to monitor progress. We are committed to sharing our lessons learned with other countries. We therefore support Chad in developing its first national action plan. In that regard, Switzerland welcomes the launching by the African Union of its first report on the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda in Africa this month.

Secondly, as stated in our national action plan, women have a key role to play in conflict prevention. Earlier this month, three female civil society representatives briefed the Council during its debate on peace and security in Africa (see S/PV.8633) and

underlined the positive role that women can play in that regard. Also, Swiss non-governmental organizations have produced a study showing how the women and peace and security agenda can promote prevention, including of violent extremism. The Security Council must build on those efforts and ensure that its relevant resolutions, including mission mandates, contain provisions requiring women's meaningful participation in peace and security and the establishment of conflict-prevention activities and mechanisms.

Thirdly, the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda requires that the entire international community and United Nations system, across its three pillars, contribute to that effort. We commend and support the Peacebuilding Commission's important convening and advisory role in such work and other issues. Switzerland has for example been active in raising awareness of the role that the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women can play in such implementation. Civil society and human rights defenders, in particular women, also have a crucial role to play in implementing the women and peace and security agenda. We call on all States to respect their international obligations and commitments to that end. We must all step up our efforts and deliver on our commitments. Switzerland looks forward to contributing to that goal by chairing, together with South Africa, the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network in 2021.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Latvia.

**Mr. Pildegovičs** (Latvia): Allow me to start by commending the South African presidency of the Security Council for convening this debate. I also wish to thank Secretary-General António Guterres and the other briefers for their remarks and valuable input in today's discussion.

Latvia aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the observer of the European Union (EU).

The empowerment of women and their inclusive engagement, as well as gender equality on the whole, are not a whim of our century but rather the building blocks for a more peaceful, secure and sustainable world. Gender equality comes with a positive spillover effect that benefits our children, families and entire communities and steers us closer to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The Security Council's



resolutions on women and peace and security are important for the integration of a gender perspective within a broader security context, thereby representing an important step towards conflict prevention and resolution and sustainable peace. Hence, we need to put the utmost effort into reducing the disparity between women affected by conflict and the role assigned to women in conflict prevention and resolution. It is often overlooked that women's participation in conflict prevention and resolution has a meaningful effect on the outcome of the process. In the meantime, special attention must be paid to the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations, including physical security and access to sufficient health care. The same applies to eradicating all forms of sexual violence and abuse in conflict. That must remain high on our agenda.

As we approach the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), Latvia reiterates its strong support for the women and peace and security agenda, recognizing that the close link between global security and the equal participation of women should not be underestimated. We applaud the Secretary-General for his strong commitment to putting women's meaningful participation high on the United Nations agenda. We have put gender equality high on our own agenda, and we are in the process of finalizing a national action plan on women and peace and security. As a State member of the European Union, we contribute to the implementation of the agenda through the EU's internal and external policies. Many of the guidelines have already been integrated into our national system. Other examples of improved gender equality include recent parliamentary elections, during which the highest number of women ever were elected to the Parliament of Latvia — 31 per cent, which is also slightly above the EU average. Moreover, 16 per cent of the soldiers in Latvia's national armed forces and 30 per cent of our State police force are women. We are proud that Latvia has the highest percentage of women researchers in Europe, at 52 per cent.

On a greater scale, Latvia is pleased to recall that a robust plan of action on gender and gender-based violence was adopted under its recent presidency of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). That can be considered to be the first intergovernmental agreement that aims to improve the meaningful participation of women in disarmament forums, as well as outlining the practical steps that States parties will take to implement the provisions of the ATT with regard to carrying out risk

assessments based on gender-based violence criteria. We call on all States parties to the ATT to strongly adhere to that plan of action. At the same time, we recognize that gender equality is not just about the number of women in positions of power. It is crucial that gender equality and the participation of women go beyond the numbers and ensure that the voices of women and girls are heard and integrated into decision-making processes. That is what we must strive for so that our tomorrow may be better than our today.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Ireland.

**Ms. Byrne Nason (Ireland):** I would like to thank South Africa for convening this debate and for shepherding the tenth resolution on women and peace and security (resolution 2493 (2019)) safely across the line. Ireland co-sponsored the resolution. Of course, we all hoped for more. It may not be perfect — little of the women and peace and security reality is optimal. We support you, Madam President, so that we can build a better future together.

Ireland aligns itself with the statements to be made on behalf of the European Union and on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women and Peace and Security, respectively.

As an active member of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), we sincerely hope to see the Chair of the PBC brief the Council on this topic in the future.

Many speakers have today referred to the upcoming twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). In my view, that should be a moment for a clear-eyed assessment of what has been achieved rather than a cause for celebration. Ireland welcomes the Secretary-General's sobering report (S/2019/800) outlining the increasing attacks against women human rights defenders and peacebuilders and the unacceptable continued exclusion of women from peace and political processes. I know that I am not alone in the Chamber in feeling a growing sense of frustration at the slow pace of change. Frankly, I also feel shame at the growing number of threats to the progress already made. The fact is that those who wage wars — who are not, in the main, women — continue to set the parameters for peace without women. Quite apart from the inequality that that serves to reinforce, let us be clear, it is also a fundamentally ineffective way to build peace. We have seen the evidence that peace is more durable when women have participated in its negotiation. Which part

of that reality do we not yet understand? Put simply, women and peace and security ought to be part of all of our peacebuilding work, which, in this Chamber entails every mandate renewal, every geographic and thematic discussion, every local consultation and every piece of analysis completed in the field. We simply cannot afford for this issue to be confined to one open debate in October of every year. That formula clearly has not worked so far.

Ireland sees the sustaining peace agenda and the women and peace and security agenda not as separate but as one and the same process. Through the peacebuilding architecture review next year, we will work to ensure the full recognition of that synergy. Gender equality is at the heart of my country's foreign and development cooperation policy. We launched our third national action plan on women and peace and security earlier this year. We match our overseas engagement with domestic action, which is focused on migrant women affected by conflict living in Ireland and those affected by conflict in Northern Ireland.

Ireland believes in women's meaningful participation in peacebuilding because we have lived it. It is more than 20 years since the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition participated in the Good Friday Agreement. Yet still today that Agreement is one of the few global examples in which women have directly participated in a peace process. The elements introduced by women to the Good Friday Agreement have been critical to sustaining peace over the two decades that followed because they went to the root causes of the conflict and helped to imagine a positive vision of a Northern Ireland of the future.

With over 60 years of continuing and unbroken peacekeeping experience, Ireland knows well how critical it is to integrate a gender perspective in order to empower women in peacekeeping. Ireland is a gender champion within the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative, and we support the Secretary-General's targets. We are particularly proud that today the highest-ranking female United Nations peacekeeper is an Irish woman — Brigadier General Maureen O'Brien, Acting Force Commander of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force in the Golan Heights. We take the same approach in our work on disarmament and humanitarian action, in which we view the equal participation of women as fundamental.

The Secretary-General today rightly raised the issue of funding. As the Council is aware, today's debate is one of the most oversubscribed every year. We are all eager to talk, but what if we were as eager to invest in women? It is essential that States Members of the United Nations continue to increase their support for gender equality and women's organizations. Earlier this year, Ireland completed its two years as Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women, so we know only too well the challenges, complexity and urgency of this debate. As an aspiring member of the Security Council, Ireland is committed to standing up, raising our voice and finding the resources to move beyond rhetoric and towards reality. There is a short three-word sentence in the Secretary-General's report that really should guide us for the next 12 months, which is that implementation remains critical — or as Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka of UN-Women likes to say, “do, do, do”.

**The President:** I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I now give the floor to the representative of Hungary.

**Mrs. Bogyay (Hungary):** It is great to see you, Honourable Minister, here in the Security Council. I would first of all like to thank the presidency of South Africa for convening this very important open debate. I also thank the briefers for the insightful remarks they delivered this morning.

Hungary aligns itself with the statements to be delivered on behalf of the European Union (EU), the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security and the African Women Leaders Network.

Hungary is committed to implementing the women and peace and security agenda. I wish to inform the Council that we are currently in the process of drafting our own national action plan on women and peace and security, which we aim to adopt before the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). In order to implement the women and peace and security agenda at the national level, the Hungarian defence forces have incorporated training and education about resolution 1325 (2000), gender awareness, sexual exploitation and abuse, and conflict-related sexual violence into national predeployment training courses

and international courses such as the international military observer course. In addition, we regularly carry out intensive training courses related to the women and peace and security agenda for non-commissioned officers and other officers. Mainstreaming the gender perspective in peace operations and military processes increases operational efficiency. Moreover, increasing the participation of women in peacekeeping missions as well as implementing gender-sensitive strategies for protecting civilians and providing humanitarian assistance are of key importance to provide the best assistance possible for women and girls who are affected by conflict.

With regard to increasing our efforts to promote the deployment of female personnel, we are working on projects that support, for instance, creating better work-life balances and making available atypical types of employment to women, which indirectly contribute to recruiting a higher percentage of female soldiers for deployment. Our female personnel can participate in United Nations, NATO and EU missions under the same conditions as male soldiers.

We are of course appalled by the ongoing systematic and widespread conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence, which can constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity and even genocide. Accountability must be accordingly provided. Survivors of sexual violence require not only immediate medical care but also comprehensive psychosocial support and human rights-based and gender-responsive services.

We call for the international community to better address the needs of those women and girls belonging to religious and ethnic minorities who have been persecuted and displaced by conflict or terrorism. In order to successfully implement the women and peace and security agenda, actions need to be taken in advance during peacetime, on the one hand by addressing the root causes of conflict and preventing militarization and arms proliferation and, on the other hand, by protecting and promoting the human rights of all women and girls.

Only inclusive peace can be sustainable. We hope to see heightened attention accorded to the needs of women and their meaningful participation in the planning and carrying out of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activities. We play a vital role in preventing violent conflict. As we look forward to the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of

resolution 1325 (2000), we reaffirm our commitment and call for reinforced cooperation to fully implement the women and peace and security agenda.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Thailand.

**Mr. Srivihok** (Thailand): Thailand welcomes the timely focus of this open debate, which reflects on the achievements and challenges in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and its subsequent resolutions in preparation for next year's commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of its adoption. The 2015 global study by UN-Women on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) pointed out that there remains a crippling gap between the ambition of our commitments to the resolutions and actual political and financial support. Our firm belief is that we can and must narrow that gap by implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the women and peace and security agenda in a holistic manner.

In order to take meaningful action on women and peace and security, we must recognize the interrelated, inseparable and mutually reinforcing nature of all the elements of gender equality in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We need to address, among other things, the discriminatory laws, attitudinal and institutional obstacles and gender stereotyping that continue to hinder the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and the 2030 Agenda. Thailand recognizes that SDG 5, on gender equality, and SDG 16, on peace, justice and strong institutions, are closely linked and that their implementation is required in order to advance the women and peace and security agenda. A society can achieve sustainable peace only when it has an integrated an inclusive approach that incorporates development and human rights for all, including women. The empowerment of women and girls and gender equality are elements that are key to conflict prevention and the promotion of international peace and security.

At the national level, Thailand has adopted and is now in the stage of implementing its national measures and guidelines on women and peace and security for 2016 to 2021. Those measures also serve as an action plan that has both an internal and external outlook and aspires to enhance the role of women in addressing conflict and political and social unrest in the world.

On the international front, Thailand has been an ardent supporter of women's participation in

peacekeeping missions. Seven of the 27 Thai peacekeepers serving in the three peacekeeping missions to which we contribute are women, accounting for 20 per cent of the total number of Thai peacekeepers. Thai women peacekeepers are also at the forefront of community engagement efforts to promote sustainable development during their service in peacekeeping missions.

As we prepare to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action next year, and in our efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, Thailand is committed to continuing to do its part at home and abroad to genuinely advance gender equality and the empowerment of women in all contexts, including in maintaining international peace and security.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands.

**Mr. Van Oosterom** (Netherlands): I thank you so very much, Madam President, for personally presiding over this open debate.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands aligns itself with the statements to be delivered by the representative of Canada, on behalf of 55 Member States, and on behalf of the European Union.

We are on the eve of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). Calling for the full and effective implementation of all elements of this very important women and peace and security agenda could not be more important. This year's report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2019/800) is very clear on that point. We simply cannot lower our guard. We need to stand together to ensure that the women and peace and security agenda is not weakened by compromising on agreed language, especially on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

In this statement, I will highlight three aspects of this agenda: first, women human rights defenders; secondly, the survivor-centred approach; and thirdly, our commitment to implementation.

On my first point, women's organizations and women human rights defenders play key roles in promoting peace and security at multiple levels. We are deeply concerned that, on the whole, violence against them is rising. For instance, in Colombia in the first half of 2019, 447 threats, 20 homicides and

13 homicide attempts against women leaders, human rights defenders and peacebuilders were recorded. We need to ensure across the world that women rights defenders are protected and can do their crucial work without interference and without fearing for their lives.

My second point is the importance of a survivor-centred approach. When it comes to protection against conflict-related sexual violence, it is essential to adopt a survivor-centred approach, to listen to survivors and to respect their dignity, their rights and their wishes. Survivors should be the drivers of their own personal recovery process. They should be provided support in the form of information and comprehensive services, including those related to sexual and reproductive health and rights. In addition, they should have access to mental health and psychosocial support. International humanitarian and human rights law should, of course, be respected

My third point concerns our commitment to implementation. We need to go beyond words. The gap between our commitments and their implementation remains wide — too wide. That is something we all have to take responsibility for. The Kingdom of the Netherlands is committed to the full implementation of all elements of the women and peace and security agenda. We will make use of next year's momentum to develop our fourth national action plan, with enhanced accountability and a stronger national pillar. Moreover, starting in 2021, we will double our funding for women, peace and security. Furthermore, we will continue our efforts to enhance the meaningful participation of women in peace processes and to increase the number of uniformed women in peacekeeping missions, including in leadership roles.

In conclusion, let me quote Leymah Gbowee, the Liberian women's rights advocate and celebrated Nobel Peace Prize laureate, who said that we have the power to stop war and to "turn our upside-down world right-side up". We agree. All of us have that power. All the necessary elements are present in the comprehensive agenda that is the women and peace and security agenda. Now we, collectively, need to do our utmost to achieve its full implementation.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Jordan.

**Ms. Bahous** (Jordan): Allow me, at the outset, to congratulate South Africa on its successful presidency of the Security Council for this month and to welcome,

with appreciation, this morning's unanimous adoption of resolution 2493 (2019) on women and peace and security, of which my country is a proud sponsor. I would also like to extend my thanks to the briefers. Their insights inspire us all and their views are invaluable.

My country, Jordan, would like to align itself with the statement to be delivered later this afternoon by the representative of Canada on behalf of the 56 Member States representing all five regional groups of the United Nations.

Jordan has always been committed to maintaining peace and security, not only in the Middle East but also in areas of conflict worldwide, where it provides peacekeeping troops and expertise. Jordan's adoption in 2017 of an ambitious national action plan on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), with a budget allocation from the Jordanian Government and generous pool-funding from our donor partners, is an example of our commitment to enabling women's participation in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, the prevention of violent extremism and gender-based violence.

We are at a pivotal moment in history. Xenophobes and racists have emerged from the shadows, women's rights are suffering pushback, the space of civil activism is shrinking and the legitimacy of the principles of human rights is being attacked.

We all know that men and women are impacted differently by conflict. A more inclusive approach to the way peacemaking is carried out is need. While men have long been considered the only relevant actors in armed conflict and its resolution, women have been gravely affected and involved in conflict as relatives, caretakers, politicians, human rights defenders and combatants. Efforts should be directed at increasing the engagement of women, not only in soft and preventive diplomacy, but also at the core of peace processes, as we all know that women's participation adds a broader range of perspectives at multiple levels, enabling inclusivity and diversity, which have proven to lead to more sustainable peace.

In that regard, Jordan welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2019/800), particularly its recommendation on adopting the necessary measures to address the social, cultural and political barriers to women's full participation in the security and law enforcement sectors, such as increasing the number of female uniformed personnel in peace operations.

My country has made big strides towards integrating gender perspectives across all peacekeeping functions and is committed to further developing best practices on gender mainstreaming in military and police operations, including in predeployment training, as well as supporting the roles and tasks of gender advisers deployed in peacekeeping missions. Jordan believes that increasing women's participation in peacekeeping is a critical factor for the overall success of peace missions. We are therefore intensifying efforts in order to reach 15 per cent female participation by 2020 in order to meet Jordan's commitment to the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative.

Allow me to commend the United Nations peacekeeping missions on the impressive evolution of their human-resources capacities and priorities related to prevention and response to victims of war and violence, including sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations, and to making the safety of all, particularly that of women and girls, a priority of their active involvement in peace processes.

United Nations reports indicate that, unfortunately, only 13 per cent of countries allocate funding to statistics and data, and almost 80 per cent of the gender-equality indicators across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are lacking data. Disaggregated data sheds light on areas where progress is made, reveals gaps where further efforts are needed and identifies the resources necessary to shape national policies and plans.

To fulfil our commitments to the SDGs, particularly Goal 5, and to realize better implementation and localization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Jordanian Department of Statistics, relevant governmental bodies and civil society organizations, in collaboration with UN-Women, are relentlessly working through a three-pillar programme in order to reach a supportive policy and institutional environment to improve the monitoring of national and international commitments to the SDGs, while regularly generating quality and comparable gender statistics and ensuring that gender statistics are widely accessible and used to inform policymakers.

Finally, as we approach 2020, the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), it is imperative that we advance the women and peace and security agenda by including and empowering women politically, socially and economically and ensuring safe universal education for all women and girls. We need

to break the mould, we need to change perceptions now and for the next generations, and we need to fight the pushback and the current that are setting us back.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Uruguay.

**Mr. Amorín (Uruguay)** (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to welcome you, Madam President, and to commend the South African presidency for organizing this open debate on a key issue for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Uruguay aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Canada on behalf of a large group of countries concerned with the issue of women and peace and security and wishes to share some considerations in our national capacity.

My country welcomes the Secretary-General's useful and detailed report (S/2019/800) and the data provided in the independent assessment of the implementation of the gender recommendations contained in the three 2015 peace and security reviews. The information shows that, while tangible progress has been made on the women and peace and security agenda, there is still a long way to go before it is effectively and fully implemented. Resolution 2493 (2019), which the Council adopted this morning and which Uruguay co-sponsored, is an important step forward on that long road.

I shall now cite the measures Uruguay is taking at the national and multilateral levels to promote the implementation of the agenda.

Regarding domestic measures, I am pleased to inform the Council that my Government is ready to finalize its national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and other relevant resolutions. There is concrete evidence that national plans remain one of the main tools for accelerating the implementation of the agenda. Our national action plan includes legislation that our country has adopted on human trafficking, sexual violence and other human rights violations. The plan focuses on both the prevention and combating of such serious crimes and on the care, protection and reparation of victims. It also incorporates existing peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts as a basis for achieving new goals. We believe that the results obtained through the national action plan must be concrete and measurable, which is why it includes both quantitative and qualitative indicators.

As a troop-contributing country, Uruguay has in recent years taken clear steps at the domestic level to achieve greater inclusion of women in the national armed forces, and particularly in peacekeeping operations. Thanks to those efforts, the participation of Uruguayan women is higher than the average participation of women peacekeepers deployed under the United Nations flag. Uruguay plays a very active role in the implementation of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, of which the women and peace and security agenda is a central component. Likewise, our country is part of the contact group for the Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations and is involved in projects to identify barriers to deployment and provide capacity-building with the aim of increasing the participation of women.

Among other actions taken at the multilateral level, Uruguay will co-chair the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network next year, which coincides with the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). The Network has the potential to generate the necessary political momentum to accelerate progress on issues related to women, peace and security. We see it as an instrument to promote cooperation on those issues and the exchange of experiences and good practices among all the States that have joined it. In preparation for our tenure as Chair, a regional workshop will be held in Montevideo in December to address issues related to the women and peace and security agenda in the Americas. Furthermore, Uruguay is supporting an initiative proposed by Spain and Finland that is aimed at ensuring the effective participation of women in peace processes by 2025.

My country also pays particular attention to interconnections with the commitments made under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The protection of human rights is inextricably linked to international peace and security. Violations of women's rights are not spontaneous but are an extension of other violence that is covertly exercised within societies and is rooted in inequality and widespread discrimination against women in disregard of their fundamental rights. In that connection, Uruguay will be submitting its tenth periodic report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and is renewing its commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which prioritizes gender equality. The 2030 Agenda — in particular Goal 5, on gender equality,

and Goal 16, on peaceful and inclusive societies — has the potential to create the social, economic and political conditions to advance the women and peace and security agenda.

To conclude, 2020 will be a historic milestone for the women and peace and security agenda, with the celebration not only of the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), but also of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the seventy-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations. Next year will therefore have historical significance and impose on us the responsibility to step up efforts towards the effective implementation of commitments.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Slovenia.

**Ms. Bavdaž Kuret (Slovenia):** At the outset, allow me to thank the presidency of South Africa for organizing this open debate and the speakers for their briefings and testimonials.

Slovenia welcomes the latest annual report of the Secretary-General (S/2019/800), which shows that we have moved from the “what” and the “why” towards “how” to integrate a gender perspective in peace and security. We commend the Secretary-General for his personal commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Slovenia aligns itself with the statements to be delivered by the observer of the European Union and the representative of Canada, on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security.

In solidarity with those who will speak after me, I will try to use only two minutes of the Council’s precious time and to limit my intervention to the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda in Slovenia.

Slovenia’s national implementation efforts are reflected in the second national action plan, adopted in 2018. Slovenia is the only country in the world where the positions of Chief of the Armed Forces and Chief of Police are both held by women. At the Slovenian Foreign Ministry, 57 per cent of diplomats are women and 55 per cent of those deployed to foreign missions are women. Women account for 40 per cent of Slovenian ambassadors and heads of mission abroad; we still need another 10 per cent to reach parity.

Slovenia has integrated the gender perspective into a number of national strategies, such as those on national security, migration, counter-terrorism and violent extremism. It has established an education and training centre for those heading on peacekeeping operations and missions that provides training on women, peace and security. Its new development cooperation and humanitarian aid strategy confirms gender equality as one of the two key, cross-cutting issues in Slovenian development cooperation.

Finally, we can achieve tangible results only by working together. In the words of the Secretary-General,

“we must act immediately to halt any loss of momentum or inconsistency in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, deepen commitment where progress is building, and maintain the course where results have been achieved” (S/2019/800, para. 11).

Slovenia stands ready to do its part.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Armenia.

**Mr. Margaryan (Armenia):** I would like to thank the presidency of the Republic of South Africa for prioritizing the women and peace and security agenda and welcome the adoption of resolution 2493 (2019) earlier today. We also thank the Secretary-General for presenting his report (S/2019/800) and commend his leadership in promoting gender-responsive policies and equal opportunities for women and girls across the United Nations system.

The upcoming twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) will be an important opportunity to strengthen the collective response and take resolute action to address all forms of violence against women and girls and ensure the full protection of their human rights in times of conflict and crisis. That landmark resolution has created a comprehensive normative framework to scale up the efforts of the international community in mainstreaming the role of women in prevention, post-conflict reconstruction, rehabilitation and peacebuilding and in addressing the special protection needs of women and girls in conflict situations. Armenia firmly believes that women have a key role to play in all conflict stages, particularly in confidence-building and promoting peace and reconciliation. The inclusive engagement of all women

affected by conflict in peace and security efforts is vital to promoting lasting and durable settlements and sustaining peace.

We emphasize the need to protect the rights of women and girls residing in conflict areas, as the most affected part of the population, and to advance their meaningful participation and representation in prevention and peacebuilding processes. I would like to recall in that regard the Women for Peace campaign, initiated by the spouse of the Prime Minister of Armenia, which is an important example of an inclusive platform for women and mothers to raise their voice for peace, non-violence and reconciliation across dividing lines.

Armenia attaches great importance to advancing the women and peace and security agenda in the framework of its national policies aimed at ensuring the political and public participation of women, their empowerment and the promotion of gender equality. In February, in close cooperation with civil society and international partners, the Government adopted the national action plan on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, thereby consolidating national policies and strategies with the aim of making them more coherent and coordinated.

The national action plan focuses on prevention, protection, participation, relief and recovery with clear objectives, timelines and performance indicators. It identifies a concrete set of measures to increase the engagement of women in the security sector, including in peacekeeping missions, and to promote the political participation and economic empowerment of women in the context of conflict prevention and resolution and peacebuilding. It places particular emphasis on the protection of the rights of vulnerable population groups, such as women residing in border communities and women affected by conflicts.

In the light of the upcoming twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the five-year milestone towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, next year will be a critical moment in scaling up the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

The Commission on the Status of Women, the main United Nations policymaking body in the area of the empowerment of women, is also a particularly important platform for advancing the women and peace and security agenda. As Permanent Representative of

Armenia and Chair of the sixty-fourth session of the Commission, I look forward to contributing to gender-mainstreaming in security sector governance and reform and the substantial involvement of women in peacebuilding and peacekeeping activities.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Armenia's firm commitment to further enhancing the empowerment of women in its reform agenda and ensuring their inclusion and active participation in political and public life as important prerequisites for promoting peace and security.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan.

**Ms. Lodhi (Pakistan):** This open debate is being held on the eve of significant landmarks and anniversaries. Next year we will celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations. We will mark 25 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and 20 years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). This is therefore an opportune time to reflect on our achievements, as well as on lost opportunities, and to consider a course correction where needed.

While we have made considerable progress on the normative front, the world remains a very dangerous place, especially for women and girls who find themselves caught in the vortex of pain and suffering caused by seemingly unending wars, protracted disputes and foreign occupation. Despite our best intentions and efforts, they continue to suffer disproportionately with lasting consequences. According to the recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2019/800), more than 50 parties in various conflicts around the world are suspected of having committed or instigated patterns of rape and other forms of sexual violence in situations that are on the agenda of the Security Council.

Women not only remain the primary victims of hostilities and sexual violence in conflict situations; they also face multiple practical and institutional barriers that prevent them from participating fully and substantively in peace processes.

Resolution 1325 (2000) marked a watershed in placing women's issues at the centre of the global conflict-prevention debate within the larger context of international peace and security. While the agenda has sought the feminization of peace in a post-conflict environment, a greater effort will be needed to



safeguard and protect countless women whose suffering we continue to discount or ignore owing to exigencies of realpolitik or geopolitical interests.

We need to reaffirm that this agenda applies to all women in conflict situations, especially in cases of foreign occupation, such as in occupied Jammu and Kashmir. For almost three months, the world has witnessed in horror as India's cruel clampdown on all civil liberties in occupied Kashmir and its illegal annexation of the disputed territory, in gross violation of international law and several Security Council resolutions, have exacerbated and compounded the suffering of people, especially women and girls.

The anguish of Kashmiri women is further compounded when their family members, including children, are kidnapped in midnight raids, illegally detained and then tortured by occupying forces and when unremitting restrictions on movement and communication condemns women in occupied Kashmir to seeing their children suffer and die as a result of the lack of medical help. The continuing lockdown has not only made access to health care, food supplies and even communication with loved ones next to impossible; it has also made women more vulnerable to abuse as they are left at the mercy of occupying forces enforcing an inhumane curfew. Rape, after all, has long been used there and confirmed in the reports of international human rights organizations as a brutal tactic to humiliate an entire community and people. This travesty of justice must end. The Security Council must live up to its responsibilities and address this dire and unacceptable situation.

Peacekeeping operations and uniformed personnel, as we all know very well, remain the most visible representatives and symbol of the United Nations working directly with communities every day. They have a critical role to play in mainstreaming gender perspectives in peace and security. Among the world's top troop-contributors to United Nations peacekeeping, my country, Pakistan, for its part is not only training its Blue Helmets along those lines, but it has also increased the number of its female peacekeepers and met the United Nations target of 15 per cent women in our troop contributions to the United Nations — a target that we met with great pride.

Finally, as this is my last statement as the Permanent Representative of Pakistan in the Security Council, I would like to conclude by saying that giving women

a key role not only brings fresh perspectives but can also be a game-changer in contributing significantly to building a foundation for lasting and sustainable peace. I am the first woman from my country in 70 years to represent the Islamic Republic of Pakistan at the United Nations. It has been a great honour and privilege, especially to speak in this Chamber. I am confident it will not be another 70 years before Pakistan sends another woman to represent our great country.

**The President:** I am sure that Pakistan has heard that a woman must be the next Permanent Representative.

I now give the floor to the representative of Kazakhstan.

**Mr. Temenov (Kazakhstan):** I thank the South African presidency of the Security Council for convening today's important and timely open debate on women and peace and security. I express my warm appreciation to all the briefers as well as civil society representatives for their determined efforts aimed at championing the women and peace and security agenda. We also welcome the unanimous adoption of resolution 2493 (2019) today, which we fully endorse.

Despite commendable strides, we witness the lack of opportunities for women to assume leadership roles in times of conflict and peace alike. As the Secretary-General underscored in his recent report (S/2019/800), ensuring the meaningful participation of women in all phases of United Nations-backed peace processes remains a challenge. While, on the one hand, this is due to violent conflicts becoming more complex and fractured with the proliferation of non-State actors, there is, on the other hand, an existing gap between intentions and the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda in many key areas.

Supporting the six proposals in the Secretary-General's recent report, we make the following five additional recommendations.

First, greater focus should be given by troop- and police-contributing countries to providing special gender-sensitive training and to including more women in their national deployments to field missions. This approach must be accompanied by the appointment of gender specialists in every peacekeeping operation unit, including human rights, rule of law, security sector reform and humanitarian units.

Secondly, Member States should fully implement the Secretary-General's policy of zero tolerance for infractions by United Nations personnel.

Thirdly, efforts should be redoubled to support women in grass-roots organizations working for a culture of peace, community-based reconciliation and an end to all forms of impunity. Women must be given leadership training to raise political awareness and conduct peace education, as well as to engage in social reconstruction and integration activities.

Fourthly, women should be involved in the management and security of camps for refugees and internally displaced persons, especially women and girls, and assist in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process.

Fifthly, women should be increasingly engaged in the women and peace and security agenda for conflict prevention and resolution and in transformative change across the three pillars of the United Nations. Likewise, Member States should decisively mobilize the Council's Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security; the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund; the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network; and the Peacebuilding Commission's gender strategy.

Kazakhstan strongly believes that the education of women and girls, especially in rural areas, should be provided as a key to true progress on women's empowerment to bring about social transformation.

Last year, together with the European Union and the United Nations Development Programme, Kazakhstan launched an education programme to train Afghan women in Kazakh universities. This month, the first group of 30 women began an eight-month English-language course leading to admission to Bachelor's, Master's and technical programmes in four very eminent Almaty-based institutions. It is our principled position that Afghanistan should not be viewed as a source of challenges but as one of opportunities based on its economic integration into Central Asia and through connectivity and investments in regional infrastructure, trade and transit-transportation projects. As part of the country's rich human capital, women must be active in these processes, and we are privileged to be able to help. We encourage and appeal to donor countries to allocate more scholarships for women and girls from conflict-affected countries.

Kazakhstan is working to achieve the highest world standards in gender policy and strengthen the role of women in its sociopolitical and economic life by formulating new strong pro-women policies in its 2050 Strategy. The aim is to achieve gender parity in decision-making at all levels.

In response to the Secretary-General's call to achieve greater gender balance in peacekeeping operations, Kazakhstan has since 2018 begun deploying women peacekeepers to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara and United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. We plan to increase this number further.

In conclusion, Kazakhstan pledges its unfailing support to ensure that women can be powerful catalysts and agents of transformation on all fronts.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

**Mrs. Zappia (Italy):** I would like to commend South Africa for having convened this important debate. We truly appreciate your presence here today, Madam President. I also wish to thank the briefers for their insightful contributions.

Italy aligns itself with the statement to made by the representative of the European Union and with the statement to be made by the representative of Canada on behalf of 56 Member States.

As we approach the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we must redouble our efforts to fully implement the women and peace and security agenda, in order to fill the remaining important gaps that were clearly highlighted by the Secretary-General in his latest report (S/2019/800). Italy strongly supports the Secretary-General's call to action to the United Nations system, the Security Council and all Member States as well as the proposals he made.

We are implementing our third national action plan on women, peace and security, which was elaborated with the active engagement of civil society organizations, academia, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and trades unions, and received public funding from the Italian Parliament. The plan envisages a monitoring and evaluation mechanism and periodic reports on the state of its implementation. A similar approach is inspiring the drafting of our fourth national action plan.

In keeping with our commitment to empower women as vital agents for peace, fostering women's participation in mediation was one of the major priorities of our recent term on the Security Council and our presidency of the Group of Seven. In October 2017, we launched the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network. We are very proud of the results it has achieved so far: new members have joined; the first two local antennae, in Cyprus and Turkey, were established; training, capacity-building and networking opportunities were provided; and fruitful synergies with the United Nations, the African Union, other regional networks and various Member States were developed. The latest achievement is the creation of the Global Alliance of Regional Women Mediator Networks, which was successfully launched in New York on 26 September.

The next step is the organization in Rome of two events. On 3 and 4 December, in collaboration with UN-Women, we are hosting, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, an international seminar on strengthening women's participation in peace processes, to consider the roles and responsibilities of Member States. Indeed, alongside the United Nations, Member States have a responsibility to advance the full and effective participation of women in mediation and peace processes, and we would like to encourage further commitments to that end. The next day, in the framework of the Mediterranean Dialogues, we will hold the third session of the Women's Forum.

The protection and promotion of women's rights and the fight against all forms of violence and discrimination against women remain key priorities of Italy's international action. Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment also means fighting all forms of violence against women, and vice versa. Indeed, we attach the greatest importance to the fight against all forms of gender-based violence, in particular harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and child, early and forced marriages. We support several humanitarian initiatives aimed at preventing gender-based violence and protecting victims of abuse, as well as providing victims with education, livelihoods and other tools that allow them to become agents of change and build resilient communities. We also support with determination the important role of women human rights defenders in promoting and advocating the realization of all human rights.

Italy is stepping up its efforts to increase the number of female peacekeepers. Over the past few years, our Ministry of Defence has incorporated gender perspective into its policies and training curricula, appointed a Gender Advisor and established a Joint Council on Gender Perspectives. In order to increase the female presence within the armed forces and the Carabinieri, the Ministry of Defence has commissioned sociological research to identify the appeal of armed forces to young Italian females. This report should identify possible ways to increase the number of recruits.

Italy is devoting an increasing number of resources to implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. The funds allocated to our national action plan help civil society and academia to realize many interesting projects. Beyond the annual core contribution to UN-Women, this year the Italian Development Cooperation Agency provided financial support to the UN-Women flagship Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund established in 2014. This multi-donor global facility is designed to support women's and men's equal leadership and participation in shaping peace, security and humanitarian action. The Italian Development Cooperation Agency also provided ad hoc in-kind contribution through our Junior Professional Officers programme, under which we deployed a women, peace and security analyst to UN-Women in Kinshasa.

Italy has been a staunch supporter of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) since the first stages of its negotiation. The ATT is the first arms-regulation treaty to recognize the link between conventional arms transfers and gender-based violence, particularly with regard to the disproportionate impact of small arms and light weapons on women and girls. We strongly support the provision contained in article 7.4 as a concrete way to address the potential risk of serious acts of gender-based violence that could be generated by arms transfer.

Let me conclude by reaffirming that Italy will continue to play its part in matching commitments with actions, thereby making full implementation of the entire women and peace and security agenda a reality.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Luxembourg.

**Ms. Konieczny (Luxembourg)** (*spoke in French*): I thank the Secretary-General for his very comprehensive annual report (S/2019/800). I also wish to express our gratitude to South Africa for having convened this debate as part of its presidency of the Security Council.

Luxembourg fully aligns itself with the statement that will be made by the representative of the European Union.

The briefers who have enriched our debate today have described the reality well. It is clear that we must redouble our efforts in order to bridge the remaining gaps in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions. The aim is not only to overcome a series of obstacles to the effective participation of women in peace and security processes, but also to stem the deterioration of human rights worldwide. It is unacceptable that, in 2019, the rights of women and girls are still not sufficiently guaranteed, particularly when it comes to accessing justice, socioeconomic opportunities, adequate health care and protection of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

To date, 81 States Members of the United Nations have adopted national action plans on women and peace and security to implement resolution 1325 (2000). Let us build on the positive momentum engendered by the twentieth anniversary of the resolution in 2020 to remove obstacles and aim for more ambitious results. We urge all countries that have not yet done so to establish national action plans to implement resolution 1325 (2000) by next year. Only by joining forces can we achieve the objectives of the women and peace and security agenda.

Luxembourg is among those States that have recently adopted a national action plan. Our plan follows a comprehensive, government-wide approach. It sets out measures not only in the areas of diplomacy, defence, national security and justice, but also in the areas of health, education and development cooperation, with the aim of ensuring the full empowerment and emancipation of women and girls in the long term.

That comprehensive perspective is necessary in order to address the many cross-cutting obstacles faced by women and girls. In this regard, we welcome the fact that the report of the Secretary-General refers to the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, the Arms Trade Treaty and the gender strategy adopted by the Peacebuilding Commission in 2016.

We are convinced of the need to consider and implement the women and peace and security agenda in a broader context. All the rights of women and girls must be strengthened. From that perspective, the results of the review of the implementation of the Beijing

Declaration and Platform for Action on the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary — Beijing+25 — should also be taken into account.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the Principal Adviser on Gender and the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women and Peace and Security of the European External Action Service.

**Ms. Marinaki:** I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States. The candidate countries Turkey, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

We would like to thank the presidency of South Africa for choosing this topic for this year's debate and for so successfully initiating an early start to the stocktaking of implementation efforts ahead of next year's twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the landmark Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. We already have a robust framework of policies in place. More than words, what is needed now is decisive action.

The European Union (EU) has already adopted a new strategic approach on women and peace and security, as well as a revised action plan reaffirming our determination to pursue implementation of the women and peace and security agenda in a holistic fashion. Our strategic approach supports actions by Governments and civil society alike to engage, empower, protect and support women and girls through concrete commitments, with particular emphasis on our aim to achieve sustainable and lasting peace and security through the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.

In the European Union, we endeavour to lead by example. The key objectives of our action plan on women, peace and security are to increase women's leadership, to reinforce their full, equal and meaningful participation and to firmly emphasize the centrality of gender analysis and the mainstreaming of gender perspectives, the prevention of conflicts and conflict-related human rights violations, the promotion of full accountability policies and institutional reforms, the protection of women's and girls' rights, better access to justice and the promotion of institutional mechanisms

to help prevent all forms of sexual and gender-based violence and support effective relief and recovery. We insist on the urgency of ensuring full access to comprehensive, coordinated and quality services, including sexual and reproductive-health care, psychological support and legal counselling.

Our commitment to promoting regional and global leadership and practice in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda cannot be fulfilled without close cooperation with multilateral and regional organizations, civil society, academia, think tanks and the private sector. Tomorrow, we will take a step forward in terms of scaling up our international cooperation on women, peace and security at a regional level. Together with the United Nations, the African Union and NATO, and with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe as an observer, we will launch a joint initiative on regional acceleration of implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We believe that this unique initiative will, among other benefits, prove the advantages of multilateralism in moving the women and peace and security agenda forward faster.

The European Union is founded on the universal values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights. We note with concern the renewed efforts in many parts of the world to curtail the space for civil society. We appreciate the emphasis that the Secretary-General places in his report (S/2019/800) on women's organizations, peacebuilders and women human rights defenders as key political constituents who play pivotal roles in efforts relating to conflict prevention and resolution and peace maintenance.

We share the Secretary-General's grave concern at the increase in attacks and threats inflicted on those actors. This is unacceptable, and we will take further specific steps to protect them, including through sustainable funding and by paying particular attention to those who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and therefore are particularly at risk, namely, for example, persons with disabilities.

We continue to engage proactively in the promotion of women's leadership through bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, as well as through regular consultations in EU-led and EU-supported processes with women's organizations and women human rights defenders working in conflict-related settings, conflict prevention, preventing violent extremism and radicalization,

peace negotiations, mediation and peacebuilding, humanitarian action and development programmes. In our civilian and military missions and operations, we reiterate our commitment to a zero-tolerance policy towards misconduct and abuse, and we aim to improve our response to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment through a new European Union policy.

The instruments, strategies and political commitments are already in place. Our focus now should be on implementation, with more and better targeted action in order for us all to demonstrate the significant progress that is long overdue ahead of next year's important anniversaries. However, time is against us, and we must step up our game collectively. This mission is not for women and girls alone, but also for men and boys, who need to be fully engaged as positive agents for change.

Finally, in view of the upcoming twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) in 2020, the European Union reiterates its commitment to helping the United Nations in efforts aimed at achieving a faster and more ambitious implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. In this regard, we look forward to tightening our European Union-United Nations cooperation in all areas. Together we must work on better gender analysis, more sex-disaggregated data, improved gender expertise, greater leadership accountability and enhanced resources. The United Nations can always rely on the European Union's unwavering support, not only in New York but around the world.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia.

**Mr. Fernandez De Soto Valderrama** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the President of the Security Council for convening this open debate as we approach the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). I welcome the briefings by the Executive Director of UN-Women and the other briefers.

Colombia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Canada today on behalf of 56 Member States.

Today's meeting is undoubtedly a good opportunity to share best practices in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda and to take effective actions to ensure the participation

and leadership of women in the various aspects of peacebuilding.

Colombia has set an example in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), recognizing that, in order to achieve a peaceful and inclusive society based on the principles of legality, entrepreneurship and equity, political and economic empowerment and the promotion of women's leadership are indispensable. My Government is convinced that the participation of women in peacebuilding is a matter of priority that will contribute to achieving the transformations that our "Peace with legality" policy proposes to offer women, in particular those in rural areas: better living conditions that will translate into their economic autonomy, as well as the creation of working environments with decent conditions that break the cycles of violence that violate women's rights.

Accordingly, a high-level gender-equality unit was set up by the Vice-President of Colombia, Ms. Martha Lucía Ramírez Blanco, in January, in order to advance the implementation of the 51 gender indicators included in the framework plan for the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. Furthermore, the relevant entities have submitted their work plans, reporting a progress rate of 96 per cent in the 51 gender indicators. These plans are vehicles for the promotion of gender equality and will ensure more and better opportunities are created for women, especially those who have been victims of violence.

Another step forward is the National Reincorporation Council's technical round tables on gender, composed of women Government officials and ex-combatants of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo, which are held weekly to ensure that the gender component is included in each productive project approved in the framework of the reincorporation process.

President Duque is committed to advancing the participation of women in the leadership of the various political spheres. The Government has the first-ever cabinet with parity between men and women in the history of Colombia, and our national development plan includes a chapter dedicated to the promotion of women's equity, known as the Pact for Equity for Women, whose objectives include the establishment of a national women's network that will bring together policies, strategies and instruments adopted to ensure

that women's rights form part of the agenda of all branches of public authority.

The recent local elections saw the largest number of women candidates to date, which is an example that our efforts to ensure the participation of women in decision-making positions are bearing fruit. We will continue advancing along this path, recognizing that women and girls play a fundamental role in Colombia's peacebuilding journey.

Before concluding my statement, and in my capacity as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, I wish to inform members of the Council that the Commission has compiled and submitted a document in written form that we think will be important for today's debate, in line with our mandate as an advisory body to the Security Council, and which we know will be very useful for the Council.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

**Mr. Fifield (Australia):** I am pleased to address the Security Council for the first time, as the new Permanent Representative of Australia, on a topic of such vital importance as the women and peace and security agenda. We thank South Africa for its strong leadership on this agenda, and we welcome the Secretary-General's renewed commitment and call to action. We also welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the subject (S/2019/800) and commend the work of the experts who contributed to it.

Australia has a proud history of contributing to international peace and security. Since 1947, Australia has deployed troops to more than 60 operations overseas, including long-standing contributions to some of the oldest United Nations peacekeeping efforts. Today, all Australian Defence Force personnel deployed to fragile and conflict-affected contexts are trained in women and peace and security. We also have 166 Australian Defence Force gender advisers who can be deployed on military, humanitarian, relief and recovery operations.

The women and peace and security agenda reflects the fact that conflict continues to disproportionately affect women. Women's needs, contributions and agency in conflict and peacebuilding situations are too often an afterthought. The rights of women and girls underpin the fundamental components of the women and peace and security agenda. The convergence of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Platform

for Action and the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) provides an opportunity to highlight the intersections of these two important agendas.

Women and girls are central to the success of efforts to prevent, respond to and resolve conflict and to build peace. However, women are too often excluded from conflict resolution, peacebuilding and security operations. This situation puts peace and stability at risk and compounds negative outcomes for women and girls. To deliver on this agenda, we must address the root causes of gender inequality, including harmful norms and inequitable structures. We must promote and protect women's rights, including sexual and reproductive-health rights. We must commit to improving gender composition in our peacekeeping missions and our national security services. We must commit to the Secretary-General's sustaining peace agenda and its important actions on women and peace and security.

In Australia, the women and peace and security agenda is indivisible from our work on humanitarian response and disaster relief, on development assistance and on peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions. We have seen the difference that gender advisers have made in reconstruction efforts. It is life-changing. It is transformative to the way in which we do business.

Australia's second women and peace and security national action plan, to be released this year, is underpinned by a commitment to human rights, inclusion and women's meaningful participation in all aspects of peacebuilding, crisis response and prevention.

We look forward to continuing to work with the United Nations, its Member States and civil society to accelerate implementation of the women and peace and security agenda in 2020 and beyond.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Albania.

**Ms. Kadare (Albania):** Albania aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union. I wish to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

Despite the progress made to date and the development of an extensive normative framework on women, peace and security, implementation is lagging behind, while many barriers and challenges persist. As the Secretary-General puts it, there remains a stark contrast between rhetoric and reality. Women continue

to be insufficiently represented in peace processes and their involvement in the prevention and resolution of conflicts has not been guaranteed. In addition, we are very concerned by the finding of the Secretary-General's report that women are currently targeted by record high levels of political violence.

Nowhere is the gender gap more evident than in field missions, particularly United Nations peace operations. Despite clear evidence that the meaningful inclusion of women in peacekeeping missions improves their efficiency and effectiveness, women represent only 4.2 per cent of United Nations military personnel in the field.

We need international mechanisms that overcome the structural barriers that exist and ensure women's meaningful participation in all peace and security decision-making processes. We need to properly finance the women and peace and security agenda and invest in women peacebuilders. And we need men to stand up and support that cause as resolutely as women.

Albania has made significant progress in empowering women and achieving gender equality, including in the security sector. Albania currently has the fifth most gender-balanced Cabinet in the world, with 53 per cent women ministers, including the Minister of Defence. While women constitute 18 per cent of the total armed forces personnel, in June for the first time Albania sent two women to serve in a United Nations peacekeeping operation in South Sudan.

A year ago, we approved our first national action plan for resolution 1325 (2000). In order to ensure its full implementation, we have established a technical group, composed of gender focal points, which drafts periodical reports, as well as a political group, composed of high-level representatives from the Ministries for Foreign Affairs, Defence, Health and Social Protection, which monitors progress by assessing the reports. Every year the conclusions are discussed at the National Council on Gender Equality, with the aim of improving national policies as well as holding the leadership accountable.

Between October 2018 and May 2019, we organized, in close cooperation with non-governmental organizations, 12 training sessions for military and police staff, focused on gender issues in military/police operations, the handling of post-conflict situations and violence against women and girls.

The appointment and promotion of women to leading positions in the police and the army remain a priority. More generally, the Albanian Government has put a clear focus on policies aimed at boosting women's meaningful engagement in public life. We believe that fundamentally women's political empowerment can also significantly boost gender-equal decision-making of all kinds, including on peace and security issues. Albania will continue to champion the women and peace and security agenda, which has been included among the priorities of our chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in 2020, as well as of our bid for membership of the Security Council for the term 2022-2023.

In concluding, I would like to reiterate that women should not only be consulted. Women also need to be heard. Their expertise, experience and ability to understand the needs of communities should be acknowledged and have a real influence on all peace processes. The message that this debate sends to the world must be crystal clear: no lasting or sustainable peace can be achieved without women's meaningful engagement.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

**Ms. O'Neill (Canada):** I beg your indulgence, Mr. President, because today I will deliver two separate statements. The first statement is on behalf of 56 Member States representing all five regional groups of the United Nations, including South Africa, I note as a means of currying favour.

The group of countries thanks today's briefers for sharing their insights and experiences. We also thank members of the Security Council for their efforts to address more systematically women's human rights, gender equality and the gendered impact of conflict.

We commend South Africa for holding this open debate on the important theme of the full and effective implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. As the Secretary-General's most recent report (S/2019/800) on this item makes clear, implementation has made strides but persistent gaps and challenges remain, making implementation far from complete. The group emphasizes that meaningful action on women and peace and security requires committing to the full and effective implementation of all elements of the women and peace and security agenda and

recognizing their interrelated, inseparable and mutually reinforcing nature.

The group welcomes the recommendations and suggested actions described in the Secretary-General's report as a means to close gaps. We emphasize the importance of the ongoing monitoring and tracking of progress. The group would like to highlight the vital role played by civil society in all aspects of the agenda, including the monitoring of implementation.

Women remain continuously underrepresented and excluded from peace and security efforts, including peace negotiations. The group stresses that women's full, equal and meaningful participation must be in place in all aspects of peace and security, including all formal and informal decision-making processes at all levels. That must be safeguarded and is non-negotiable. We underscore the Secretary-General's emphasis on enhancing support and resources for women's meaningful participation in peace and security processes.

Political violence targeting women continues to be of grave concern, inhibiting women's ability to participate in public life and decision-making processes. The deliberate targeting of women peacebuilders and women human rights defenders remains a major concern. The group condemns in the strongest possible terms acts that constitute violations and abuses of international human rights law and violations of international humanitarian law and hinder the achievement of full gender equality, peace and sustainable development.

Ensuring women's full and meaningful participation in the security sector, including in peacekeeping operations, is another area where progress must still be made. While there have been some positive developments, progress is too slow. The group welcomes innovative measures taken to increase the full and meaningful participation of women in peacekeeping operations, including the uniformed gender parity strategy 2018–2028. The group also underlines the key role that mission leadership must play in integrating gender perspectives across all mission components. This must be a top priority for the United Nations leadership, troop- and police-contributing countries and all Member States.

Devastatingly, sexual and gender-based violence remains prevalent in situations of armed conflict worldwide. It continues to be a tactic of war and terror and must be addressed as a key security issue.



The group calls for further strengthening of justice and accountability measures to address sexual and gender-based violence in conflict. Recognizing the importance of providing timely assistance to survivors of sexual violence, the group urges United Nations entities and donors to provide non-discriminatory and comprehensive health services, including sexual and reproductive health, psychosocial, legal and livelihood support and other multisectoral services for survivors. In addition, we call on the Security Council to incorporate sexual and gender-based violence as a criterion for sanctions and to assess the gendered impacts of sanctions.

In closing, as other speakers have noted, 2020 will be a landmark year for the women and peace and security agenda, with the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) championed by Namibia. Now is not the time to be complacent with the status quo, but rather to be more ambitious and to address the gaps for further implementation of the women and peace and security agenda in its entirety. The Group calls on all United Nations entities, the Security Council, all Member States and all other stakeholders to use this opportunity to move from words to action and to ensure the full and effective implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

I would now like to switch to French and say a few words in my national capacity as the representative of Canada.

*(spoke in French)*

I would like to thank South Africa for having submitted resolution 2493 (2019) which was adopted today. As the President of the Council remarked this morning, it is nice to have a return to consensus. We salute South Africa's emphasis on full implementation. Like several others, we would like to have heard stronger language with regard to women human rights defenders, civil society and sexual and reproductive-health law. To achieve real results, what does implementation look like? For Canada, it is a question of transforming current methods of collaboration.

*(spoke in English)*

The first of three ways Canada is doing that is through partnership. The women and peace and security agenda demands that we break out of institutional and social silos. Within Canada, for instance, our national action plan is a partnership among the nine ministries

and agencies, including many with primarily domestic mandates. We recognize that peace and security are not just foreign policy or defence issues. Women around the world face intersecting forms of violence and discrimination, including in Canada, and particularly among indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people.

Partnerships based on mutual respect with other countries are equally important. In 2020, Canada will co-chair the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network with Uruguay, building on the excellent work of the current Chair, Namibia. Through the Elsie Initiative on Women in Peace Operations, Canada partners with Ghana, Zambia and Senegal to assess and address barriers and to design bold interventions to make a difference for women in police and military institutions. Canada's Chief of Defence staff is also now chairing a women, peace and security-focused United Nations network of his counterparts and invites all Chiefs of Defence staff to join.

It could not be clearer — no country and no region has a monopoly on good ideas. By working with partners, we look forward to the day when, instead of saying we need to do more, we can say we did it and it worked.

The second way that Canada is transforming how we work is by funding those who need it most. The hard work of implementation is done by women's rights organizations that are underresourced. Movements need funding. We create barriers to implementation when we demand that transformational work happen on short funding cycles and sparse budgets. That is why Canada doubled its commitment to the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund. It is why earlier this year we launched the Equality Fund to bring in partners, including the private sector, to provide unprecedented levels of sustainable resources to women's organizations and movements. And that is why we made a three-year \$650 million commitment to closing the gaps in support for sexual and reproductive health.

Sexual and reproductive health is not a bargaining chip. We cannot use women's lives and their bodily autonomy as language to be negotiated away. Sexual and reproductive health and rights is core to the agenda and must continue to be as we recommit our efforts to full implementation.

Finally, we must be intentional about inclusion. Where are the young people, the indigenous women, the LGBTQI communities, among others? Frankly

speaking, the price of exclusion is too costly for us to continue with the status quo. The Security Council consistently says that women deserve a seat at the table and yet there are crises around the world where women are shut out from decisions that affect their lives. For long enough, we have demanded that women justify their participation, that they provide the data and explain their special contributions. It is time to put the burden of justification on those who continue to exclude half the population.

Civil society is a true leader in making implementation inclusive. Its groups are not just stakeholders but equal partners and are the ones showing us, in practice, how to push back on the push back. In this spirit, Canada formalized our relationship with civil society through our national action plan and continue to look to them to hold us accountable. In the light of today's resolution, we especially thank the NGO Working Group for bringing the remarkable Alaa Salah and, through her, the voices of Sudanese women to the Council and for the Group's leadership in pushing us to sustain our shared vision of the agenda and reminding us that our gains are still precious.

If elected to the Security Council in 2021, Canada will continue to champion the full women and peace and security agenda and work both inside and outside this Chamber to make the transformational aspirations of the agenda a reality. We must do that work now, and we must do it together.

**Ms. Plepyté** (Lithuania): Allow me to start by commending South Africa as the President of the Security Council for the month of October for convening today's important debate. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (S/2019/800), recommendations and encouragement. Lithuania aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and delivered on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security.

Resolution 1325 (2000) was a milestone in our collective efforts to advance gender equality around the globe. However, as we are preparing to mark the twentieth anniversary of the resolution next year, we still have miles to go on the uneven and challenging road of implementation, which means that, despite achievements over the past 19 years, the objectives of the resolution have not been fully achieved, and significant work remains to be done.

Violence against women and girls, attacks on their human rights continue to occur in conflict and post-conflict settings. Representation of women at decision-making levels and inclusion of women in prevention, management and resolution of conflicts remain insufficient. It is equally worrying that political will is not always consistent and that the international community often falls short of its ambitions. We must not allow for any regression and backtracking on this important agenda. We must therefore consolidate all political will to maintain course towards goals that were set almost 20 years ago.

We were encouraged and welcomed recent decisions made by the Security Council to expand the designation criteria for sanctioning individuals who perpetrate sexual and gender-based violence in the context of armed conflict. We would like to see this practice developed further so that sexual and gender-based violence becomes a standard element of sanctions regimes.

The protection and promotion of human rights for all women and girls and their empowerment is a long-standing priority for Lithuania. My country remains firmly committed to the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. We are fully aware that the scale and complexity of the implementation of the agenda requires coherent and comprehensive efforts. In this respect, the pivotal role of civil society, including women's organizations, should be fully recognized. We express our concerns for the increase in attacks and threats against civil society, particularly against women human rights defenders, whose safety and protection are essential, as they are our key allies in moving the women and peace and security agenda forward.

Lithuania is currently working on its second national action plan, wherein the means and instruments for the continuous implementation of the women and peace and security agenda are foreseen. While drafting the plan, we are working closely with the representatives of the civil society. We do not merely consult; we are drafting the plan together. We believe that it is vital to engage and cooperate with experts, many of whom we find in civil society. Civil society can also help us look for innovative ways to promote the women and peace and security agenda and address numerous challenges. Lithuania supports such high-impact initiatives aimed at searching for innovative ways to move forward as the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund. My country

supports the work of the Fund and has just allocated another voluntary contribution to its important work.

Lithuania remains a strong advocate for the integration of gender perspective in all aspects of peacekeeping operations. Increased numbers of women peacekeepers, deployment of women's protection and gender advisers, and human rights and gender-awareness training have all proven successful and should be further advanced. Nationally, my country is striving to deploy peacekeeping troops with greater gender balance and continues to encourage female police and military women to apply. Mandatory predeployment trainings in Lithuania on gender sensitivity, preventing sexual exploitation and identifying and responding to indicators of conflict-related sexual violence have moved beyond abstract concepts towards more practical, scenario-based learning. We encourage all troop-contributing countries to ensure that predeployment and in-mission trainings meet the highest standards of the United Nations guidelines on gender sensitivity and sexual violence.

Despite some positive trends, the progress made in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda remains too slow, and further work is needed to achieve our objectives. This debate is an important contribution to this effort and serves as an opportunity to share good practices, articulate achievements, identify barriers and put forward bold proposals. Ahead of the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), we need to move forward in a steadfast manner by leaving no one behind.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

**Mr. García Moritán** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the delegation of Canada on behalf of a group of countries.

We thank South Africa for having convened this debate. In the context of the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the post of the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Argentina wishes to reiterate its support for the work that has been accomplished.

Achieving gender equality and the full empowerment of women and girls in all their diversity, as well as ensuring that gender becomes a cross-cutting issue across the peace and security agenda, are sine qua

non conditions to effectively prevent conflicts, find peaceful solutions and build sustainable peace. In that respect, we must redouble our efforts to increase the representation, participation and leadership of women throughout all peacebuilding and conflict-prevention processes, at all levels of decision-making.

Sexual violence in conflict is one of the most appalling and terrible violations of human dignity and represents an impediment to the greater involvement of women in conflict resolution and the building of a sustainable peace. We therefore wish to strengthen our commitment to the prevention and eradication of and accountability for such crimes, placing victims at the heart of our action and pooling our efforts to address the underlying structural causes that make women so vulnerable and puts them at risk.

Concerning measures aimed at the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), this year the Ministry of Defence of Argentina trained 450 military staff using instruments related to gender and gender-related violence. Anonymous surveys were also carried out to identify situations in which rights were being violated, and the results were used in the context of the trainings. These surveys made it possible to update, on an ongoing basis, the framework of the training module for such personnel.

In order to strengthen the role of women in regional peacebuilding, in August the Argentine Minister submitted to representatives and ambassadors of the Southern Cone, during the second meeting of the Federal Network of Mediators, a proposal to establish a regional network of female mediators in the Southern Cone so as to enhance and increase the resources available for the training of female mediators, as well as promote the empowerment and significant participation of women in decision-making forums.

To conclude, I wish to stress that we must guarantee ongoing access to safe education during conflict. This is a fundamental goal that will contribute to shielding women and girls from the risks of armed conflict. I should therefore like to draw attention to the significant role of the Safe Schools Declaration, an initiative led by Norway and Argentina, and I invite States to endorse the Declaration, a non-binding instrument that also contributes to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Viet Nam.

**Mr. Dang** (Viet Nam): I wish first to thank the South African presidency for having convened this very important open debate and for focusing the debate on the implementation aspect of the women and peace and security agenda.

Twenty years have passed, and extraordinary work has been done in transforming the perception of the role of women in peace processes. However, we are concerned that women continue to be underrepresented at all stages of peace processes and remain vulnerable during and after conflict. Much needs to be done to fully translate the objectives of the agenda into tangible results on the ground. Moving forward, we wish to highlight the following points.

First, it is necessary to strengthen and sustain the political will of Member States. Unwavering commitments and concrete actions on the part of all nations are decisive factors for the success of the agenda. Cooperation among the United Nations and regional organizations could help to enhance its implementation. Within the United Nations system, effective coordination and coherence is essential, taking into account the cross-cutting nature of gender equality and women's empowerment. The General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, each with a unique role, need to work together in a complementary manner and in compliance with their respective mandates.

Secondly, we strongly emphasize the participation of women at every stage of peace processes, including post-conflict reconstruction. The aspect we want to take as an example is mine action, which has often been overlooked in our discussions. In Viet Nam, an estimated 800,000 tons of residual explosive remnants of war remain, severely affecting millions of people, particularly women and children. To highlight the problem, the Government of Viet Nam pays special attention to the participation and contribution of women in mine action, as women are the best educators in terms of imparting knowledge to their children, their families and the wider community. The Vietnamese Women's Union plays an important role in this regard. With the support of international partners, the Union has actively engaged women in the process of raising awareness on mine risks, giving assistance to victims and restoring mined lands to help ensure the safety of and development for local people and sustain their livelihoods.

Last but not least, we call for greater attention to be paid to monitoring and measuring our progress. A holistic approach to the implementation of the agenda needs a comprehensive set of indicators to assess its performance. Such indicators were developed 10 years ago but have not been used to their full advantage. The upcoming anniversary is a good opportunity to find ways and means to bring the indicators into full play.

In conclusion, Viet Nam reaffirms our strong commitment to the women and peace and security agenda and will work closely with Member States and other relevant stakeholders towards a meaningful commemoration of the agenda next year.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

**Mrs. Nusseibeh** (United Arab Emirates): I thank the Republic of South Africa for having convened today's annual open debate on women and peace and security, a topic of the utmost priority for the United Arab Emirates, as it should be for us all given the stark evidence of the gaps that remain, as outlined in the Secretary-General's report (S/2018/800). We were pleased to also co-sponsor resolution 2493 (2019), which you, Mr. President, proposed today.

There is widespread recognition of the fact that when women meaningfully participate in peace processes, peace is 35 per cent more likely to last 15 years or longer. Despite this recognition and an abundance of conflicts around the world, not enough countries have taken the necessary steps towards implementation. Between 1990 and 2017, women constituted only 2 per cent of mediators, 8 per cent of negotiators and 5 per cent of witnesses and signatories in all major peace processes. We believe that these statistics must be improved in favour of women and girls, and not just at the finish line. How do we do that?

First, the inclusion of women in peace processes should not just be a box-ticking exercise of how many women are present at the final agreement. Women should be an integral part of both formal and informal negotiations from start to finish and in the aftermath of conflict resolution so as to ensure that women are not excluded at critical points of a peace process, including in the initial backroom negotiations on how the process itself will run. Early planning, based on gender-sensitive conflict and political analysis, must inform all peace and security interventions.

Secondly, there is no substitute for financing and visibility in the procedures and budgets of security and peace actors. That is the most tangible way that Member States can reflect meaningful change. The United Arab Emirates strongly supports that a minimum of 15 per cent of all United Nations security and peace spending explicitly targets gender equality and women's empowerment, and we encourage all donors to go beyond that required minimum. We further call for prioritizing financing mechanisms that specifically address the important role of women in humanitarian and conflict responses. That could be done through mainstreaming gender considerations in the provision of post-conflict assistance or disbursing funds for that specific purpose.

We therefore support meaningful budget line items for protection in the humanitarian and peace work of the United Nations, in line with the outcomes of the Oslo Conference on Ending Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Humanitarian Crises, which we co-hosted in May. We also strongly support the mandatory application of gender and age markers across all United Nations programming.

Thirdly, we simply physically need to increase the number of women in peacekeeping operations, as everyone has said again and again. How do we do that in practice? An example from the United Arab Emirates is our partnership with UN-Women to organize a military and peacekeeping training programme for 134 women from the Arab region this year to equip women with the skills and networks to serve and lead. As a result of the success of the programme, the United Arab Emirates recently announced a second round for mid-January 2020, which aims to widen the scope to also include women trainees from Africa and Asia. The programme will support regional strategies in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda and support the training of women in the military and peacekeeping, not only in our region but globally, as well.

Fourthly, electoral reforms around the world should be prioritized to enable women safe political participation as voters and candidates, including the use of quotas, where needed, as we have done in the United Arab Emirates, resulting in a 50-50 gender balance in our recent parliamentary elections.

Lastly, we believe that a focus on the inclusion of women in post-conflict reconstruction will have a multiplier effect and needs to remain a priority. I am

therefore pleased to announce that, on the sidelines of today's debate, the United Arab Emirates and the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security launched a panel discussion series on the role of women in post-conflict reconstruction, one of the core dimensions of resolution 1325 (2000). Drawing on the findings of that collaboration, at this time next year, we will release an action plan for the United Nations community, with a shortlist of some key reforms needed to ensure that gender is mainstreamed across United Nations services to post-conflict and recovering communities.

As we have heard today, implementing the women and peace and security agenda is not only morally imperative for women's empowerment and gender equality, it is also critical to preventing conflict and building sustainable peace. Women are our first responders, our community and family pillars and agents of change. The United Arab Emirates remains committed to that vision. In line with that vision, I would like to note that the inclusion of women from conflict zones, particularly youth, in briefings on relevant issues is of great importance for the women and peace and security agenda and would demonstrate a real commitment to it here in the Chamber.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

**Mr. De Souza Monteiro (Brazil):** I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's important debate on women and peace and security. Let me also thank the briefers for their insights and reflections.

The global study conducted by UN-Women in 2015, put together in the context of the fifteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), came to the conclusion that a peace agreement is 35 per cent more likely to last at least 15 years if women were a part of the negotiations. Over the past years, women have achieved great success in waging peace, every time they were given the opportunity. There are important lessons to be learned from the engagement in peace processes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, Colombia and many other places. Evidence shows that belligerents often trust women to be honest brokers in peace processes, in ways that help bridge divergent views. In a number of cases, women peacekeepers are the only ones able to make contact with the local female population, which provides United Nations missions with precious information on

how to better protect civilians, as well as on how to fulfil mission mandates as a whole.

We must also recall that women made an invaluable contribution during the elaboration of the Charter of the United Nations, perhaps the most long-standing peace effort of all time. Brazil takes pride in the fact that one of the four women delegates who took part in the San Francisco Conference was a Brazilian biologist and politician, Bertha Lutz, who signed the Charter on Brazil's behalf.

In March 2017, following the Council's recommendations, Brazil joined a growing group of nations that have adopted a national action plan on women and peace and security. By adopting our action plan, which was renewed in 2019 for an additional four years, we committed to pursuing clear guidelines in support of the full participation of women in international peace efforts. Among other commitments that have translated into policy, the plan has been instrumental increasing the proportion of women military and police officers in our contribution to United Nations peacekeeping. In the same spirit, Brazil welcomes the priority attached by the Secretariat and the Department of Peace Operations to that objective, most notably to the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028, which is part of the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative.

As a long-standing troop- and police-contributing country, Brazil is entirely committed to the success of that strategy. While we are proud to have taken concrete steps towards fulfilling the targets for women military and police officers, we recognize the need to address the structural challenges resulting from the fact that only recently have women taken on combatant roles in our armed forces. Brazil is willing to work closely with the Department of Peace Operations to find ways to overcome that challenge together. As an example of its commitment to increasing the participation of Brazilian women in peacekeeping operations, Brazil will host the 2021 United Nations Female Military Officers Course. It is the first time the course will be offered in the Americas. Moreover, our integrated peacekeeping training centre has also been developed and will soon host a course aimed primarily at non-combatant military, with a view to preparing more female officers.

Another commitment from Brazil's national action plan is the inclusion of the women and peace and security perspective in cooperation projects in

peacebuilding contexts. That guideline has been essential, for instance, in framing our engagement in the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). Brazil commends and encourages efforts to better integrate the women and peace and security agenda into United Nations peacebuilding efforts in the field. The adoption of the Peacebuilding Commission's 2016 gender strategy was a positive step in that direction, while also making the PBC the first-ever intergovernmental body to adopt such a document. We welcome the consideration of the women and peace and security dimension in the engagement of the PBC in country configurations, as well as in the elaboration of programmes financed by the Peacebuilding Fund.

We also fully support calls to enhance the role of the Peacebuilding Commission in discussions about women and peace and security. Last June, the PBC was briefed by Brazilian Commander Marcia Braga, recipient of the United Nations Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award for 2019 for her work in the Central African Republic. As a follow-up to Commander Braga's briefing, the PBC advised the Security Council to encourage exchanges by the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic with women leaders in local communities, as a means to better understand violations, enhance the Mission's early-warning capabilities and provide a more tailored approach to the protection of civilians.

In conclusion, as we approach the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), the time is right for deeper reflection on the unmistakable progress the international community has made on the women and peace and security agenda over the past two decades. However, we must also look ahead in order to keep up the momentum and make even further strides. Going forward, Brazil would like to see the Peacebuilding Commission play a greater role in the context of the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). The women and peace and security agenda has always provided us with more material for discussion than the Security Council could possibly process. In the PBC, on the other hand, we could, for instance, organize a women and peace and security week aimed at taking stock of the numerous lessons learned and good practices emanating from women's engagement in peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Austria.

**Mr. Kickert** (Austria): We thank South Africa for convening this open debate on the full and effective implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, which we also view as the starting point for the run-up to the twentieth anniversary of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000) next October.

Austria aligns itself with the statements delivered by the observer of the European Union and by the representative of Canada, on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women and Peace and Security.

Austria has been a vocal supporter of the women and peace and security agenda ever since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). We are constantly working for the promotion and realization of the full and effective implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. We are doing so at the national level, through international cooperation with partner countries and civil society, as well as through our support for the United Nations, notably UN-Women.

We welcome the Secretary-General's report (S/2019/800) and its recommendations. We note with concern that agreed commitments have not been matched by action. Let me refer to just a few examples: the meaningful participation of women in peace negotiation processes is still a distant reality in many conflict regions; violence against women, and in particular women human rights defenders, is on the rise; and sexual and gender-based violence continues to be used by conflict parties as a weapon of war.

We thank Ms. Lina Ekomo and Ms. Alaa Salah for their truly moving and impressive testimonies this morning. We applaud their courage and that of all women fighting for peace every day. We hear their call and that of the Secretary-General telling us to focus on the full implementation of all aspects of the women and peace and security agenda.

Let me briefly underline three components of Austria's engagement in the full and effective implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

First, as financial resources often fall short of political commitments and funds often fail to reach the most vulnerable, including women's organizations working to prevent violent conflict and build peace, we are a proud donor and supporter of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund to support local women's networks and engage in conflict prevention

and peacebuilding, inter alia in Iraq and, more recently, in Uganda.

Secondly, Austria deems the role of civil society to be paramount to the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, both as actors on the ground and as monitors of the overall implementation of the agenda in the Security Council. In that regard, as part of a series of events leading up to the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), Austria is proud to be hosting a global civil society forum on women and peace and security in Vienna in early 2020.

Lastly, Austria is endeavouring to increase the number of Austrian uniformed women in peace operations, and we will also foster a gender perspective among all deployed personnel. We have been deploying gender advisers to the peace operations of regional organizations, including the European Union, NATO and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, as well as other United Nations peacekeeping operations. Austria will continue to deploy qualified experts in this important domain in the future.

More than ever, it is our conviction that women are agents of change for peace and security. As we look forward to the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), let us actively follow up on our pledges in order to further advance the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda through a collective effort.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

**Mr. Edrees** (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like at the outset to thank South Africa for convening this important meeting and giving us the opportunity to speak before the Council. I also commend South Africa for its efforts in presiding over the Council for the month of October. I thank the Secretary-General for his valuable briefing and report (S/2019/800) and all of the briefers for their insights, which have served to enrich our discussion today.

Next year will mark the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the historical resolution 1325 (2000). That gives us the chance to reflect on what we have achieved so far in implementing the women and peace and security agenda and other relevant subsequent Council resolutions. With respect to the participation of women at all decision-making levels, which is a key pillar of Egypt's 2030 vision for the empowerment of

women, I should like to briefly address the national efforts we are making to promote the role of women in the area of peace and security.

The Egyptian Government adopted an initiative in May with a view to developing an integrated national action plan on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). That plan is aimed at ensuring the full participation of women in achieving peace and security. To that end, Egypt is currently deploying 48 Egyptian women — and working to increase that number — among our forces participating in United Nations peacekeeping missions in various parts of the world. In that context, Egypt fully endorses the Secretary-General's agenda of a zero-tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse. Egypt was one of the first countries to join the Secretary-General's initiative to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse. We also joined the Women, Peace and Security National Focal Points Network and the voluntary compact on preventing and addressing sexual exploitation and abuse.

Since 2017, Egypt has been proposing that the General Assembly adopt a resolution to include an agenda item on this issue. We have constantly promoted a comprehensive approach to responding to the crimes of sexual exploitation and abuse at the level of the United Nations system as a whole. We also stress the importance of ensuring accountability for perpetrators of those crimes and providing all necessary assistance to their victims. In that context and for the sake of prevention, the Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding provides training courses for military and police components, including for Egyptians, Arabs and Africans who contribute to United Nations peacekeeping missions, in cooperation with specialized United Nations agencies, such as UN-Women and the United Nations Population Fund. Those courses provide military and police components with the information and necessary training to deal with sexual abuse and exploitation in conflict regions. They also raise awareness of participants on the various aspects of the women and peace and security agenda.

Egypt has placed the implementation of women and peace and security agenda at the top of its list of priorities during its current chairmanship of the African Union. We are working to launch programmes with a view to building the capacities of brotherly African nations through cooperation with relevant African organizations, including the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation,

the League of Arab States and relevant regional organizations, in implementing the women and peace and security agenda. We are also working on launching an Arab women mediators network in order to ensure the integration of all efforts at the national, regional and international levels.

In conclusion, Egypt is committed to pursuing its serious and relentless work to ensure the empowerment of women at the economic, social and political levels, as we firmly believe that women play a robust, effective and necessary role in transformation and building processes towards the achievement of peace, security and sustainable development. I wish to close by once again thanking you, Mr. President, and South Africa for convening this meeting and giving us the opportunity to speak before the Council.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Qatar.

**Ms. Al-Thani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*):** At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on having convened this important open debate.

Despite the achievements of the international community in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, the statistics and recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General before us today (S/2019/800) make it abundantly clear that, regrettably, we are still falling short of our objectives. There is a pressing need to intensify international efforts to overcome all the challenges that currently stand in the way of the effective involvement of women in peace and security activities.

Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the State of Qatar has been working hard to support the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda at all levels, together with our support for all peace efforts. We contributed to the global review of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), which concluded that the involvement of women in peace operations has a lasting and positive impact on promoting and sustaining peace and on preventing conflict. In that context, we need to redouble our efforts to implement the recommendations contained in that important study, as well as the provisions of all the resolutions pertaining to the women and peace and security agenda. Such action will contribute directly to achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



The commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) represents an important opportunity for us to mobilize global action towards the implementation of every aspect of the very extensive normative framework surrounding the women and peace and security agenda. It is also important on this occasion to consolidate our efforts to implement women and peace and security agenda and the youth and peace and security agenda, which was adopted with resolution 2250 (2015), which referred for the first time to the vital contribution of youth to lasting peace.

For the sake of unifying efforts and demonstrating the linkage between the two resolutions on the ground, on the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015) and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the State of Qatar will host the second International Symposium on Youth Participation in Peace Processes. The Symposium will focus on the participation of young women in peace processes, both in panel discussions and by ensuring gender parity in the course of the preparation for all the Symposium's phases. We are currently working with the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth with a view to making an effective contribution to the implementation of the two resolutions on the ground. The Symposium will also take place against the backdrop of the first International Symposium on Youth Participation in Peace Processes, which the State of Qatar co-hosted with Finland and Colombia in March.

My country intends to do its utmost to strengthen the role of women in peacemaking through practical, pragmatic actions. For example, we sponsored inter-Afghan dialogue on peace and security and ensured that Afghani women were included in the peace discussions. The Doha Intra-Afghan Peace Conference, which we successfully co-hosted with the Federal Republic of Germany in July, enjoyed the participation of distinguished Afghani women in its various meetings and groups, including the Government, the Peace Council, civil society and youth.

In conclusion, we emphasize the commitment of the State of Qatar to maintaining our cooperation with all relevant parties involved in the women and peace and security agenda at the national, regional and international levels. We also intend to provide the support necessary to ensure the implementation of the agenda on the ground, which will contribute

to achieving lasting peace and security throughout the world.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Namibia.

**Mr. Gertze** (Namibia): Namibia thanks you most sincerely, Mr. President, for organizing this important debate today. We are encouraged, as always, by the overwhelming support for this open debate. We also welcome the Security Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2493 (2019), the tenth resolution on women and peace and security.

We are fast approaching the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). The historic mindset shift towards finally recognizing the immeasurable and constructive role that women can play globally in the crucial pursuit of peace and security set us on a great path of hope and progress. While we appreciate that we have made some progress over the past 19 years, Namibia, as an initiator of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000), notes with a sense of disappointment that there are still too few women peacekeepers in the world today. Currently, only 4.2 per cent of the military personnel in United Nations peacekeeping missions are women. Namibia has peacekeepers, both military and police personnel, deployed in three missions: the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. I am happy to report that Namibia has female police officers deployed in all three missions.

Another important issue that needs to be addressed is the greater inclusion of women in conflict prevention, peace processes and mediation. We welcome the formation of women mediator networks, notably the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation, which act as a direct response to current obstacles to women's meaningful participation and influence in all aspects of peace processes.

Women continue to be underrepresented in arms control and disarmament forums, as highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2019/800). In 2017, only one-quarter of the participants in multilateral disarmament meetings at the United Nations were women. There is an urgent need to mainstream the women and peace and security agenda in disarmament.

As of September, 82 countries had adopted and were implementing national action plans on women and peace and security. These plans provide a valuable tool for States to implement their commitments to the women and peace and security agenda and to detail their actions and obligations under the Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security, of which there are now 10. Namibia launched its first national action plan earlier this year. Our plan is forward-looking and incorporates emerging issues, trends and threats to peace and security, such as climate change, cybersecurity and the traffic of persons, while also looking at how those issues impact the overall women and peace and security agenda.

Regional and subregional organizations must also take stronger measures to ensure that the women and peace and security agenda is implemented at those levels. Namibia welcomes the launch of the African Union Continental Results Framework for Monitoring and Reporting on the Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa. We strongly believe that monitoring, reporting and accountability are important tools to ensure the post-2020 meaningful implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

In April, Namibia organized the third meeting of the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network. The Network enables closer coordination among Member States and facilitates the annual sharing and exchange of best practices and lessons learned. At the meeting, participants discussed the importance of having a youthful voice on this agenda and how the convergence of the women and peace and security agenda and disarmament can be translated into national actions at the local, national and regional levels. The meeting underscored that access to information, youth networks and the use of technology, including social media, can play a crucial role in promoting and supporting the active engagement of women and young people in peace and security. A total of 85 countries are currently members of the Network and we strongly encourage all countries to join. We look forward to handing over the chairmanship of the Network to Canada and Uruguay next year.

Next year, the international community will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). That should be an opportunity for Member

States to outline and/or renew commitments made to ensure that women are adequately represented in peace and security matters. In that regard, I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate Namibia's intention to establish an international women's peace centre in Windhoek. We are diligently consulting with our various stakeholders and partners in establishing this centre, as we intend to launch it in 2020 as part of our commitment. We look forward to welcoming everyone to the centre and to hearing the commitments of other Member States for 2020.

**The President:** I now give the floor to Ms. Darisuren.

**Ms. Darisuren:** I am glad to be here today to talk to the Council about the preparations of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for the approaching twentieth anniversary of the women and peace and security agenda.

As the world's largest regional security organization, with a long track record on conflict prevention and management, we in the OSCE see the women and peace and security agenda as a fundamental element in our conflict toolbox. The OSCE study on the progress made in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda in the OSCE region will be published early next year. I would like to highlight some of its findings.

Let me start with the creation of national action plans in our region. Following a global trend, the number of national action plans in the OSCE region has continued to grow steadily during the past five years. Over 60 per cent of OSCE participating States now have a national action plan. These plans continue to identify women's participation in peace and security as a main priority. We see a trend whereby recently developed national action plans are responding to the recommendations made in *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice and Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000)*, which called for more attention to be paid to conflict prevention. It is essential that the women and peace and security action plans recognize that addressing deeper, underlying root causes of conflict, such as prevailing structural inequality, which particularly affects women and girls, is crucial to any conflict prevention effort.

The lack of budgeted funding continues to pose a major challenge to the implementation of national action plans. Our assessment shows that over 80 per

cent of the current national action plans make no or only minimal reference as to how the implementation of action plans will be funded.

In 2020, the OSCE will offer a series of events to provide platforms to Government and civil society representatives and our international partner organizations to discuss the findings and recommendations of our study and develop ways forward to implement the women and peace and security agenda. Regional organizations are well suited to supporting the national-level implementation of the women and peace and security agenda in coordinating, setting agendas and carrying out initiatives that support the work at the national level.

I would like to say a few brief words on OSCE initiatives that provide data, tools and capacity-building in this field. The OSCE-led survey on the well-being and safety of women in South-East and Eastern Europe illustrates how regional organizations can assist in promoting the women and peace and security agenda. By making available data on the prevalence and patterns of violence against women, the survey helps to highlight the need to respond to and prevent violence. That in turn can help States to strengthen measures to combat violence against women.

In December, the OSCE will launch a toolkit on the inclusion of women in effective peace processes that will complement the efforts of the United Nations and other organizations to address the unacceptably low level of women's participation in decision-making at peace tables. The OSCE also offers concrete tailored capacity-building for security service actors

in our participating States. The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights has supported the armed forces of Ukraine in developing a set of recommendations to military commanders. These are aimed at assisting them in efforts to foster a gender-sensitive institutional culture that addresses discrimination, harassment and abuse. Furthermore, we have provided recommendations on measures that could be used to help prevent gender-based violence in the families of armed force personnel.

In Central Asia, the OSCE has provided long-term support to border management and services in Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, including on building skills and knowledge on how to gender mainstream the work of border services. A training workshop on gender aspects of border management was conducted jointly for Turkmen and Afghan law enforcement officers. We look forward to continuing to work with our Government and civil society partners to develop ways to address the remaining challenges in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

**The President:** There are a number of speakers remaining on the list for this meeting. I intend to suspend the meeting now, to be resumed at a date and time to be announced in the month of November, under the presidency of the United Kingdom.

On behalf of the Council, I would like to thank the interpreters, information and publicity officials, engineers and security officers for donating a total of 23 minutes to advance the cause of women and peace and security.

*The meeting was suspended at 6.05 p.m.*