



Security Council

Seventy-eighth year

9276th meeting

Tuesday, 7 March 2023, 3 p.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Ms. Dlhovo (Mozambique)

Members:

Albania	Mr. Stastoli
Brazil	Mr. Muniz Pinto Sloboda
China	Ms. Hang Su
Ecuador	Ms. Mendez Gruezo
France	Ms. Chassot
Gabon	Mr. Nanga
Ghana	Ms. Kesse Antwi
Japan	Mrs. Shino
Malta	Mr. Ciscaldi
Russian Federation	Mr. Kashaev
Switzerland	Mr. Hauri
United Arab Emirates	Ms. Alrahma
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland ..	Ms. O'Kelly
United States of America	Ms. Trinh

Agenda

Women and peace and security

Towards the 25th anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000)

Letter dated 24 February 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2023/146)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room AB-0601 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).

23-06829 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



The meeting resumed at 3.10 p.m.

The President: I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than three minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

I now call on the Minister for Social Development of South Africa.

Ms. Zulu (South Africa): I would like to commend Mozambique for convening this important meeting on the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda on the eve of International Women's Day.

We meet at a time when the international community is at a crossroads, grappling with a number of global challenges, including persistent armed conflicts and enduring underdevelopment in many parts of the world. Unfortunately, those challenges have a destabilizing effect on women and have the potential to reverse some of the gains made in the advancement of the rights of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Despite that, we note that significant progress has been made in advancing the women and peace and security agenda since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), over 22 years ago, and other related Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security. As a result of those resolutions and the global focus on women and peace and security, there have been a variety of efforts and initiatives in the form of gender strategies, gender quotas, justice and accountability measures for crimes against women, international and regional women and peace and security special envoys, global networks and national action plans — all aimed at promoting the women and peace and security agenda. Those pertinent initiatives have led to the increased participation and representation of women in peace processes, peacebuilding and peacekeeping. Some efforts have also facilitated access to justice for victims and survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. However, we recognize that more remains to be done to realize the agenda in its entirety. In that regard, let me outline some of the areas that we believe require more attention as we ponder the women and peace and security agenda beyond 2025.

First, we believe that the New Agenda for Peace proposed by the Secretary-General provides an opportunity to further the women and peace and security agenda. That is because the changing nature of conflicts and emerging threats to international

peace and security may require that we rethink how to advance the agenda.

Secondly, we need to strengthen existing partnerships and create new ones. In that regard, South Africa believes that there is room for improvement in fostering closer relations between regional groups and the United Nations.

Thirdly, it would be useful to take stock of the implementation of the recommendations emanating from the 2015 global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), whose tenth anniversary will coincide with the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution itself.

Lastly, the full and unconditional implementation of all resolutions and decisions of the Security Council is vital to the realization of the women and peace and security agenda. A similar call was made in resolution 2493 (2019), which was championed by South Africa in 2019.

In its national capacity, South Africa will continue to strengthen its existing national mechanism, which focuses on training and building the capacity of women in conflict prevention and mediation, deploying more women to peacekeeping operations and promoting women's rights. We will also continue to galvanize women to share ideas on peace and security matters. The Gertrude Shope Annual Dialogue Forum — one of South Africa's flagship events on women and peace and security and a platform for the exchange of ideas — has continued to grow since its inception. South Africa will soon be embarking on the process of reviewing and developing its second national action plan. We hope that our rich discussions today will contribute to our national review process through the sharing of experiences and ideas.

In conclusion, let us be absolutely clear. While it is useful to commit to new obligations, we must first focus our attention on implementing those that we have already committed to.

The President: I now call on the Minister of Social Assistance, Family and Women's Empowerment of Angola.

Ms. Da Silva do Sacramento Neto (Angola) (*spoke in Portuguese*) (*English interpretation provided by the delegation*): Let me first congratulate Mozambique on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council

for the month of March on the eve of our celebration of International Women's Day.

It is with great satisfaction that the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP) acknowledges two of its member States — Brazil and Mozambique — carrying out their duties on the Security Council, following the recent memberships of Angola and Equatorial Guinea. We hope to see such contributions continue with Portugal's successful candidacy for the 2027-2028 term. The Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries welcomes the ministerial-level open debate at the Security Council on the theme "Women and peace and security: towards the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000)", which is timely and takes on particular importance at this critical juncture for humankind, as the world is facing myriad conflicts that have a direct impact on the human rights of women and girls. We also reaffirm our determination to promote, address and overcome the challenges related to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 5 — "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls". As we debate this theme, thousands of women and girls are daily facing various types of violence as a result of armed conflicts and natural disasters that are wreaking havoc in various regions throughout the world.

In compliance with resolution 1325 (2000), the majority of CPLP member States have adopted and implemented national plans of action. We must ensure that women are no longer seen merely as victims but as key actors in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and sustainable development. We therefore acknowledge the importance of education and academic and professional training as a means to dispel gender stereotypes, including the involvement of men and boys as both the agents and beneficiaries of change.

We reaffirm the need to incorporate gender perspective in the reform of the security sector in both peace processes and States' military and security structures, which was given priority by the adoption of the action plan for the CPLP defence component at the twentieth Meeting of Ministers for Defence of the CPLP on 1 June 2021. I would also like to reiterate our commitment to the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The President: I now call on the Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Gender and Child Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago.

Ms. Webster-Roy (Trinidad and Tobago): Trinidad and Tobago relishes the opportunity to contribute to this open debate and would like to congratulate Mozambique on its election to the Security Council.

The convening of this important debate on the eve of International Women's Day spotlights the urgency for the international community to accelerate its efforts to empower women as equal partners alongside men on matters of peace and security. We believe that the participation of women in the peace and security agenda provides them with an opportunity to contribute constructively and innovatively to the safety and stability of their societies — an indispensable requirement for achieving sustainable peace. Encouraged in its belief in the importance of advancing gender equality in peace and security at the United Nations, in 2010 Trinidad and Tobago introduced the first General Assembly resolution on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control (resolution 65/69). The resolution was introduced on the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) with the strategic intention of challenging the international community to adopt and institutionalize the formula of equitable representation of women at all levels, including in decision-making processes related to peace and security.

However, the participation of women in matters of peace and security goes beyond symbolic numerical parity. It is therefore essential to intervene deliberately to ensure the establishment over time of a pool of talented female policymakers and practitioners with the requisite skill sets, as a means of guaranteeing sustainability. In that regard, Trinidad and Tobago reaffirms its unshakable commitment to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The guarantee of equal rights to all our citizens on a non-discriminatory basis is enshrined in our Constitution, and the goal of gender equality is an integral component of our national development policy.

We are pleased that the gap between policy and practice is progressively being narrowed, as evidenced by the ascendancy of women to the most senior offices of State. In fact, it gives me great pleasure to inform the Council that a few weeks ago, Trinidad and Tobago appointed its first substantive female Commissioner of Police. Furthermore, five years ago, Trinidad and Tobago elected its first female Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. It is a matter of great pride, and we are pleased to announce, that later this month we will inaugurate our second female

Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces — evidence of our policy in action.

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

Ms. Jorge Mera (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Dominican Republic, I would like to commend Mozambique for convening today's important and timely open debate, and I would also like to thank the women who briefed the Security Council today.

Since its adoption in 2000, resolution 1325 (2000) has enabled important progressive changes in our collective approach to addressing the important issue that brings us together today. The implementation of the women and peace and security agenda continues to be our best opportunity to strengthen women's presence in assuming leading and central roles in the areas of conflict prevention and resolution and peacekeeping. Accelerating the implementation of the agenda is our shared responsibility. It can be achieved by demonstrating political will, breaking down the persistent structural and practical barriers and opening the way for women's full, equal and meaningful participation in peace and security processes. Civil society and women human rights defenders, as well as their civic space, must be protected by States and supported by the Council and the United Nations so that they can carry out their work without fear of reprisals.

It is a matter of deep regret for the Dominican Republic that women and girls are the main victims of conflict and sexual violence — an unacceptable harm that we must work tirelessly to address. We need to continue to focus our efforts on enhancing the protection of women and girls against that scourge by equipping peacekeeping missions as best as possible and empowering the women themselves, as well as their communities, to develop mechanisms that can help, with the support of States, to eliminate once and for all that threat to women's integrity and dignity and put an end to impunity for the perpetrators. Violations of women's rights, although deeply rooted in the widespread inequality and discrimination faced by women, are often swept under the rug. We cannot ignore the interlinkage in that regard with the commitments made under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its general recommendation No. 30.

It is a priority for the Dominican Republic to contribute to building a peace architecture that addresses the issues I have mentioned, including the impact of non-conventional threats such as climate change and of new technologies in the digital era. We must also deepen our efforts to enhance positive peacebuilding, reaffirming our demands for women's rights and for the promotion and protection of the human rights of all people, wherever they are. That is why my country, after having demonstrated leadership on that issue during its term on the Security Council, including as a co-Chair of the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security, submitted for the first time its candidacy to become a member of the Human Rights Council, in which we are committed to continuing to promote the women and peace and security agenda and all the necessary actions for achieving its full implementation.

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

Mr. Franco Sousa (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first like to commend Mozambique for convening today's open debate, as well as you, Madam President, for your leadership today. On behalf of the Republic of Panama and our Minister for Foreign Affairs, Janaina Tewaney Mencomo, I would like to thank you, Madam, for the opportunity to participate in a forum that enables us to share our reflections on the extremely important role that women play in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Resolution 1325 (2000) encompasses a transformative vision, which highlights the systematic and widespread practice of violence against women and girls in armed conflicts. The resolution has become a starting point for incorporating the gender perspective into international humanitarian law, demonstrating that the promotion of women's full, equal and meaningful participation in decision-making processes is the only way to achieve sustainable solutions for addressing the causes of the violence within those conflicts. In addition to the nine subsequent resolutions adopted in the context of its implementation following its adoption in 2000, the resolution has undoubtedly opened a valuable path for addressing issues such as the gendered impact of armed conflicts and the enormous capacity of women around the world to coordinate peace initiatives. However, despite the positive progress achieved, the risks remain enormous, and gender equality in the international arena, in particular with regard to peace contributions, is far from being a tangible reality.

I would like to emphasize that violence against women is a violation of human rights, which means that we need to distance ourselves from those views that perceive and justify it as a manifestation of certain cultures or as the unquestioned privilege of certain groups or individuals in the exercise of power. Despite the absence of bombs and shells, the bodies of women and girls have become battlegrounds for unscrupulous armed militias and those who take advantage of the chaos of war to unleash violence against the most vulnerable members of their communities. If there is one thing we have learned, it is that peace and security depend on the capacity of States to ensure inclusion in all its forms and manifestations. As a demographic group, women make up almost half of the human population, yet they continue to face exclusion and inequality in the political, economic and social spheres, a problem that is even more acute in societies fragmented by armed conflict.

It is important to emphasize that Panama recognizes resolution 1325 (2000) from the two perspectives it includes on women in situations of armed conflict—both as victims and in their key roles in decision-making in conflict prevention and negotiations for peacemaking and peacebuilding. Our country supports the Council's comprehensive capacity to adopt actions aimed at protecting and guaranteeing the rights of women and girls, thereby strengthening democracy and the rule of law. The positive effects of women's inclusion in transition and reconstruction processes in societies that have been affected by hostilities and conflict are very clear. Such effects contribute to ensuring conditions conducive to negotiations and ceasefires, and to disarming the parties to the conflict and ensuring their return to society. The comprehensive results of women's participation, as actors for peace, suggest that their proactive efforts have a direct impact on negotiation and mediation activities, in which we have seen the growing involvement of women experts who have been specially trained in the development of peaceful solutions to conflicts.

Recognizable progress has been achieved. Today there can be no doubt that the empowerment of women experts participating in Government delegations has resulted in a genuine approach to conflict resolution with a more human face. In addition, the provision of support for women in conflict zones has been key to the implementation of peace agreements. Empowering women is the key to successful sustainable peacemaking.

That is why, if we want to ensure peaceful, inclusive and democratic societies, we must defend women's rights in all contexts. We must uphold our commitment to gender equality and be allies to women in our homes, in our communities and in our workplaces. We advocate for an inclusive human rights-based agenda in which women, young people and girls have a voice and play a leading role in building such an agenda for peace.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Digital Government and Gender Equality of Denmark.

Ms. Bjerre (Denmark): On behalf of the Nordic countries — Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and my own country, Denmark — I want to thank Mozambique for convening this timely meeting on women and peace and security.

More than 20 years ago, women peace activists successfully advocated for the Security Council to recognize the disproportionate impact of conflict on women and girls and the crucial role of women in peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Women are still at the forefront of conflict and crises. In Ukraine, following Russia's full-scale invasion and war of aggression, women are among the first responders and front-line defenders and are at the heart of the humanitarian response. That illustrates on a daily basis why the Council has repeatedly called for women's participation in all aspects of peace and security.

Unfortunately, women's participation in efforts to uphold peace and security, whether in Ukraine or elsewhere, are carried out under a constant and unacceptable threat of conflict-related sexual violence. We call on all parties to armed conflicts to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law and human rights law. The prevention of and accountability for conflict-related sexual violence must be ensured, everywhere and always.

Towards the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), the Nordic countries emphasize the importance of the meaningful implementation and advancement of the women and peace and security agenda. The Security Council must ensure that United Nations peace operations have a comprehensive women and peace and security mandate.

But our commitment to achieving the women and peace and security agenda goes beyond the work of the Security Council. In that regard, we would like

to highlight two areas of crucial importance for the agenda's implementation:

First, we must ensure women's full, equal and meaningful participation in decision-making and peacebuilding processes, including to secure the full enjoyment of human rights for women and girls in all their diversity. The participation and leadership of local women-led and women's rights organizations is especially important. Women-led organizations should have access to flexible financing for capacity-building, participation and protection against reprisals.

Secondly, we must stop intimidation, attacks and reprisals against all women human rights defenders, peacebuilders and civil society leaders. We must defend the defenders. In 2021, 35 women human rights defenders, journalists and trade unionists were killed in retaliation for their work. Those are just the women we know of — we know that such incidents are heavily underreported. Many more are threatened and harassed into silence, both online and offline. The Council and the United Nations peace and security architecture as a whole needs to be informed by a diverse group of briefers. In order to ensure that we protect their participation, we, the Member States, must also ensure zero tolerance for reprisals.

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

Ms. Moreno Bau (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mozambique for convening this open debate.

Spain aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Canada on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security.

As we approach the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), Spain is more committed than ever to the women and peace and security agenda — one of the five pillars of the Government's feminist foreign policy. Spain actively participates in debates on women and peace and security at Headquarters and in other forums in which it is a member.

As leaders, together with Finland, of the Commitment 2025 initiative, we are determined to increase the significant and substantive participation of women in conflict prevention and resolution, negotiation and mediation processes by 2025, and we invite other Member States to join that initiative. We recall that this is ultimately a component of Sustainable Development

Goal 5, target 5, which is to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

Within the European Union (EU), it is worth highlighting initiatives such as the EU Gender Military Training Discipline, a course on a comprehensive approach to gender in peace operations, which Spain leads together with the Netherlands. Within NATO, Spain has contributed greatly to the inclusion of the women and peace and security agenda in the new strategic concept and organized a side event during the summit held in Madrid in July 2022 with women's organizations from the European Union, Ukraine and Afghanistan.

In addition, the Spanish Government has supported the launch of the Group of Five for the Sahel Women's Platform, and its Ministry for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation organized the "HearUS" Afghan women's summit in 2022 to help Afghan women in exile to safely denounce violations of their rights in Afghanistan. Supporting Afghan women will remain a priority for Spain in 2023.

Spain advocates publicly denouncing conflict-related sexual violence, taking stronger action to prevent it and cooperating to bring perpetrators to justice.

At the national level, in December 2022, I presented the follow-up and review report of the second women and peace and security action plan to the Spanish Congress of Deputies. That follow-up has not only allowed us to take stock of what has been achieved thus far, but also shown the way to improve the next plan, which should be drawn up by the end of this year and for which we will once again be counting on civil society. Among the lessons learned, which we believe are also useful for the Security Council in general, is the need to have a specific budget, with qualitative indicators that make it possible to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the women and peace and security agenda and to have broad civil society participation.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan.

Mr. Zardari (Pakistan): I would like to thank you, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Mozambique, for convening this open debate on women and peace and security on the eve of International Women's Day.

The world today is facing a pandemic of conflict, violence, war, hate, extremism and terrorism. Despite the Geneva Conventions, civilians are increasingly the primary targets of war and violence. As the Council's landmark resolution 1325 (2000) observed, women and girls suffer disproportionately and inordinately from war, conflict and violence.

The strategy adopted in resolution 1325 (2000) and the 10 subsequent resolutions on women and peace and security have served to enhance national and international recognition on the challenges and their manifestations. Almost 90 States have adopted national action plans to protect women and girls and empower them to contribute to preventing and responding to conflict, war and violence. The United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict has helped to enhance recognition of this challenge. The larger presence and role of women peacekeepers has visibly contributed to preventing and containing conflicts and violence and crimes against women.

Yet we are far from realizing the objectives of the women and peace and security agenda. The sombre reality is that women continue to be the principal victims of war and conflict. We hear the cries of mothers, sisters and daughters in Iraq, Afghanistan, Ukraine and Africa, who are suffering from the consequences of wars that have been imposed on them. We have yet to implement the strategy to prevent wars, erase the suffering they cause, establish accountability for the crimes against women and girls, and empower women through skills, access and leadership to contribute to prevention, recovery and redressing their imposed and disproportionate suffering.

We are disappointed at the restrictions imposed on education and work on women and girls in Afghanistan. The right of women and girls to access all levels of education and work is a fundamental right in keeping with Islamic injunction. We urge the de facto authorities to take steps towards resumption of female education and allow women to contribute to Afghan society.

The most egregious autocracies arise from — and the worst crimes against women and girls occur in — situations of foreign occupation and suppression of the right to self-determination of peoples. In this regard, the very object of violence is to suppress the civilian population, which is manifest

most vividly in the occupied Palestinian territories and occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

The women and peace and security strategy will remain incomplete and unfulfilled so long as the acute dimensions of the plight of women under foreign occupation are not addressed frontally and vigorously. Above all, occupation forces must be held accountable. To ensure the implementation of the women, peace and security strategy, it is essential to establish monitoring mechanisms for crimes committed against women and girls in territories under foreign occupation, including occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The Security Council called for improved monitoring in resolution 1888 (2009), through the deployment to conflict areas of military and gender adviser teams, and in resolution 1960 (2010), where it endorsed measures to end the impunity of perpetrators. These provisions must be implemented.

Pakistan also supports effective implementation of other measures in the Council's resolutions on women and peace and security: the deployment of women protection advisers, a larger role for United Nations women peacekeepers, especially in leadership positions, addressing the root causes of conflict, increasing the resources for women in conflict zones, providing for a stronger and equal role for women in the prevention of conflict, the delivery of relief and recovery assistance, in forging lasting peace and in promoting the peaceful resolution of conflicts in accordance with the United Nations Charter and Security Council resolutions by utilizing the various mechanisms available under the Charter.

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

Ms. Gil Savastano (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Government of Colombia has made a "total peace" commitment to the peaceful solution of conflicts because we believe in the supreme value of life. The "total peace" policy is wisdom, and we are calling for wisdom in defence of life. We condemn all violations of women's rights in every corner of the world, and at this time we remember with special empathy the women of Iran. The struggle of Iranian women is the struggle for all of us, and they are not alone.

The situation of women and girls in armed conflict today could lead us to question the relevance of the women and peace and security agenda. However, we are in this Chamber today to reassure you, Madam

President. While the women and peace and security agenda needs updating — an injection of modern thinking — it is still, even in current state, in force, relevant and bearing fruit in Colombia. Let me therefore share our experience.

As I said, Colombia is committed to “total peace” and to the fundamental role that women play as agents of change in this process. We have established as a national priority the guarantee for women in all their diversity to participate in the development of the “total peace” policy. We wish to be an international reference point for peace and life, and we believe that change is for and through women. We are moving towards structural transformations that will lead us to settle the debt in political representation, equality and economic autonomy owed to women and to guarantee to them the right to a life free of violence.

Despite the fact that Colombia negotiated the world’s first peace agreement with a gender perspective, the debts owed to women in terms of peace and security persist. We are pleased to announce that, 23 years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) — that is, 23 years late — Colombia is drafting its first national action plan based on the resolution, and we are doing so hand in hand with the women’s movement. With the assistance of UN-Women, we are organizing — or rather, the women of Colombia are organizing — five regional forums, a national meeting and several sectoral workshops. We want an exemplary national action plan. It will have the victims of the conflict at its core, and it will pay special attention to the use of sexual violence as an instrument of war.

Resolution 1325 (2000) today, 23 years after its adoption, has provoked an explosion of participation in Colombia that has surprised, surpassed and gratified us. Urban, peasant and rural women, mestizo, indigenous and Afro-Colombian women, heterosexual and LGTBI+ women, and workers and professionals are meeting every day in every corner of Colombia to discuss, exchange, coordinate and formulate a public policy for peace and security. The very process of formulation has become one of political participation and therefore of empowerment.

Most important, the women of Colombia are redefining the content of resolution 1325 (2000), appropriating it and moulding it to their circumstances, and, in so doing, they are bringing it to bear on the

challenges they face in 2023. Resolution 1325 (2000) is a living text in Colombia.

This process of formulating a national action plan with this level of participation has allowed us to reach some conclusions that we respectfully present to the members of the Security Council. First, Colombia believes that the women and peace and security agenda lacks intersectionality. The Security Council should recognize the multiple identities, such as race, ethnicity, social class, nationality and sexual orientation, that intersect to deepen discrimination. No Colombian woman is only a woman. We are many women at the same time, and we hope that the Security Council will reflect our challenges as they are.

Secondly, Colombia believes that the women and peace and security agenda lacks diversity. We believe that the Security Council should address the differentiated impacts of armed conflict on the LGBTIQ+ community and consider a resolution that strengthens the previous resolutions on the subject. In that context, we welcomed resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security and believe that the LGBTIQ+ community requires the same attention from the Security Council.

Resolution 1325 (2000) has become a catalyst for mobilization in Colombia, and we hope to return in September to present our national action plan in the General Assembly. Our national action plan is for women and by women. To the women of the world and the women of Colombia, we say do not give up, and keep insisting. As our Vice-President Francia Márquez Mina says, let us keep fighting until dignity has become a habit.

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

Ms. Goula (Greece): I would like to warmly thank Mozambique for organizing such an important event, which is aimed at reinforcing the implementation of the agenda on women and peace and security.

Greece fully aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union, and I would like to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

My country emphasizes the importance of accelerating the realization of substantive gender equality both at home and abroad, as a means of contributing to a gender-equal, peaceful and more resilient world. The promotion of the women and peace

and security agenda is among the priorities of Greece's candidacy for election to the Security Council for the 2025-2026 term, as well as in view of the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), coming up in 2025.

Greece seeks to enhance the substantive and meaningful inclusion of women in peace processes as one of the most effective ways to achieve long-lasting and sustainable peace and security. At the same time, we advocate for ensuring the effective protection of women from conflict-related, gender-based and sexual violence. Furthermore, we underline the direct connection between three of the Security Council agendas — first, on the protection of civilians, secondly, on women and peace and security, and thirdly, on children and armed conflict. Greece has also been active in highlighting the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women journalists, who often fall victim to undocumented conflict-related sexual violence, as well as discrimination and sexual harassment on- and offline. In that regard, my country, together with a core group of like-minded countries — Argentina, Austria, Costa Rica, France and Tunisia — promoted General Assembly resolution 76/173, on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity, which the Assembly adopted unanimously in November 2021, with an unprecedented number of 112 sponsors. The resolution makes explicit reference to resolution 1325 (2000) and the women and peace and security agenda of the Security Council.

Today's event coincides with the sixty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which is focused on innovation, technological change and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. Greece is actively participating in it in support of the Commission's valuable work. We consider that closing the gender digital divide and ensuring that no one is left behind in the digital economy and society are essential not only to achieving sustainable development but also to promoting peaceful, secure and gender-equal societies.

On a final note, I would like to express Greece's determination to contribute substantially to the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda and its core commitments, ahead of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000), which hopefully will coincide with Greece's participation in the Security Council.

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

Ms. Velichko (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): More than 20 years have passed since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, which was intended to reduce the potential for conflict around the world and strengthen the role of women in post-conflict recovery. However, current global trends present a depressing picture and a pessimistic forecast for the future. We are seeing trust give way to confrontation and dialogue to accusatory rhetoric, while a new arms race is spiralling. There is a tendency to promote individual approaches to the detriment of the interests of other members of the international community. The vaunted instruments of the European security architecture are cracking under the strain. Europe is now siding with war. Whether its security architecture will survive the current crisis is a major question.

That is why the time has come to consider security in a broader Eurasian context. As the current occupant of the presidency of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, Belarus intends to host an international conference in Minsk this year on the prospects for security in Eurasia, with a view to holding an impartial dialogue aimed at establishing the conditions for the creation of a sustainable system of equal and indivisible security with corresponding individual and collective guarantees. We look forward to the active participation of women in the conference, whose role in matters of peace and security must be strengthened.

It goes without saying that in armed conflicts it is women, especially women with children, who suffer most of all. Every conflict should be resolved around the negotiating table, and women must occupy their rightful place in the peace process and become more involved in post-conflict recovery. However, let us be honest. Are women always only the victims of conflict? Are they not often supporters of conflict as well? In that context, we have to address the issue of some countries' application of illegal sanctions, which not only violate international law and undermine the efforts of the countries affected to achieve socioeconomic development, but also have a negative impact on those who impose them. There are women who are actively lobbying for those destructive, opportunistic sanctions. We therefore find ourselves in a paradoxical situation in which some women pose a direct threat to global security, while others are its victims. That is worth thinking about.

We recently marked the International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness. The Secretary-General called on women, as the primary guardians of their families' upbringing, to participate actively in decision-making processes on the implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. We are convinced that the more people are educated about disarmament issues, the fewer the conditions there will be conducive to arms races, escalating tensions and unleashing conflicts. And we will finally understand that there is no alternative to a global security dialogue in the spirit of San Francisco, and in that process, women also have a role to play — one of creativity and harmony.

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

Ms. Vseviiov (Estonia): Estonia aligns itself with the statement to be made on behalf of the European Union, and I would like to add a few remarks in my national capacity.

Estonia welcomes the Security Council's debate on women and peace and security and remains fully committed to standing firm on the advancement of women's rights, security and leadership. On the eve of International Women's Day, I am afraid we must admit that despite some progress, we are still unable to always protect women's rights in violent conflict, as we are not yet able to decisively advance equality across the globe.

For more than one year, Ukrainians have been enduring unthinkable horrors in the Russian war of aggression. Forty per cent of the Ukrainian population, mostly women and children, are in need of urgent humanitarian aid. Those who remain in Ukraine are at the mercy of Russian soldiers and mercenaries, who use sexual and physical violence, exploitation and abuse against civilians as a war tactic. While their mothers are being killed or raped, thousands of Ukrainian children are being held in filtration camps, deported to Russia and subjected to forceful adoptions. We call upon the international community to do everything possible and more to support Ukraine and the Ukrainian victims of the aggression. In spite of that grim background, the launch by Ukraine of an updated national women and peace and security action plan to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in every aspect of society deserves recognition.

Unfortunately, every single day, thousands of women across the globe must fight for their fundamental

human rights. In Afghanistan, the Taliban's actions seek to gradually erase Afghan women from public life, depriving them of education and health care. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, conflict-related sexual violence continues to affect a countless number of women and children, who are in desperate need of our support. The brave women of Iran, who despite the harsh consequences they face have been at the forefront of protests demanding their basic rights and dignity, should be respected and supported. However, today the European Union imposed sanctions on nine persons responsible for committing sexual violence and other violations of women's rights. Among them are two Russian commanders sanctioned for their deeds in Ukraine. We must always hold perpetrators accountable, as justice provides a glimmer of hope to the victims, while impunity will only lead to new crimes and violations.

In conclusion, Estonia affirms its efforts to advance the role of women and girls and to implement resolution 1325 (2000). We will continue to support UN-Women, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund and the Offices of the Secretary-General's Special Representatives on Sexual Violence in Conflict and for Children and Armed Conflict in their activities.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister of Women's Affairs of the Observer State of Palestine.

Ms. Hamad (Palestine) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the State of Palestine, I would like to express our sincere thanks to your delegation, Madam President, for convening today's important meeting on women and peace and security. I thank Mozambique for its able leadership of the Council in March. I would also like to thank the Executive Director of UN-Women, Sima Bahous, for her comprehensive briefing, as well as the other speakers for their valuable contributions.

The State of Palestine agrees that the women and peace and security agenda helps to prevent crises. The State of Palestine has developed a national plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and all subsequent resolutions in a participatory way, in cooperation with civil society organizations, in order to build on the expertise of all stakeholders. We in Palestine support human rights. We are committed to doing our utmost to protect all women from violence and discrimination, ensure their full and equal participation at all levels of decision-making and empower them to ensure their ability to contribute to national recovery,

reconstruction, reconciliation and the peace mediators network. We are committed to supporting young generations of women and girls.

At its core, resolution 1325 (2000) seeks to achieve just peace so that all peoples across the world can live in safety. Women contribute effectively to that end. However, the situation is very different in occupied Palestine. Since 1948, Palestine has endured multiple disasters and outrages, the most recent of which is the statement made by the racist Smotrich, who called for the village of Huwwara to be wiped out. He wants to bring back the 1948 Nakbah. We have seen an attack on the United States and European delegations that visited to assess the scope of the damage. In the light of those serious developments, we see that our path to peace is uncertain and ambiguous, and our security is at stake. We are now farther away from peace and closer to the entrenchment of the occupation, the reality of annexation, an apartheid regime and the acquisition of land by force.

The State of Palestine has joined and ratified more than 87 international conventions and protocols without any reservations. We are fully committed to international legitimacy and United Nations resolutions. We commend positions that support Palestinian rights, and we are waiting for words to be turned into action on the ground. We also thank all friendly countries that have supported us.

In conclusion, we urge States to recognize the State of Palestine, based on its international legitimacy. We also call for the perpetrators of crimes to be held accountable and for ending the impunity enjoyed by the Israeli occupation, including settlers. We stress the need to provide protection to our Palestinian people, in particular women and girls, who are subjected to killing on a daily basis and whose homes are being demolished. We want them to live in peace, security and prosperity.

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

Ms. Levchenko (Ukraine): We are grateful to the presidency of Mozambique for convening today's important open debate on the progress of the women and peace and security agenda.

Ukraine has always been a staunch advocate for the promotion of fundamental human rights, with a particular focus on the rights of women and girls

worldwide. We welcome the fact that putting women and girls at the centre has been outlined among six potential areas for the New Agenda for Peace.

That is particularly important for us because, since 2014, Ukraine has been countering Russian aggression, which in 2022 turned into a full-scale invasion. Along with the temporary occupation of Ukrainian territories and the resulting numerous casualties and mass destruction, sexual violence has been a hallmark of the Russian invaders.

Orders for sexual violence were given from the top and pointedly applied in order to humiliate and destroy our reproductive capacity. It happened in the Kherson region, where, under threat of violence, a Russian soldier repeatedly raped a 62-year-old woman. It happened in the Kyiv region, where invaders raped a girl and her mother, beat the father and forced him to watch. It happened in Sviatohirsk, where a woman was raped by three Russian soldiers. Now she works with a psychologist and even helps other women who were similarly abused.

In total, the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine has recorded 171 such incidents, involving not only women, but also men and children. And we do not know how many are suffering in silence, especially in the temporarily occupied territories.

The entire free world must guarantee the most important thing — justice. That is needed by all, not only Ukrainians. It must serve as a precedent for any potential aggressor and collective rapists throughout the globe to realize that sexual violence will not go unpunished. Ukraine fully endorses the global campaign at the highest levels to ban sexual violence and to ban rape as a weapon of war.

Ukrainian women, however, are not just victims, as 61,000 women are members of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and approximately 5,000 of them are defending our country on the front lines. Ukrainian women are pushing the volunteer response, they are taking positions in governance, they are advancing our economy as entrepreneurs, they are taking care of their dependents, and they are engaging actively in all fields of civil life. One of our women activists, Oleksandra Matviichuk, leads the non-governmental organization that was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2022.

That is the logic behind the second national action plan under resolution 1325 (2000), amended and updated

in December 2022 in order to address the current needs and context of the full-scale military aggression. The current updated national action plan recognizes that women must be actors and agents in the ongoing war, as well as in the reconstruction of the country.

We appreciate the Organization's engagement, in particular within the Framework of Cooperation between the Government of Ukraine and the United Nations on the prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence. We invite one and all to attend a side event that our delegation is holding today on the implementation of this Framework and the role of women's civil society organizations.

We call on all States to recognize that women's voices must be heard in serious discussions and negotiations for peace and that we must eliminate all barriers that hinder their participation in politics. We emphasize the urgent need for the international community to prioritize the women and peace and security agenda and to underpin it with concrete steps.

The President: I now give the floor to Ms. Ronner-Grubačić.

Ms. Ronner-Grubačić: I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The candidate countries Türkiye, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the potential candidate country Georgia, as well as Andorra, Monaco and San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

Assessing the disproportionate effect of armed conflict on women and girls is more important today than ever. The prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, offline and online, demands our attention. Implementing the full women and peace and security agenda must be a core priority of the Security Council.

We face a changing security context, characterized by hybrid threats, energy blackmail, disinformation, food insecurity and the increasing weaponization of suffering. Yet some problems are depressingly familiar. Women human rights defenders and peacebuilders continue to be targets of attacks and threats in many parts of the world. That is unacceptable. We — the EU, the United Nations, Member States and regional organizations — need to work with academia, think tanks, civil society, human rights defenders, activists,

journalists and media workers who cover first-hand, with high professionalism and self-sacrifice, the devastating reality of conflicts. The EU approaches the twenty-fifth anniversary with that mindset, encouraging everyone to implement a zero-tolerance policy for reprisals against women human rights defenders and peacebuilders.

The EU therefore welcomes the Secretary-General's initiative of a New Agenda for Peace. It is essential that this New Agenda build on the existing women and peace and security agenda and further strengthen the ability of the United Nations to deliver it. Women and gender equality must be at the heart of peace and security in the coming years, including through the implementation of the Peacebuilding Commission's gender strategy.

The pursuit of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine requires the full force of the Charter of the United Nations and international law in order to deal with the various types of violence faced there by women and girls. But the same issues require equal attention wherever they occur, on all continents.

The EU continues to contribute to advancing this agenda by gender-mainstreaming the EU's 21 civilian and military missions and operations, deploying 5,000 women and men around the world; by placing the women and peace and security agenda at the top of the EU-United Nations joint priorities for peace operations and crisis management, including through strengthening cooperation at the field level; and by following up on Council conclusions on women and peace and security, adopted by European Union member States in November 2022, reaffirming our commitment to this agenda.

In sum, the EU will work actively with women, all over the world, in all their various roles, on peace and security, conflict prevention, countering violent extremism and radicalization, peace negotiations and peacebuilding, climate and developing humanitarian-action and development programmes.

I wish everybody a happy International Women's Day tomorrow.

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

Ms. Oehri (Liechtenstein): We thank you, Madam President, for convening today's debate, express our sincere appreciation to all the briefers and thank the International Committee of the Red Cross, in particular, for their important work.

Despite strong follow-up resolutions to resolution 1325 (2000), including on the participation pillar, in many parts of the world women's equal, full and meaningful participation remains the exception rather than the rule. That is unfortunate and unacceptable in the light of the evidence we have accumulated over the almost 25 years since the initial adoption of the women and peace and security agenda. Women peacekeepers, mediators, lawyers, journalists and human rights defenders, among others, have been key agents of political change and contributed significantly to sustainable peace. Their inclusion in peace talks has proven to be indispensable for forging lasting peace agreements.

Women have also played an integral role in peace movements and disarmament efforts. For decades, they have been at the forefront of advocating for a nuclear-free world. With the Doomsday Clock set at 90 seconds to midnight and "sounding an alarm for the whole of humanity" in the words of Mary Robinson, Chair of the Elders, such efforts are more important than ever. Enabling women to be agents of change, including by eliminating patriarchal patterns of decision-making, is therefore not only our obligation under the women and peace and security agenda and other relevant international law, but urgently needed for a safe and peaceful world.

In Myanmar, women and youth have played a particularly important role in resisting the military coup, peacefully standing up for democracy and the rule of law and against crimes against humanity committed by the military junta, including extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detention and torture. By doing so, they have also challenged long-prevailing age and gender norms in their patriarchal society. Rather than receiving recognition for their important role in the opposition movement, however, they remain largely excluded from formal political decision-making and face attacks and retaliation. Any efforts to de-escalate violence and reach a sustainable political resolution and democratic transition of Myanmar requires women's equal, meaningful and effective participation at all stages of decision-making. Only a fully inclusive civilian Government can be representative of the will of the people and lead towards a peaceful, just and inclusive society. That was stressed in the General Assembly resolution on Myanmar in 2021 (General Assembly resolution 75/287) and reiterated at the end of last year by the Council itself (see S/PV.9231). In that regard,

let me also emphasize once more the urgent need to prevent the flow of arms into Myanmar, as called for by the Assembly, as an effective way to stop the violence.

Leading up to the twenty-fifth anniversary of the women and peace and security agenda, we must not only do better in its implementation, but also apply it across thematic files and country situations dealt with within the Security Council and beyond. In that regard, we commend the women and peace and security presidency initiative — a creative, cross-regional and informal way to bring heightened visibility to the agenda and to create further momentum around its implementation. We particularly welcome the promotion of the strong representation of women among briefers to the Council, as well as the more significant inclusion of gender perspectives in Council meetings and products.

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

Ms. Mendoza Elguea (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico is grateful to Mozambique for convening this open debate and for the briefings made earlier.

During Mexico's previous term as an elected member of the Security Council, one of my country's priorities was to advance the women and peace and security agenda in line with its feminist foreign policy. As co-Chair of the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security, we systematically advocated for a gender perspective in the work and deliberations of the Council. We advocated for an intersectional approach, cooperation with regional and civil society organizations and for the peacekeeping missions approved by the Council to have the necessary capacities to effectively fulfil their mandates to protect women.

More than two decades after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we note that, although progress has undeniably been made in this area, enormous challenges persist, and we cannot but help note the setbacks with great concern. The first-hand accounts of women who have been victims of sexual violence as a result of the war in Ukraine and the measures adopted in Afghanistan limiting the autonomy of women and girls are unacceptable. It is time to redouble our efforts to implement the measures that we have committed to and adopted.

In particular, I will highlight three of them. The first is the full, equal and meaningful participation of women, in all their diversity, in decision-making

processes at all levels, including in peace processes. The second is the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence and access to justice and sexual and reproductive health services for survivors and victims. The third is the protection of women peacebuilders and human rights defenders from gender-based violence.

We must overcome the structural barriers that hinder gender equality, including the segregation of women in the labour market and discrimination against women in terms of their access to financial resources and land use and tenure. With regard to the role of women as mediators, I am pleased to announce that the Ibero-American network of women mediators has been registered and that it will soon be formally established. We welcome the fact that 10 Ibero-American countries have already expressed their interest in taking part in the initiative, and we hope that others will join them.

Lastly, Mexico reiterates its commitment to continuing to promote the women and peace and security agenda from various angles, such as the Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action, adopted by the Generation Equality Forum.

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

Ms. Totladze (Georgia): At the outset, I would like to express our appreciation to the presidency of Mozambique for convening today's debate.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made earlier on behalf of the European Union.

In my national capacity, I would like to add the following.

The adoption of landmark resolution 1325 (2000) and the subsequent women and peace and security resolutions by the Security Council highlights the importance of women's full, equal and meaningful participation at all levels of decision-making in order to achieve sustainable peace. Despite the achievements made thus far with women's increasing participation in areas pertaining to international peace and security, progress in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda remains slow. We share the concerns raised in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2022/740) on women and peace and security with regard to the numerous barriers, compounded by predominate gender stereotypes, that girls and women have to overcome in the realization of their right to participate in public and political life.

In turn, the Government of Georgia prioritizes the issues of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), the meaningful engagement of women in peace processes and fostering the women and peace and security agenda in the process of peaceful conflict resolution. To that end, on 25 October 2022, the Government of Georgia adopted its national action plan on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security for the period from 2022 to 2024. The stated action plan has been developed in close cooperation with local non-governmental organizations that work in women's rights and women activists. One of its priorities includes a focus on women's participation in peace and security processes. Furthermore, within the framework of our commitments under the resolution, we continue to promote conflict-affected women in Georgia as a driving force of public diplomacy.

As we gather here to discuss the women and peace and security agenda, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine continues to rage. Russia's illegal aggression against Ukraine has thus far resulted in the forcible displacement of more than 10 million Ukrainians, most of whom are women and children, who are particularly vulnerable, including to the risk of human trafficking. We are horrified by sexual and gender-based violence committed by the Russian armed forces in Ukraine. At this juncture, I would like to emphasize that the ongoing military aggression against Ukraine and Russia's continued occupation and creeping annexation of the Georgian regions of Tskhinvali, South Ossetia and Abkhazia clearly violate the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and undermine the rules-based international order, imperilling regional and global security. Regrettably, despite the efforts of Georgia's Government to empower conflict-affected women, women and girls living in the Russian-occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions of Georgia continue to suffer from persistent violations of their fundamental human rights and are unable to benefit from our Government's human rights protection framework.

In conclusion, I would like to assure the Council once again that in two years, when we mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the groundbreaking resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, the Government of Georgia will do its utmost to ensure the full integration of gender perspectives into decision-making, as well as to protect the rights of women and promote their meaningful participation

in conflict-prevention and peacebuilding, in line with the resolution.

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

Mr. Elshandawily (Egypt): At the outset, I would like to thank Mozambique for organizing today's open debate ahead of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. I would also like to thank all the briefers who spoke this morning. We are proud that this open debate is being organized under an African presidency. It is always worth recalling the African role in bringing the women and peace and security agenda to the attention of the Security Council. Egypt commends every African effort aimed at fully implementing the women and peace and security agenda in Africa. Women's participation in decision-making at all levels will always remain at the core of our discussions in our quest to achieve sustainable peace.

Egypt will always stress the importance of advancing the women and peace and security agenda from a holistic approach that aligns efforts across the peace continuum so as to enhance their effectiveness and impact. That is very relevant to our peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. In that regard, Egypt takes great pride in its championing of the General Assembly's resolutions on United Nations action on sexual exploitation and abuse adopted since the Assembly's seventy-first session, the latest of which is resolution 76/303, adopted in September. The resolution promotes a system-wide approach to implementing the zero-tolerance policy aimed at eliminating such heinous acts.

The President of the Arab Republic of Egypt was one of the first leaders to join the Circle of Leadership initiative to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations operations. Raising awareness against sexual exploitation and abuse is an integral part of the comprehensive training that Egyptian forces receive prior to their deployment in peacekeeping operations. Respect for national ownership and a full consideration of the cultural and societal specificities of different countries in armed conflict or emerging from it are keys to the success of our collective efforts to advance the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

Let me conclude by stressing that investing in women's capabilities, resilience and leadership is

the only way we can preserve a healthy and coherent society working to achieve sustainable peace.

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

Mr. Margaryan (Armenia): I would like to congratulate Mozambique on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March and to express our appreciation to it for convening today's timely open debate. We thank the Executive Director of UN-Women, the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the other briefers for their valuable contributions to today's discussion.

Armenia is committed to efforts to advance the role of women in peace and security. To that end, we recently adopted our second national action plan on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), with a particular focus on ensuring the inclusive engagement of women affected by conflict. Our national action plan for the period from 2022 to 2024 sets comprehensive objectives designed to address issues such as increasing the involvement of women in our armed forces and police systems, upholding the protection of the social and economic rights of women and girls affected by armed conflict and promoting awareness-raising and effective international cooperation in that regard.

In our region, we are still facing the consequences of the brutal and unprovoked violence launched by Azerbaijan in 2020, which continues to take lives and bring devastation, displacement and human suffering, and which has had a disproportionate impact on women and girls. During the large-scale military offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh, among the hardest hit were the women trapped between the war and the pandemic. Conducted in gross violation of international humanitarian law, Azerbaijan's armed attacks involved massive bombardments, artillery and missile strikes that heavily damaged a number of medical facilities, including a maternity hospital. In September 2022, Azerbaijan launched yet another criminal attack targeting civilian infrastructure and densely populated areas in Armenia and capturing, torturing and executing female soldiers. The videos of such unspeakable atrocities have been applauded and extensively celebrated on Azerbaijan's social networks.

As we speak, a population of 120,000 continues to be trapped in the conditions of the ongoing blockade, imposed on 12 December 2022, of the Lachin corridor, which has essentially disrupted the only lifeline

connecting Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia and the outside world. In a February 2023 publication, Amnesty International reported on the blockade's disproportionate impact on women in Nagorno-Karabakh, who are dealing with a multitude of challenges, including in terms of access to health care and essential services. Eighty-six days into Azerbaijan's barbaric, medieval siege, mothers and children in Nagorno-Karabakh continue to be shown to be the main targets of the blockade, as the disruptions of cargo and supply chains have affected families with young children the most, with the risk of malnourishment and even starvation becoming a real problem.

Two weeks ago, the International Court of Justice indicated provisional measures, according to which Azerbaijan shall

“take all measures at its disposal to ensure unimpeded movement of persons, vehicles and cargo along the Lachin corridor in both directions.” (*Application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Azerbaijan v. Armenia)*, General List No. 180, para. 62)”

To date, Azerbaijan has failed to implement the Court's legally binding order, engaging instead in manipulative interpretations, distortions and fabrications, which, as we have seen, have little value in a court of law. Equally disturbing are the attempts to instrumentalize the issue of prisoners of war and civilian captives, whose return Azerbaijan continues to deny, in defiance of the Geneva Conventions and the provisional measures issued by the International Court of Justice in December 2021. That inflicts severe distress on the mothers, wives and families of those held in captivity, who have been going through trauma and pain for more than two years since the establishment of the ceasefire and the termination of hostilities.

Twenty-three years into the inception of resolution 1325 (2000), women continue to be at an increased risk of injustice and inequality. Outbreaks of violence, as well as complex humanitarian emergencies and their disproportionate impact on women and girls, have clearly demonstrated that the United Nations needs to re-equip itself to better deliver on its preventive function and on the women and peace and security agenda.

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

Mr. Prabowo (Indonesia): Speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), I congratulate Mozambique on convening today's open debate and thank the briefers for their presentations. As we approach the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2022/740) clearly highlights that much work still needs to be done. It is important for us to leave behind business as usual in order to enable us to make meaningful progress. It is also important to enhance cooperation with regional organizations on the women and peace and security agenda, which has long been a priority for ASEAN, given its full commitment to ensuring the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and related resolutions on women and peace and security. In that context, allow me to highlight three points.

First, strengthening women's leadership and their transformative role is key. Supporting initiatives led by women and for women is important in that regard. Under the umbrella of the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation, we established the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry, which allows ASEAN countries to pool their expertise and better integrate a gender perspective into conflict-prevention initiatives.

Secondly, we need to enhance efforts to mainstream the women and peace and security agenda in peace and security decision-making processes. In December, ASEAN established the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security, which provides a framework for the role of women in realizing inclusive and sustainable peace in the region. The action plan is also mindful of future challenges, such as climate change, natural disasters and public health emergencies. It will also be continuously monitored and evaluated to ensure it remains relevant and forward-looking. Such an action plan requires continued support for its implementation, including the political support of the Council.

Thirdly, we must capitalize on technology to create a multiplier effect in terms of women's participation in the women and peace and security agenda. For a region with more than 340 million women and girls spread across the 10 ASEAN countries, the dissemination of good stories that will encourage women's participation in the women and peace and security agenda is a challenge. In order to overcome that, we launched an ASEAN women and peace and security website in

2022, as a hub of knowledge for the women and peace and security agenda. Through the website, we aim to amplify good and encouraging practices on women and peace and security for women in the ASEAN region and beyond.

Regional platforms and mechanisms play a significant role in pushing the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. ASEAN stands ready to work together with the United Nations and other regional organizations to advance it through lessons learned and the sharing of best practices. Together, we can do more.

Allow me to add some points in my national capacity.

After almost 25 years, various goals that we set ourselves in the women and peace and security agenda are still distant targets. The number of women mediators and negotiators is negligible. The number of women in peacekeeping is equally uninspiring. We are still far from the target set by the Secretary-General in his Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy to be achieved by 2028. Indonesia believes that two important approaches are needed.

First, we need to intensify capacity-building across the entire women and peace and security spectrum. Greater efforts must be taken by all to ensure that women have access to capacity-building programmes throughout the peace and security continuum. Having a greater pool of women with high capacity will create more opportunities for their involvement in peace and security processes.

Secondly, we must use the New Agenda for Peace process as an opportunity to also contribute to the women and peace and security agenda. In that context, women's voices must be heard in setting the course of the New Agenda for Peace. Ensuring a greater role and voice for women in areas such as peacekeeping, mediation and peacebuilding, as well as in preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism, is important.

Thirdly and finally, let me reaffirm Indonesia's commitment to supporting the full, effective and meaningful participation of women in the peace and security agenda. Indonesia believes that the role of women in peace processes is not merely a form of embracing gender equality — it is a transformative force for more robust efforts to achieve sustainable peace.

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

Ms. Rodríguez Mancía (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank you, Madam President, for convening today's open debate, and we also thank the briefers for their valuable contributions.

Almost 25 years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), States still have a long way to go to comply with the provisions of that and subsequent resolutions. However, the intervening years have reaffirmed the important role of women in conflict prevention and resolution, as well as in peace negotiations, peacebuilding and peacekeeping. They are also key actors in humanitarian responses and post-conflict reconstruction processes. That is why we underscore the responsibility of States and the Organization to ensure the effective implementation of the provisions of the global women and peace and security agenda. Conflicts around the world continue to undermine the negligible efforts that have been undertaken to enable women to exert greater influence on our societies. The Russian Federation's unprovoked, unjustified and disproportionate aggression against Ukraine is a clear example. The population, especially women and girls, are being affected and their rights violated.

We strongly believe that, in order to advance the women and peace and security agenda, a holistic view of both the problems and the opportunities at hand is required. The full, equal, effective and meaningful inclusion and participation of women is crucial for the development of any country and therefore also for global peace and stability. Guatemala is committed to and prioritizes the participation of women in peacekeeping operations, with 300 women deployed as military and civilian personnel in various United Nations missions, demonstrating their dedication, leadership, professionalism and humanity in all the actions they perform. It is imperative that our countries continue to hire, train and deploy women peacekeepers — not to fulfil a quota but because of the positive impact they have in those environments, which is supported by concrete data.

Guatemala also highlights the important complementary role that regional organizations and United Nations entities play in that important agenda, as stipulated in resolutions 2242 (2015), 2467 (2019) and 2493 (2019), without losing sight of the fact that the

main responsibility for that global agenda lies and will always lie with States.

National action plans are a vital product of resolution 1325 (2000) as a valuable tool for States to implement their commitments and ensure their continuity. Those plans create spaces for civil society to accompany that work and allow national stakeholders to identify priorities, determine responsibilities, allocate resources, and initiate strategic actions within a defined time frame. My country has taken ownership of its national plan, which remains in force and serves as the basis for monitoring public policies for the integral development of women, as well as for actions promoted by the plan under resolution 1325 (2000) and related resolutions on women and peace and security.

Finally, Guatemala reaffirms the importance of national ownership and leadership in peacebuilding and emphasizes the inclusion of all segments of society and the need to increasingly promote the participation of women in order to ensure that the needs of all levels of society, especially the most vulnerable, are addressed. The New Agenda for Peace represents an opportunity to strengthen those efforts.

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

Ms. Skoczek (Poland): Poland would like to thank Mozambique for convening this debate and all the briefers for their insightful remarks.

We align ourselves with the statements delivered by the representative of the European Union and on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security.

Poland fully supports initiatives aimed at increasing the role of women in building peace and security. To that end, Poland is currently implementing its first national action plan on women and peace and security, which will run until the end of 2023. Polish activities under the national action plan focus on the enhancement of women's participation in crisis management and peacebuilding missions, in United Nations, European Union, NATO and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe operations, and in the promotion of implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, both in Poland and through our international cooperation activities. One of the priorities of the Polish national action plan is raising the effectiveness of efforts to prevent and combat conflict-related sexual violence.

The women and peace and security agenda highlights the disproportionate impact of armed conflicts on women and girls, the great benefits of improving the involvement of women in peace processes and the absolute necessity of tackling the scourge of sexual violence as a weapon. Unfortunately, we have witnessed a reversal of generational gains in women's rights. The use of rape and other forms of sexual violence as a tactic of war, torture and terrorism is widespread. Many communities are affected by the threat, occurrence or legacy of conflict-related sexual violence, including in Afghanistan, Libya, Myanmar, the Sudan, Yemen and Ethiopia.

We are horrified by the growing number of accounts of use of sexual violence by the Russian soldiers in Ukraine as a tactic of war and as a deliberate way to dehumanize victims. The reports, including the one by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, describe appalling cases of rape committed by soldiers of the Russian armed forces, with victims ranging from four-year-old children to persons of more than 80 years of age. It is therefore crucial to redouble our efforts to fight all forms of conflict-related sexual violence, address the issue of impunity of perpetrators of such crimes and enhance support for victims.

The count of those forced to flee their homes has hit the highest number since records were first kept — to over 100 million last year. Emergencies in Ukraine, Ethiopia, Afghanistan and other places have been important factors behind it. Displacement heightens the risks of all forms of sexual violence, so we must provide greater support for those fleeing war and conflict.

There is no doubt that preventing women from political engagement and curbing their public activity has a negative impact on crisis prevention and post-conflict recovery. We therefore need to introduce and implement better protection mechanisms that will empower all women and give them platforms to use their natural resilience and strength to ensure peace for us all.

The President: I now give the floor the representative of Germany.

Ms. Leendertse (Germany): We are very grateful to Mozambique and, in particular to you, Madam President, for organizing today's important and timely debate on women and peace and security.

Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) 23 years ago, much has been accomplished. However, as highlighted by previous speakers, much remains to be done. Progress has stalled in some areas, and we observe regression in others. The Taliban's violations of women's rights in Afghanistan, rising levels of conflict-related sexual violence — for example, in the Central African Republic, South Sudan and Ukraine — and the persistent difficulties in achieving equity of women in leadership positions globally all underline the need for further efforts. We all need to ensure that the frequent references to women, peace and security in statements at the United Nations and elsewhere do not remain mere rhetoric but are implemented in practice.

Let me highlight three avenues forward.

First, we must start at home. Last week, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock presented our guidelines on feminist foreign policy. She highlighted that feminist foreign policy is not a magic wand that can conjure up change overnight. Rather, it provides clear principles for using our existing toolkit in a smarter manner and for cultivating a feminist reflex. To achieve this we will, inter alia, train our staff, create incentives, hire more women and promote multiplying networks worldwide; ensure systematic gender-budgeting towards equal access to resources for all genders and marginalized groups; and monitor our efforts and adjust where necessary in close coordination with our national and international partners, including other feminist foreign policy advocates. It is our hope that more countries will join us in these efforts.

The second avenue is that we should reinforce existing instruments. Peacekeeping missions already do important work towards ensuring women's full, equal and meaningful participation in peace processes on all levels. We encourage senior leadership to expand political spaces for women and marginalized groups, and we remain engaged as an Action for Peacekeeping champion.

And the third avenue forward is that we should, of course, continuously push the policy agenda. We must ensure that women, peace and security is advanced in our joint policy documents, particularly the New Agenda for Peace. It is not enough for everyone to proclaim women, peace and security a priority; we need to agree on how we will make it one. Germany remains ready and eager to work with all of States Members of

the United Nations to bring the women and peace and security agenda forward.

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

Ms. Zoghbi (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Madam President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I would also like to thank you, Madam, for convening today's important debate on women and peace and security, entitled "Towards the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000)", which coincides with the celebration of International Women's Day tomorrow, as well as the sixty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

At the opening of the new session of the Commission on the Status of Women yesterday, the Secretary-General recalled that if we continue at the pace we are moving, it will take us 300 years to reach gender equality. Even with the Security Council itself, the statistics show a lack of gender equality. According to UN-Women, from the inception of the United Nations until last year, only 26 women have occupied the position of Permanent Representative in the Security Council. That figure shows that we are still far from achieving Sustainable Development Goal 5, on gender equality. It is clear that greater efforts need to be made.

Resolution 1325 (2000) was the first Council resolution to recognize the role women play in achieving international peace and security, their contribution to preventing and resolving conflicts and their importance to peacekeeping and peacebuilding — all of which fall within the purview of Sustainable Development Goal 5. Since its adoption, States Members of the United Nations, including Lebanon, have relied on resolution 1325 (2000) to establish national plans on women and peace and security. Indeed, after adopting our first plan in 2019, we have been taking practical steps for implementing it.

Despite the many unprecedented challenges facing Lebanon, we have been persistent in efforts to advance the women and peace and security agenda. We have achieved progress in terms of women's participation in the military, both with increased numbers and in greater responsibility in the tasks assigned to them. As a case in point, Cadet Jana Sader of the Lebanese army recently graduated from a nearly two-year training course at Laughlin Air Force Base in Texas. She is

the first pilot in our army to fly an A-29 Super Tucano attack aircraft. She is a proof that there is no limit for what a woman can do.

We value the presence and efforts of women soldiers within the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. While there are far fewer of them than their male counterparts, it remains our hope that the number of women peacekeepers will increase in future. Recent official figures indicate that women soldiers constitute only 4.8 per cent of the military units that comprise nearly 95,000 peacekeepers.

As we look forward to celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of adopting resolution 1325 (2000) in two years, Lebanon is working on implementing a second national action plan on women and peace and security, which we hope will complement the first plan by updating the means with which emerging challenges to the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda in its entirety are addressed.

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

Mr. Massari (Italy): Italy aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representative of the European Union in its capacity as observer and the representative of Canada, who spoke on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security, and would like to add a few remarks in its national capacity.

Italy commends Mozambique's timely initiative to convene an open debate on women and peace and security right at the outset of the work of the sixty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women. Indeed, participation is the challenge at the core of resolution 1325 (2000).

However, when we look at the data from the past two years, we see that the rate of women's participation as party negotiators or delegates at peace processes has decreased from 23 to 19 per cent, in spite of their constructive contribution at the grass-roots level and their presence on the front lines. Structural barriers to implementation remain and need to be addressed. For that reason, we welcome all efforts in that direction, such as bringing in more technical expertise, higher-quality data and adequate resources; promoting strategy meetings on designing and supporting inclusive processes to identify and then implement measures with the greatest impact for each context; strengthening gender mainstreaming across the work of

political and peacebuilding missions; and ensuring the support of regional organizations and Member States to make those efforts sustainable.

Italy has a long-standing tradition of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. We are a proud supporter of the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network, which we launched in October 2017 to promote gender equality and foster women's inclusion in peace processes, mediation efforts and peacebuilding in the Mediterranean region. The Network offers training, capacity-building and networking opportunities and has led to the establishment of the Global Alliance of Regional Women Mediators Networks, uniting voices from six different regions of the world in a call to accelerate the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda on the ground. Peacebuilding, peacekeeping and mediation are sectors in which women have proved particularly effective. In that spirit, we welcome the prioritization of the women and peace and security agenda in the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative and in mandates of peacekeeping operations.

This is a time to engage to do things differently. The intolerable consequences of the armed conflicts in Ukraine and elsewhere demand that we promote solutions to stop the suffering of women and girls in conflict-affected situations. We must listen to the call for action, accountability and justice coming from civil society's grass-roots women-led organizations, and embed that call in our individual and collective action to enable women to be not mere victims but actual agents of change.

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

Mr. Lagdameo (Philippines): I thank all the briefers for their insightful presentations.

We are approaching the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). Since then, the women and peace and security agenda has been elaborated on in subsequent resolutions and implemented in regional, national and subnational action plans. Indeed, the effective implementation of the women and peace and security agenda requires a multifaceted approach to gender equality and women's rights, a process that includes strategic engagements at the global, regional and national levels. It also requires the commitment of various stakeholders to working together and sharing resources, expertise and

experiences in implementing the women and peace and security strategy.

The Philippines' national action plan covering the period from 2017 to 2022 recently came to a close, and we are now formulating the plan for the next period, from 2023 to 2028. The Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity leads our national steering committee on women, peace and security. It has conducted three comprehensive consultations to assess the implementation of the national action plan and the next round of consultations with civil society, with the support of UN-Women.

In the Philippines, we continue to work to ensure the meaningful participation and leadership of women and girls as active change agents in conflict transformation and post-conflict development by mainstreaming the women and peace and security agenda in policies, plans and programmes at the national, regional and local levels. As we approach the twenty-fifth anniversary of the agenda, the Philippines is crafting the next version of its national action plan, which will stand alongside the regional action plan on women and peace and security of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. Working in conjunction with those plans is the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security, launched in December last year. We also support the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry, which aims to build the capacity of women as peacebuilders and to contribute actively to the maintenance and promotion of peace in the ASEAN community. The Philippines stands ready to implement those initiatives and to share our experiences with regional and global partners.

The women and peace and security agenda has evolved and strengthened in the past two decades. We are now more aware of the differentiated impacts of armed conflict on women and girls. Mainstreaming gender in disarmament and international peace and security instruments is a primary rather than a secondary issue. We also know that the presence of women peacekeepers can improve missions' abilities to respond to the needs of women and girls. The Philippines has deployed women peacekeepers and military observers in United Nations missions, and time and time again we have seen the importance of women's leadership in building fair and peaceful communities. We cannot overemphasize the importance of gender analysis in all aspects of conflict prevention, peace and reconstruction.

At the same time, we have seen traditional and emerging security challenges threaten global peace and security. We encourage the Security Council to explore ways to draw on the synergies of action plans at different levels in order to reinvigorate the global implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. We should engage and empower young people, especially young women, in peacebuilding and security processes, as well as in preventing their recruitment into gangs and violent groups. It is also important to model women's leadership and participation in defence institutions and operations, and to enhance protection for women and girls in conflict-affected areas.

By evaluating and improving the effectiveness of national action plans on the women and peace and security agenda through the use of evidence-based indicators and participatory approaches, we can make strides in ensuring that the goals of the women and peace and security agenda make a positive difference for people on the ground.

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

Mr. Arbeiter (Canada): I thank you, Madam President, and your Government for convening us today. I know there has been a long list of speakers already, and there are still many speakers to go, but I beg the Council's indulgence because I have two statements to give — one on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security, which many Member States have already referred to, and a very brief statement in my national capacity. I promise to be as quick as I can. I am pleased, as I mentioned, to speak on behalf of 65 members of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security.

There remains a significant gap between the ambition of our women and peace and security agenda commitments and the realization of women and girls' full, equal and meaningful participation in political, peace and security processes. Regrettably, women and girls continue to be excluded from decision-making and face discrimination, sexual and gender-based violence — both off- and online — as well as human rights violations. That requires our urgent and concerted action. In that regard, we reiterate our commitment to protecting and promoting the autonomy, empowerment and human rights of all women and girls. We will advocate for and support women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership at all levels

and all stages of political, peace and security processes. That includes United Nations-led peace processes, which must ensure women's participation. We will promote a safe and enabling environment for all women peacebuilders, mediators, human rights defenders, civil-society leaders, journalists and media workers by amplifying their voices, swiftly and unequivocally condemning attacks, intimidation and reprisals against them online and offline and ensuring predictable and flexible funding for them.

We call on the Council to ensure that all United Nations missions provide, monitor and report on support for women peacebuilders and human rights defenders and to fully ensure the independent contribution of civil society to the Council's work. We commit to promoting the full, equal and meaningful participation of uniformed women in peacekeeping at all levels, including in leadership positions.

We will strengthen international support and protection for women refugees and displaced women in conflict and post-conflict settings, in particular with respect to protection against human trafficking and conflict-related violence. We will prevent and respond to all forms of sexual and gender-based violence and discrimination, including by ensuring survivors' access to essential services, such as sexual and reproductive health, livelihood and mental health and psychosocial support services, as well as remedy and reparations services. We will promote accountability for sexual and gender-based violence and encourage the Council to pursue the fight against impunity with all the means at its disposal, including by applying conflict-related sexual violence as a designation criterion in sanctions regimes. We will ensure women's full, equal and meaningful participation in addressing terrorism and violent extremism, as well as in tackling the adverse impacts of climate change and in disaster risk reduction. Finally, we will continue to develop, implement and monitor action plans to implement our women and peace and security commitments and to share best practices.

On the eve of International Women's Day, we commend Ms. Chiziane and all women and girls who work tirelessly for justice, equality and peace. They inspire us to intensify our efforts.

(spoke in French)

Allow me to say a few words in my capacity as the representative of Canada. In the light of the increased number of threats, reprisals and violence, including

against women who provide briefings to the Council, more must be done to protect women peacebuilders and women human rights defenders. Canada has its own set of practical guidelines — Voices at Risk — which are designed to help Canadian diplomats to support human rights defenders and peacebuilders. We also believe that it is important to recognize the remarkable civil society contributions that often go unnoticed. That is why, on the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), Canada launched the five-year women and peace and security awards programme ahead of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the agenda. Canada is deeply committed to continuing its work to make headway on the agenda.

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

Ms. Zacarias (Portugal): I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to Mozambique on its presidency of the Security Council and wish it all the best. We are also grateful to Mozambique for convening today's important and timely debate.

Portugal aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the European Union, the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries and the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security.

Resolution 1325 (2000) was a turning point for foreign policy, declaring that the gender perspective is a vital prerequisite for conflict prevention and resolution, as well as for the promotion of peace and political and social stability, including women at all stages of peace processes and policymaking. But much still needs to be done. Closing the gender leadership gap is essential for national and global security. And it is our duty to promote equality in the realization of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. In a world in which armed conflict is increasing and its devastating impact unfolding before us with a disproportionate impact on women and children, we cannot remain idle. It is imperative to ensure the protection of women's rights in times of conflict and to empower them to become peacebuilders and mediators. We must bring the women and peace and security agenda into the core of the New Agenda for Peace. It is imperative to intensify our efforts to combat sexual and gender-based violence and uphold all women's human rights, including the right to education and health. Further efforts are also needed to close the digital gender gap, and we look forward to the results of the ongoing session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

In Portugal, beyond the adoption of a national action plan on women and peace and security, whose third edition is now being prepared, the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) has also led to the integration of gender perspectives into the Portuguese armed forces. A defence action plan for equality was created, outlining measures aimed at boosting women's involvement in peacekeeping missions. Therefore, we have also mainstreamed the gender perspective and the women and peace and security agenda into our cooperation agenda and in the area of security. The promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment was established as a cross-cutting priority in the recently adopted 2030 Portuguese strategy for international cooperation.

I would also like to note that one year after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Ministry of Defence of Portugal will host an international seminar in Lisbon on 26 April to discuss the preliminary lessons of the war from a gender perspective.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that promoting and protecting the human rights of all women and girls is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic investment to foster sustainable peace.

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

Mr. Dang (Viet Nam): It is good to see you, Madam President, presiding over today's meeting. I thank you for convening today's meaningful open debate on women and peace and security on the eve of International Women's Day, which will be celebrated on 8 March.

Viet Nam aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Since 2000, women and peace and security has become a key agenda item for the Security Council, involving 10 resolutions adopted by the Council, and has been mainstreamed into most of its documents. Great efforts have been made in that undertaking by the international community and by women themselves through their aspirations and willpower. That highlights women's important role in peace and security and their contribution to building and reinforcing peace.

In every part of the world, women have taken up an active role in conflict prevention, settlement and post-conflict reconstruction. They have engaged significantly in making, maintaining and building peace

and are taking the lead in shaping and promoting social development and progress. However, the road from political will to action has not been easy, with many challenges remaining. Some countries and regions are still embroiled in war, conflict and poverty. Gender-based violence remains a scourge. The lives and dignity of women are still under threat. Many girls are unable to go to school. Women are still confronted with political, economic and cultural barriers and are deprived of the necessary support for playing their rightful role or even marginalized from social development.

Even in that context and looking forward to the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), we should reaffirm our commitment to coordinating policy orientations and actions in order to promote cooperation on global gender equality on the matter. We should adopt measures to mobilize resources to ensure that women assume a more substantive role and greater participation in fostering and enhancing peace. In that regard, we call for more programmes and capacity-building for women at the local, national and international levels so as to help ensure sustainable peacebuilding and women's economic empowerment, in line with resolution 1889 (2009).

Viet Nam underwent the immense pain of war to achieve peace and independence and surmounted countless hardships in the course of its successful reconstruction and development. That process witnessed the sacrifice and contributions of Vietnamese women over generations. Vietnamese women peacekeepers are now present in various United Nations missions, contributing to the maintenance of global peace and insecurity.

Therefore, women and peace and security has long been high on Viet Nam's agenda, including during our two terms in the Security Council. Viet Nam will continue to work with Member States to ensure that women all over the world are able to make momentous changes for a brighter future for generations to come.

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

Ms. Copus Campbell (Australia): Australia thanks Mozambique for convening this open debate on women and peace and security.

As we move towards the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we are reminded of how far we have come as a global community but, at

the same time, how far we have yet to go. As the world continues to confront conflicts and threats to peace and security, such as climate change and pandemics, our collective commitment to advancing gender equality and the women and peace and security agenda must remain a priority.

As the women and peace and security agenda makes clear, our ability to address those challenges is more effective if we have the fullest representation of leaders in our society at the decision-making table. We will be more effective in achieving and maintaining peace and security when our actions are systemic and sustained, with adequate resourcing of the four women and peace and security pillars.

That includes the full and equal participation and leadership of women and girls, as well as people of diverse gender identities, in the security sector, military contingents, peacekeeping forces and in peacemaking. It also requires consistent and concerted mainstreaming of gender across peace and security processes.

As we respond to the climate crisis, we must acknowledge the impacts it will continue to have on global peace and security. That starts with recognizing that the impacts of the climate crisis and natural hazards differ by gender and can have a disproportionate impact on women and girls.

The women and peace and security agenda also provides a clear framework for bringing our efforts together. With this, the capabilities, insights, strengths and leadership of women and girls and persons of diverse gender identities are critical to driving effective strategies for change.

Advancing the women and peace and security agenda also demands addressing all forms of gender-based violence, including sexual violence in conflict. To do that effectively, we must partner with civil society and support human rights defenders. Australia does that through our work with the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund and regional women peace mediator networks, as well as support for the development and implementation of women and peace and security national and regional action plans.

We welcome collaboration with other Member States to accelerate action and achievements towards an inclusive, equitable and sustained global peace and security agenda.

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

Mrs. Kamboj (India): I congratulate Mozambique for its presidency of the Security Council for this month and for convening this debate on the eve of International Women's Day. I also thank Ms. Bahous, Ms. Diop and Ms. Spoljaric Egger for their insights on the topic of today's discussion.

The cultural ethos of India has taught its people to regard our planet Earth as a mother. As a nation with a strong civilizational character rooted in women's empowerment and equal participation in social and economic life, we strongly believe that the progress of women is the very basis for the empowerment of a nation.

We all agree that resolution 1325 (2000) was pathbreaking, as it ushered in a gendered perspective to the maintenance of international peace and security. For the first time, it recognized that women are disproportionately affected by violence and that their participation in peace processes is indispensable for forging lasting peace and security.

Over the years, we have seen a strengthening of the normative framework of the women and peace and security agenda. However, women are still routinely underrepresented in, and excluded from, formal peace processes, political dialogues and peacebuilding. The gender perspective is still neglected in conflict prevention, recovery and reconstruction.

It is our collective responsibility to take the women and peace and security journey forward at a pace that fully harnesses its transformative potential. Four issues are particularly relevant in that regard.

First, Member States must provide a conducive environment for the participation and inclusion of women in political processes and decision-making. To foster such an enabling environment, the principles of democracy, pluralism and the rule of law are essential prerequisites. In that context, as the Council is aware, we have been emphasizing the importance of an inclusive and representative governance in Afghanistan, with the meaningful participation of women, in accordance with resolution 2593 (2021).

While supporting political participation, we must also equally focus in a holistic manner on the socioeconomic empowerment of women, including their access to credit, finance and technology. Digital

technologies have enormous potential to empower women by providing women greater access to education, finance, credit, social services, the marketplace and employment.

Secondly, the United Nations and regional organizations must assist national authorities, upon their request, in developing capabilities to strengthen their national legal frameworks and related institutional structures for ensuring accountability and fighting the impunity of those perpetrating violence against women.

Member States should also be provided support for capacity-building in post-conflict situations in order to meaningfully and institutionally address the inequalities and violence faced by women and to ensure their full participation in decision-making. A focus on women in peacebuilding efforts is absolutely crucial.

Thirdly, women police officers and peacekeepers play an indispensable role in furthering the women and peace and security agenda in post-conflict situations. India welcomes efforts towards a Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy that leads to an increase in the deployment of women peacekeepers. In January 2023, India deployed a platoon of women peacekeepers in Abyei as part of the Indian battalion in the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei. That was our single largest deployment of women peacekeepers since 2007, when India was the first country to deploy all-women formed police units in Liberia. Those initiatives are reflective of our intent to increase significantly the number of women in peacekeeping contingents and our commitment to the women and peace and security agenda. India also supports increasing the deployment of women protection advisers for effective monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements on sexual violence in conflicts.

Fourthly, terrorism and violent extremism continue to be the biggest violators of human rights and a persistent threat to global peace and security. Needless to say, women and girls suffer invariably and disproportionately. Violence against women and girls perpetrated by terrorists remains rampant. That deserves the strongest condemnation and calls for the adoption of a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of terrorism.

Before I conclude, let me dismiss the frivolous, baseless and politically motivated remarks made by the representative of Pakistan regarding the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. My delegation considers it

unworthy to even respond to such malicious and false propaganda. Rather, our focus is where it shall always be — positive and forward-looking. Today's discussion is critically important to strengthen our collective efforts to accelerate the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. We respect the topic of the debate and recognize the importance of time. As such, our focus shall remain on topic.

I conclude by reiterating India's firm commitment to contributing further to the normative and practical aspects of the women and peace and security agenda.

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

Mr. Vorshilov (Mongolia): Mongolia is grateful to Mozambique's presidency for organizing this well-timed debate on landmark resolution 1325 (2000), which streamlined the women and peace and security agenda worldwide. We would also like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General and the briefers for their valuable remarks.

In the past 23 years, both the Security Council and national Governments have made significant efforts towards the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. Nevertheless, today women remain the segment of society most affected not only by armed conflicts, but also crises and disasters, including the coronavirus disease pandemic and the floods and earthquakes in different corners of the world. Therefore, the issue of strengthening women's representation and participation in peace and peacebuilding processes requires renewed commitment from both the international community and national Governments.

Mongolia is firmly committed to the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda across all its pillars — prevention, protection, participation, relief and recovery — and at all stages of the peace process. For more than two decades, Mongolia has contributed to United Nations peacekeeping operations and the sacred cause of strengthening international peace and security, sending its male and female peacekeepers. Since 2006, when Mongolia sent its first female officer to a United Nations peacekeeping operation, in terms of the number of female peacekeepers, it has ranked among the top 20 of the more than 120 troop-contributing countries. In addition, we are committed to fulfil the call by the Department of Peace Operations to increase the number of women serving in United Nations peacekeeping operations by 15 per cent by 2027. Within

the framework of that objective, Mongolia successfully hosted an international conference on strengthening the role of women in peacekeeping in June 2022, with the participation of female peacekeepers from more than 30 countries.

All of us recognize today the fact that women's leadership has a positive impact on all spheres of life. Likewise, women's participation at the decision-making level is attaining ever-increasing importance, owing to the problems and challenges as a result of the current global crises, including the pandemic, geopolitical conflicts and humanitarian disasters. Therefore, the Foreign Minister for Mongolia, Mrs. Battsetseg Batmunkh, has proposed the initiative to hold a female Foreign Ministers' meeting in Mongolia on 29 and 30 June in order to discuss issues concerning international relations and to seek possible solutions. We firmly believe that the meeting will provide an opportunity for participants to deliberate and exchange information on, and share their best practices of, feminist foreign policymaking. Most important, the consensus and solidarity of female Foreign Ministers will serve as a great impetus to promote multilateral cooperation to address global challenges.

We believe that, in cooperation with and with the support of the Member States, the United Nations system and the Security Council can achieve more as we approach the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) through the accelerated implementation of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Agenda for Peace and other internationally agreed development goals.

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

Mrs. Mihail (Romania) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Mozambique for having chosen the subject of this debate and taking this early stocktaking initiative in anticipation of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of landmark resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. As we know, when it comes to women's rights, we can never stop moving forward.

The women and peace and security agenda is at the heart of today's global peace and security challenges. It is clear that protecting women and girls from conflict-related violence is more critical than ever. We must also promote and ensure their participation in conflict prevention and resolution. In taking into account the

commitments undertaken thus far with regard to women and peace and security since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we hope that further reflection will be accorded to the subject on the agenda of the peacekeeping ministerial meeting to be held in Accra in December, as well as the preparatory meetings, especially given the fact that we will be commemorating the seventy-fifth anniversary of United Nations peacekeeping this year.

In order to implement resolution 1325 (2000) at the national level, Romania adopted in 2020 its national strategy and national action plan for the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. They are based on several of the agenda's pillars, including the incorporation of a gender perspective in security and defence policies; increased women's representation and participation in peace negotiations, mediation processes and peacekeeping missions; the prevention and fight against all forms of violence stemming from gender discrimination and harassment and sexual violence; and cooperation with the civil society to that end.

The development of the second national action plan on the implementation of the women and peace and security resolutions has been Romania's most recent priority in focusing on the agenda. In addition to focusing on women's participation in order to increase their involvement in a decision-making space where men's influence has predominated, emphasis will be placed on medical, psychological and social support for victims of sexual violence. In order to encourage international cooperation for the implementation of the agenda in 2023, Romania and the United States are co-Chairs of the Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network. Furthermore, Romania has incorporated the goals of the women and peace and security agenda in its efforts to promote gender equality and increase the role of women during its 2023–2025 term on the Human Rights Committee.

Armed conflicts continue to have a disproportionate impact on women and girls throughout the world, owing to the prevalence of sexual violence, including in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Myanmar, the Sudan, Syria and Yemen. The repercussions for women and girls of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine are deeply concerning. Romania stresses the need to ensure full accountability for those responsible for crimes and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

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

Mr. Almoslechner (Austria): Austria aligns itself with the statements delivered earlier by the Ambassador for Gender and Diversity on behalf of the European Union and the representative of Canada on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security, respectively. And Austria very much appreciates Mozambique's efforts and initiative to enable this stocktaking discussion of efforts to implement the women and peace and security agenda. We also thank the briefer, Leymah Gbowee, for sharing her experiences and insights. Austria also commends the continued commitment of Executive Director of UN-Women Sima Sami Bahous, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross Mirjana Spoljaric Egger and Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission Bineta Diop to the women and peace and security agenda.

As we approach the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) and the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, we are witnessing a significant backlash against the rights of women and girls, especially in conflict-affected countries. The Taliban's ascent to power in Kabul has wiped out gender equality and women's rights in Afghanistan in mere months, effectively banning women from participation in social and political life. Austria strongly condemns the recent decree barring women from working in non-governmental organizations, constituting a further major blow to women's rights in Afghanistan, with devastating consequences for access to humanitarian aid.

Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine and continued targeted attacks on civilian neighbourhoods and institutions, including schools and hospitals, as well as its use of sexual and gender-based violence as a weapon of war, is another painful example of how the situation of women and girls in conflict has worsened. Austria is very committed to ensuring that those responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity are held accountable. We therefore strongly support the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine in Vienna and the ongoing investigations of the International Criminal Court in Ukraine. We also firmly condemn the disproportionate use of force against protesters of the Woman, Life, Freedom movement and the Iranian authorities' executions of

death sentences, which are vivid demonstrations of how women's attempts to achieve meaningful and equal participation and to assert their rights over their own bodies — such as the right to wear or not to wear a hijab — are forcibly struck down. While it is important to ask ourselves where we have gone wrong in letting such situations persist, we must also be action-oriented and focus on the question of what we can do better.

We believe that we can and must do better to promote the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. Austria takes a holistic approach to issues of women and peace and security, with clear commitments in its foreign security and development policies, as well as its humanitarian assistance. The meaningful implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) serves as a pillar for the sustainable development of countries into stable societies built on the principles of the rule of law, human rights and gender equity. In 2022, Austria provided €124 million in humanitarian aid to Ukraine and its neighbouring countries, making it the number-one donor country of humanitarian assistance based on gross domestic product, the majority of it delivered to women and children. Austria also provided €5 million of emergency assistance to UN-Women in Afghanistan in 2022. Those funds have been used to establish day-care centres to respond to basic needs and to establish an Afghan women advisory group for the humanitarian coordination team. Furthermore, Austria is supporting women journalists, who often encounter obstacles to their ability to pursue their profession, in finding alternatives in the digital space.

In peacekeeping, Austria has also continued to work on increasing the number of uniformed women in its military personnel. Our armed forces therefore remain committed to integrating a gender perspective into their military operations to enhance situational awareness and improve preventive and protective measures. To that end, we recently established a permanent advisory office within the Austrian armed forces to consider the gender perspective.

Together let us harness the valuable exchanges taking place during the sixty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women. Let us make use of the insights gained for the women and peace and security agenda and continue discussions in the Security Council on how information and communications technologies and digital platforms can help empower women and girls in contexts affected by conflict and on developing measures to mitigate risks. I want to

assure the Council that Austria will continue to be at the forefront of the collective efforts to put the women and peace and security agenda into practice.

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

Mrs. Zin Zawawi (Malaysia): Malaysia would like to express its appreciation to Mozambique for convening today's open debate on women and peace and security. We also thank the briefers for their insights.

Our delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Almost 23 years have passed since the Security Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 1235 (2000). It affirmed the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, as well as in peace-building initiatives. Regrettably, we heard earlier in today's open debate that the global efforts to advance the women and peace and security agenda have regressed. The fact remains that women continue to be largely excluded from processes aimed at achieving peace and security, and we have seen that some peace agreements lack provisions that prioritize the security and safety of women and girls. Malaysia is concerned about the degree to which rhetorical support for the agenda has continued to outpace its actual achievement. Advancing the women and peace and security agenda should work in tandem with efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, and specifically Goal 5, on achieving gender equality, and Goal 16, on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies. The fact is that gender equality should be systematically integrated into all agendas in order to further empower women in achieving sustainable peace.

The importance that Malaysia attaches to the protection of women's rights is reflected through its national policy on women, which was formulated in 1989. Its key objectives are ensuring access to opportunities, the equitable sharing of resources and the integration of women into every possible sector with a view to promoting an inclusive and prosperous nation. Within that framework, Malaysia equally recognizes that women have a critical role to play in helping to end wars and maintain peace. As of November 2022, of the 849 personnel from the Malaysian Armed Forces and Royal Malaysia Police deployed to five United Nations peacekeeping operations, 11.5 per cent — 98 of them — are women. Malaysia has observed that

the presence and active participation of women peacekeepers in conflict zones can facilitate interaction and confidence-building with local communities and the populations affected, particularly among women and children. In that regard, Malaysia firmly believes that women's active participation and positive role are critical success factors in peace processes.

The Secretary-General has stated that achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls is part of the unfinished business of our time and our greatest ongoing human rights challenge. At the current rate of progress, Malaysia wholeheartedly agrees with the Secretary-General's statement that more needs to be done to achieve meaningful gender equality. Excluding women from contributing to and playing constructive roles in peace and security is no longer an option.

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

Mr. Liepnieks (Latvia): I would like to start by thanking all the briefers, as well as Mozambique, for giving us the opportunity to reflect on the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. We welcome the continued practice of inviting women representatives of civil society to brief the Security Council.

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

The women and peace and security agenda is an important contributor to tackling today's global peace and security challenges. Women's participation in peace negotiations, mediation and conflict resolution has increased, and so has the inclusion of gender perspectives in peacekeeping operations. More countries, including Latvia, have developed national action plans on women and peace and security, which serve as a road map for ensuring that women's needs and priorities are integrated into all aspects of peacebuilding. However, despite those achievements, much remains to be done. Women continue to be underrepresented in peace negotiations and in decision-making roles in the security arena. In the past 25 years, women have made up just 13 per cent of negotiators, 6 per cent of mediators and 6 per cent of signatories in major peace processes. At that rate, it may take close to 300 years to achieve full gender equality, and meanwhile, women and girls are disproportionately affected by conflict.

Sexual and gender-based violence remains pervasive in conflict situations, and while women and girls are often its primary victims, their voices are often silenced or ignored.

In the years to come, one of the main indicators of the success of the women and peace and security agenda will be the international response to the crimes committed by the Russian Federation in Ukraine. In resolution 1325 (2000) and the nine subsequent resolutions adopted in the past two decades, the Security Council recognized the effects of armed conflict on women and girls and declared sexual violence a war crime. The Council has called on the parties to conflicts to respect international law and to take measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, and yet a member of this very Council, the Russian Federation, has increasingly targeted women and girls by using sexual violence as a tactic of war, as we have seen in its war of aggression against Ukraine. It will be critical to ensure effective prevention and protection systems and practical and immediate assistance for the victims, as well as to end impunity and ensure accountability for those crimes. The Russian Federation must and will be held accountable for the crimes it has committed, including through a special tribunal for the crime of aggression.

We regret the ongoing crackdown on women's rights in Afghanistan and Iran. We should not stand by and watch as their fundamental rights are taken away. The near-total erasure of women and girls — half of the population — from public life in Afghanistan is not just a staggering human rights violation but a setback for the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda that will be felt for years to come. We cannot stress enough the central role of women in promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan. Latvia supports international efforts aimed at ensuring that women and girls reclaim their space and can fully contribute to the future of Afghanistan. Women and girls should not be seen merely as victims of conflict and instability. We must take concrete steps to ensure that they have a seat at the table and that their voices are heard and considered in decision-making processes related to peace and security.

Gender equality and women's empowerment are long-standing priorities for Latvia in international organizations and development cooperation. As a current member of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and its Bureau and the Executive

Board of UN-Women, Latvia has worked diligently to promote gender equality and plays an active role in shaping and enforcing global standards and policies for gender equality.

Since the very first days of Russia's war against Ukraine, Latvia has continued to allocate additional funds for the physical and emotional rehabilitation of victims of the war, especially women and girls, who have suffered from sexual violence committed by Russia's soldiers, as documented by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine.

In conclusion, I urge all members to take action to support the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions. Without the full, equal and meaningful participation of women, peace agreements are less likely to be reached and less likely to be sustainable.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Sierra Leone.

Mr. Sowa (Sierra Leone): My delegation congratulates Mozambique on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March and commends it for organizing this open debate on the women and peace and security agenda, which celebrates the momentous adoption, nearly 25 years ago, of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent related resolutions. We all share a fundamental responsibility for taking regular stock of the progress that has been made in improving the conditions of women and reaffirming our commitment to overcoming the considerable challenges that remain in the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

In societies where inequality, poverty and underdevelopment are prevalent, there is a tendency for women, girls and other vulnerable groups to be treated unfairly. Tension, chaos and conflicts are commonly associated with those societies. The negative effects of such conflicts on women, girls and children cannot be overemphasized. More than 50 per cent of the current global migrant population, refugees and asylum seekers are women, girls and children from conflict-affected societies. The global community therefore needs to adopt a unified solution to address those issues in our efforts to attain our shared goal of international peace and security.

The Security Council's landmark adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) made manifest the global

community's recognition of the disproportionate burden that women and girls bear during conflict situations, as well as the vital role that they play in conflict prevention, mitigation and resolution. We need to strengthen the meaningful participation of women and the leadership opportunities for them in tackling the root causes and impacts of conflicts and other emerging crises. Within global, continental and regional organizations, we should encourage more gender-sensitive conflict analysis so that we can better comprehend the progress that has been made but also the outstanding challenges to implementation.

My delegation recognizes the significant progress that has been made so far on the women and peace and security agenda. The recognition of women's issues in the higher echelons of global, continental, regional and national institutions has increased exponentially in recent years. For instance, in building on progress that has been made, the Government of Sierra Leone is currently focused on strengthening institutional and service delivery mechanisms to properly coordinate and effectively deliver on its policies and the promise of a more secure world for all, particularly efforts to empower women and transform their lives. That was reinforced when our 2021 gender equality and women's empowerment bill was enacted into law on 15 November 2022. The law is an unprecedented win for the women of Sierra Leone, as it represents the single-largest increase in women's political participation and access to finance, employment opportunities and equal pay. It also establishes a 30 per cent quota for the participation of women in Government for both appointed and elective positions.

Recognizing the gender-specific impacts of climate change and insecurity on women, men, boys and girls, as well as the importance of women's full and equal participation in peacebuilding processes, we believe it is imperative that climate security assessments and interventions mainstream gender considerations in all phases.

My delegation appreciates Member States' numerous political statements on sexual violence perpetrated against women and girls in conflict situations. However, those statements must be translated into concrete action, including by ensuring accountability for the perpetrators and reparation and assistance to the victims of that dehumanizing scourge.

In conclusion, women and peace and security remains high on the global agenda. Significant progress has been made through the concerted efforts of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, continental and regional organizations, national Governments and civil-society organizations. Notwithstanding that progress, women still encounter a myriad of targeted violations. My delegation implores the Council to reiterate its call on Member States to domesticate resolution 1325 (2000), craft national action plans and establish effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. It is our hope that our collective resolve will be translated into concrete action for the continued improvement of those mechanisms and the provision of periodic reviews of their implementation, which in turn will lead to the continued improvements in the status of women.

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

Owing to a technical failure of the recording and back-up systems during the meeting, no recording was made of part of the proceedings. Written statements furnished by the delegations in question are published as annexes to this document, by speaking order in the Chamber.

Ms. Nassrullah (Iraq) (spoke in Arabic): [missing sound; see Annex I]

Mrs. Beshkova (Bulgaria): [missing sound; see Annex II]

Mr. Hwang (Republic of Korea): [missing sound; see Annex III]

Mr. Gertze (Namibia): [missing sound; see Annex IV]

Ms. Chan Valverde (Costa Rica) (spoke in Spanish): [missing sound; see Annex V]

Mr. Chatrnúch (Slovakia): [missing sound; see Annex VI]

Mr. Aydil (Türkiye): [missing sound; see Annex VII]

... education and health services are concrete examples of our efforts to that end ... [missing sound]
... services to offer dignified living conditions to more than 4 million refugees in Türkiye ... [missing sound]
... centres, institutions for children in need of care,

socioeconomic support within families, livelihood opportunities and social cohesion programmes.

During our Group of 20 (G-20) presidency in 2015, we pioneered the establishment of the Women 20 platform in order to ensure that gender considerations are mainstreamed into G-20 work. We are also proud to have played a leading role in the establishment of the Women's Consultative Council of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) will present a valuable opportunity to take stock of that agenda and discuss how we can further strengthen and streamline it in all our peace and security-related work for the next decade. Türkiye will continue to contribute to advancing the women and peace and security agenda.

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

Mr. Vidal (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Mozambique ... [missing sound; see Annex VIII]

Recording was restored.

Chile, like other countries, is eager to share its experience.

National action plans should respond to one of the concerns raised for this debate by planning and developing effective measures to protect women and girls during armed conflict. At present we see that protection measures are becoming less and less effective. The increase in sexual violence in conflict, threats and attacks on women human rights defenders — virtually and in person — and the spread of misogynistic discourse on social media are strongly correlated with the sense of impunity enjoyed by perpetrators.

The Council must make a firm and renewed commitment to preventing impunity and seeking innovative measures to bring perpetrators to justice.

It is also imperative for the Council to ensure that all peacekeeping operations have personnel trained in addressing gender issues and in the prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence, which will provide robust protection for women and girls and be a first step towards their empowerment and meaningful participation. To enhance that participation, the Council and the Secretariat can promote three specific measures already discussed in this regard — supporting the economic and social empowerment of women affected

by armed conflict, institutionalizing the participation of local and international women's organizations in political processes related to peace and security, and promoting women's leadership at all levels of the multilateral system.

Finally, we would like to draw attention to the emerging threats affecting the security of women and girls. The trafficking and diversion of small arms and light weapons has plunged Latin America into a situation of violence that must be addressed and prioritized by the Council. The national action plans for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) should set 2025 as the deadline to respond to that situation, which, like other traditional and emerging threats, affects women and girls differently.

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

Mr. Yoseph (Ethiopia): Let me begin by congratulating Mozambique for assuming the presidency of the Council for the month of March. I would also like to thank Mozambique for organizing this important open debate on women and peace and security. And I also thank all the briefers.

The equal and meaningful participation of women is a cornerstone of lasting peace and stability. Sex-based discrimination and the disempowerment of women disrupt social cohesion and deprive our communities of the perspective, inputs and indispensable contributions of half of our population.

Equal rights and the participation of women in times of peace, as well as during conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction efforts, are therefore extremely critical. Within the security and human rights framework of the African Union, we continue to attach great value to resolution 1325 (2000), the first Council resolution on women and peace and security.

The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, also known as the Maputo Protocol, acknowledges and makes reference to resolution 1325 (2000). Furthermore, African human rights instruments, including on the rights of women and children, emphasize the value and protection needs of the family that are the foundation of every society. Those commitments have been incorporated into the post-conflict reconstruction and development policy, as well as the gender policy of the African Union.

Most notably, the African Union's Agenda 2063, a road map for Africa's socioeconomic and political development, provides for the meaningful participation and leadership of women towards silencing the guns, enhancing good governance, ensuring democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law, and promoting a peaceful and secure Africa. The African Union has also recognized the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation, also known as FemWise-Africa, as part of the African Peace and Security Architecture, and is the first intergovernmental organization to appoint a Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security.

Apart from the overarching institutional and normative frameworks I have mentioned, the African Union issued the Continental Results Framework (CRF) for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda in Africa. The CRF for the period between 2018 and 2028 provides for 41 targets, categorized under the four pillars of prevention, protection, participation, and relief and recovery. The CRF presupposes the extensive policy and legal measures in place and the urgent need for concrete actions of implementation.

It is against that backdrop that I will raise three main points that Ethiopia believes deserve greater emphasis if we are to realize our aspiration for the equal and meaningful participation of women.

My first point has to do with women's agency. Economic empowerment and equal opportunity are key in ensuring long-term equity and lasting peace. The participation of women and addressing all the encumbrances to their progress is a matter of rights and thus critical. Poverty reduction and the empowerment of women, including through concerted action against harmful practices, are necessary steps in unlocking the full potential of every community. Equal opportunity for women to participate in all State institutions and the private sector is also imperative.

While national efforts are the centrepiece to achieving that objective, international cooperation should also align with national priorities. In that regard, we must take all measures necessary to prevent hindrances, including unilateral coercive measures, that curb the economic and employment opportunities of women.

My second point relates to indigenous mechanisms. Indigenous institutions and conflict resolution

mechanisms led by women have proven effective in transitioning communities out of conflicts. It is imperative that States give more emphasis in their policy formulation and allocation of human, institutional and financial resources to engendering local initiatives and women-led programmes.

My third point relates to the need to embrace progressive realization. It is becoming a trend for countries emerging from crises to designate a quota for female representation in State machineries. In our subregion alone, three of Ethiopia's neighbours have incorporated such quotas as part of their peace processes. The implementation of those commitments deserve the maximum support of the international community. Furthermore, considering the difficulties even the most stable democracies face in ensuring a sufficient level of women's representation, it is necessary to adopt a constructive approach on the basis of the progressive realization of such goals.

Finally, I would like to reiterate Ethiopia's commitment to ensuring the full and effective participation and representation of women in peace processes, including conflict prevention, resolution and management and post-conflict reconstruction, as provided under our national laws and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa.

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

Mrs. Ataeva (Turkmenistan): At the outset, let me express our gratitude to Mozambique's presidency of the Security Council and personally thank Her Excellency Ms. Verónica Nataniel Macamo Dlhovo, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mozambique, for convening this open debate.

More than 22 years have passed since the Security Council adopted its landmark resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. And we can say today that the agenda has proven its practical value. For Turkmenistan, it has had significant implications both at the regional and national levels. Regionally, we are proud of the Central Asian Women Leaders' Caucus, which was established in December 2020 with the support of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia. That platform reaffirms women's important role in conflict prevention and resolution, peacebuilding, peacekeeping and humanitarian responses, and promotes their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the

maintenance and promotion of peace and security in the region. It was a major landmark event when, in November 2022, the Women Leaders' Caucus stepped into peacebuilding deliberations by taking part in a dedicated session of the Peacebuilding Commission and its preceding side event, both of which were held at Headquarters in New York.

In my brief observations today, I would like to focus on some of the potential opportunities that we have within the United Nations system to further advance our joint activities on the women and peace and security agenda.

First, we believe that the Peacebuilding Commission has hidden potential to apply in this field, in particular within the Commission's gender strategy, with progress tracked through its action plan. Let me remind the Council that, in 2021, 54 per cent of the Commission's meetings were briefed by women peacebuilders. We lost that focus in 2022. However, it is the right time to return to that nexus and consider what we can implement in practice.

Secondly, I see good opportunities for promoting women's participation in formulating the New Agenda for Peace. As we are participating in the sixty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), it is of crucial importance to consolidate the efforts of Member States in ensuring that the voice of specialized structures such as UN-Women and the CSW is heard at the stakeholders' conference on the New Agenda for Peace.

Thirdly, there is indeed untapped potential in informal groups to push forward the women and peace and security agenda. I would emphasize one of them, the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security, which comprises more than 60 Member States. We remain committed to the work of the Group in advancing the women and peace and security agenda through partnerships.

In conclusion, let me assure the Security Council of Turkmenistan's overall support in promoting and increasing support for women's role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities.

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

Ms. Jarbussynova (Kazakhstan): We commend the presidency of Mozambique for convening this

ministerial open debate and thank all the briefers for their in-depth and insightful remarks.

In October 2000, I was in this Chamber at a Security Council meeting (see S/PV.4213), when resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted. At that time, I was the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations. I would say that, since its adoption, much progress has been made to achieve the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peace processes, but we still have a long way to go before we fully implement the women and peace and security mandate. The expectations of those who were in this Chamber in 2000 have not been realized. As noted in the most recent annual report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2022/740), many regions of the world are experiencing a reversal of generational gains in women's rights. Gender perspectives remain at the margins of conflict prevention. In order to bridge the gap between our commitments and actual action, we believe that every Member State and region needs to fully integrate a robust normative framework of the women and peace and security agenda with its four pillars — participation, protection, prevention and relief and recovery — in their programmes and policies.

Since its independence, Kazakhstan has been consistently working to ensure the highest standards in framing gender policy. We have achieved significant progress in addressing gender issues on several fronts. We have reduced our gender inequality index by 60 per cent, introduced a 30 per cent quota for women and youth in Parliament and local representative bodies and increased the proportion of women managers in State-owned corporations to the same level — 30 per cent. In December 2021, our country adopted its first national action plan for the period from 2022 to 2025 on resolution 1325 (2000), which is a whole-of-Government strategy developed in inclusive consultations with relevant United Nations agencies and civil society organizations.

Kazakhstan has been deploying women to several United Nations peacekeeping operations. We expect that the adoption of a national action plan will increase their number, and not only improve gender-sensitive trainings for the armed and security forces, which we conduct, but attract more women in that respect. We also believe that a national action plan will contribute to expanding women's engagement in decision-making at all levels. We have strong and sustained political

will, all the necessary resources and a results-based monitoring and evaluation plan to achieve those goals.

National efforts must be reinforced by commitments at the regional level, with strengthened cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. In that context, Kazakhstan, with United Nations support, has created the Act for Equal platform to develop effective ways to fully realize the peacemaking potential of women throughout Central Asia and Afghanistan. We have also contributed financially to the joint United Nations-European Union Spotlight Initiative, a regional programme for Central Asia and Afghanistan, and joined the multi-stakeholder Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action, launched at the Generation Equality Forum in July 2021.

At the regional level, our country is focusing on Afghanistan with a multidimensional approach to conflict prevention and resolution, recovery, reintegration and humanitarian assistance. During the turmoil in Kabul, my Government issued visas and provided safe passage through our territory for 99 Afghan women judges and their families.

It is evident that lack of access to a quality and inclusive education, especially in rural areas, remains the main obstacle to achieving women's empowerment. Therefore, my country, together with the European Union and United Nations Development Programme, is implementing the second phase of its programme to educate Afghan young people — including girls — in its universities. We encourage donor countries to allocate a greater number of scholarships for women and girls from conflict-affected countries. Kazakhstan was also among the first countries to carry out the Zhusan and Rusafa humanitarian operations to repatriate, rehabilitate and reintegrate its citizens, mainly women and children, who had fled to Syria and Iraq. That serves as a good model for other countries, and we are ready to share our experiences and lessons learned with the international community. Kazakhstan will continue to support the women and peace and security agenda and the multilateral efforts aimed at achieving gender equality, peaceful societies and inclusive governance.

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

Mrs. Mimran Rosenberg (Israel): Israel aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf the Group of

Friends of Women, Peace and Security, and I would like to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

Since the moment of Israel's establishment, female leadership and participation has been a championed value. Gender equality is enshrined in Israel's Declaration of Independence, and we are proud and fortunate to have a legacy of strong female leaders. The State of Israel was one of the first United Nations Member States to incorporate the principles of resolution 1325 (2000) into its law with the adoption, in 1951, of the Women's Equal Rights Law of Israel. Work is currently under way for the implementation of the national action plan for gender equality, led by Israel's Authority for the Advancement of the Status of Women. Moreover, our Ministry for Foreign Affairs appointed a special envoy in order to ensure the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on a global scale.

Recalling the efforts to streamline the gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, in line with the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping agenda, we echo our call for the development of a new mental health strategy, which should be formed with a gender perspective in order to increase support for all peacekeepers, regardless of their gender.

The involvement of women in conflict resolution and resilience-building is crucial, and in order to guarantee their involvement in those processes, the first step must be to empower them. Israel's Golda Meir Mount Carmel International Training Centre aims to promote gender equality globally. It has carried out hundreds of training activities for more than 30,000 women and men across the globe, providing them with tools for women's empowerment and development. In the past decade, for example, MASHAV — Israel's agency for international development — has supported the establishment of the Africa Centre for Transformative and Inclusive Leadership in Kenya, which aims to enhance women's leadership and economic independence across the continent.

While empowering women is critical to ensuring female involvement, there are still places in which women continue to fight for their most basic human rights, such as Iran, where women have been brutally suppressed, and in Afghanistan, where the Taliban have cruelly prohibited women from accessing education or employment. It is our duty to stand united against such crimes, which violate the basic principles of human rights, as well as the Charter of the United Nations.

Investing in women's full participation is critical to preventing violence and promoting peace. Anyone who wishes a harmonious future for humankind must protect women's freedom and seek to ensure gender inclusion. A peaceful and prosperous future is possible only if everyone is involved. Do not underestimate the power of believing in women.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Ms. Ershadi (Islamic Republic of Iran): I thank Mozambique for organizing today's open debate. I also thank the briefers for their informative briefings.

Armed conflicts have devastating and disproportionate effects on women and girls, who are often the primary victims of violence, displacement and human rights abuses. They also face economic hardships, limited access to health care and education, and increased vulnerability and marginalization. To prevent and defuse violent conflicts, we must address their underlying causes, such as terrorism, violent extremism, and foreign occupation and interference. Similarly, women's involvement in conflict prevention and resolution is crucial, as they bring unique perspectives and experiences. Women should also be at the forefront of development, peace and security. Therefore, the international community should use diplomacy and dialogue to find political solutions to conflicts in hotspots and engage women in all stages of the peace process. In that regard, the Security Council has recognized the need to protect women in conflict situations and to empower them in conflict prevention and resolution.

In our volatile region, women's empowerment and development are crucial, despite the region's instability. Women and girls in Afghanistan have been severely affected by recent bans and restrictions, and it is essential that the de facto authorities in the country honour their obligations to ensure women's access to education, work and political participation. In Palestine, foreign occupation is the most significant threat to the security of Palestinian women and girls, particularly in Gaza, where they are the main victims of a long-standing blockade and bombings by the Israeli regime. The Council should compel the Israeli regime to end its occupation of Palestine, lift the inhumane blockade of Gaza and stop its crimes against women and girls.

While women's issues are discussed in the context of peace and security when they are related to armed

conflicts, it is important to recognize that those issues are the responsibility of other United Nations bodies, such as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The Security Council should address such issues that directly affect international peace and security, in addition to collaborating with other United Nations bodies to ensure that women's issues are effectively addressed. My delegation categorically rejects the unjustified references made by certain Member States about Iran during today's open debate. Iranian women are active in various fields, including science, education and politics, and play a crucial role in society. Despite facing challenges such as the inhumane unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States, Iran remains committed to promoting women's rights and has made significant progress in empowering women. As a responsible Member State, Iran recognizes that there is always room for improvement in terms of protecting and promoting women's human rights. We continue to work to empower Iranian women and girls and to ensure that their rights are upheld, while actively taking into account the concerns voiced by our women and girls. That is one of our top priorities, and we will endeavour to make progress in that regard.

Against that backdrop, we must address the double standards and political hypocrisy of a number of States, which selectively apply international law and human rights to advance their political interests. They often use United Nations platforms to push their agendas, while remaining silent on the human rights violations and atrocities committed against Palestinian women and girls by the Israeli regime. It is concerning that those States shamelessly support the Israeli regime's apartheid policies as self-defence, while disregarding the suffering and oppression of Palestinian women. Such political approaches can erode the credibility of the United Nations. Finally, it is ironic that the Israeli apartheid regime is attending such an important meeting as this one and speaking about women's rights, while Palestinian women and girls continue to suffer as a result of its decades-long occupation and its colonial apartheid policies and practices in occupied Palestine. The representative of the Israeli regime should have spoken about the countless Palestinian women and girls who have been victims of its atrocities in Gaza and other parts of occupied Palestine.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Sri Lanka.

Mr. Gunaratna (Sri Lanka): Permit me to extend my best wishes to the Republic of Mozambique on its accession to the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. I also extend my appreciation for the convening of this open debate on the theme “Women and peace and security: towards the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000)”, which coincides with the sixty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Although significant strides have been made in executing the women and peace and security agenda over the past 23 years, a gap remains with regard to the core commitments of the resolution. Today the direct participation and representation of women in formal peace processes continues to be the one area that lags behind in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. Between 1992 and 2019, women served as only 6 per cent of mediators, 6 per cent of signatories and 13 per cent of negotiators globally. The outbreak of the coronavirus disease shed even greater light on the full extent of gender inequality. Concerns have therefore been raised with respect to how far the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peace processes and decision-making has progressed, and what actions States should already have taken and should take in the future to achieve gender parity in that important activity. As noted in last year’s annual report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2022/740), the world is currently experiencing a reversal of the generational gains in women’s rights, while violent conflicts, military expenditures, military coups, displacements and hunger continue to increase. Therefore, empowering women leaders to participate in peace processes and peacebuilding becomes increasingly crucial in order to accelerate the commitments of resolution 1325 (2000).

The Sri Lankan Government has achieved substantial progress towards establishing gender equality and security by adopting and developing critical policies, such as its national policy for women, which is a general policy framework, and a national plan of action to address sexual and gender-based violence in Sri Lanka. It has also made available legal protections to protect women from all types of discrimination. Sri Lanka’s constitutional guarantees assure the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination as a fundamental right. There has also been a conscious effort to strengthen and reform legislation that directly enhances women’s empowerment and rights

in recognition of those constitutional guarantees. As it continues to engage in post-conflict nation-building with a view to empowering women leaders and enhancing women’s participation in decision-making processes, Sri Lanka introduced a 25 per cent quota for women candidates at the parliamentary, provincial and local government levels. Women were given the opportunity to run for office in the local government elections held after 2017, and the necessary measures are currently being taken to increase the representation of women in the provincial councils and Parliament. Sri Lanka also has been an active participant in United Nations peacekeeping operations for many decades and is a member of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. To promote the role of women in conflict prevention, Sri Lanka has increased the proportion of female contingents in its United Nations peacekeeping deployments.

In conclusion, as we meet at the mid-point between the twentieth and twenty-fifth anniversaries of resolution 1325 (2000) today, it is incumbent upon all stakeholders to take stock of the commitments made at its twentieth anniversary by identifying the gaps and addressing those issues in a meaningful way so as to achieve its envisioned outcomes. Sri Lanka encourages all parties concerned to actively engage and synergize efforts at all levels for the mobilization of resources and the leveraging of partnerships towards the realization of that objective as a priority.

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

Mr. Vichankaiyakij (Thailand): Thailand aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

At the outset, Thailand wishes to express its appreciation to Mozambique for convening this important open debate on the women and peace and security agenda.

Thailand reaffirms the vital role of women as active agents for transformative change in our efforts to achieve peace and security and sustainable development. The year 2025 will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, which has provided the bedrock for women’s protection and empowerment in the realm of peace and security. For its part, Thailand is fully committed to that very important agenda and

continues to look for ways to strengthen the obligations set forth under the resolution. In that light, Thailand wishes to highlight the following four points.

First, as women are a key pillar of every society, it is crucial to promote their leadership and meaningful participation in peace processes and in decision-making at all levels. For Thailand, our national measures and guidelines on women and peace and security set out a clear framework for a coordinated, whole-of-Government approach, in partnership with the international community. In collaboration with UN-Women, we are developing new measures and guidelines for the next cycle and seeking to strengthen the role of women in addressing conflict and political and social unrest.

Secondly, Thailand supports the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy to increase the representation of women in United Nations peacekeeping operations in a sustainable manner. We also support the incorporation of gender perspectives in all United Nations peace and security efforts. The number of Thai women officers in United Nations peacekeeping operations has continued to increase as a result of Thailand's efforts to empower and equip them with the skills required for their active participation. Currently, Thailand deploys 18 women military personnel and six women police personnel in United Nations peacekeeping operations — approximately 8 per cent of our troop contribution, the highest proportion of Thai women personnel to date. Our experience in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan, and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan shows that women peacekeepers can help to build trust, provide gender-sensitive responses and address the vulnerabilities faced by women and girls in host communities.

Thirdly, capacity-building and adequate funding remain critical factors for promoting the women and peace and security agenda. It is imperative that capacity-building be relevant to the context and situation of each conflict area. It is also crucial to promote cooperation with various stakeholders, including civil society, local communities and the private sector.

Fourthly, Thailand believes that regional perspectives and engagement are of particular importance for the successful implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The ideas and concerns of

women in different regions, from leaders to those at the grass-roots level, must be taken into account.

In conclusion, Thailand reaffirms its commitment to the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, as it is our conviction that a society can enjoy enduring peace, stability and sustainable development only through the realization of diversity, equality and inclusion.

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

Mr. Mainero (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Through resolution 1325 (2000), the Security Council recognized for the first time the central role that women must play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. Since then, the world has become more aware of both the plight and the positive contribution of women in conflict situations, and as a result why their meaningful participation in prevention, peacebuilding and peacekeeping processes is necessary. However, significant gaps remain. We have faced many challenges in implementing the four pillars of resolution 1325 (2000) over the past 20 years. Women are often excluded from negotiating tables and decision-making processes in the area of peace and security. Similarly, conflict-related violence continues to affect women, despite our commitment to preventing such violence. Finally, gender perspectives often continue to be ignored in the development and implementation of post-conflict recovery measures.

The most glaring problem in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) has been the large gap between the ambitions set out in the resolution and the results achieved to date. Regrettably, women remain largely underrepresented in the peace and security sphere, and stereotypes about women in that field persist. Women continue to be perceived as passive victims of conflict, rather than as drivers of change. In fact, recent studies show that women's participation in peace agreements makes them 64 per cent less likely to fail. As a result of women's underrepresentation, the vast majority of peace agreements adopted over the past three decades have not addressed their concerns and therefore have not reflected the interests of society as a whole.

As an international community, we must anchor our vision of security to the inclusion of women in all our activities. It is women who serve as mediators of disputes at the community level, who hold families together in times of conflict, who manage resources

when they are scarce and, in many cases, who defend and protect their communities. Given the impact of conflict on women's lives, it is essential that those who have the power to influence the composition of the negotiating table ensure that women have a seat and equal and substantive participation.

Let us not forget that there are also a growing number of armed groups for whom gender inequality is a strategic objective and misogyny a part of their core ideology.

One of the keys to the successful implementation of the women and peace and security agenda is action by States at the domestic level. One of the specific ways in which States have been encouraged to show their commitment to the resolutions on women and peace and security is through the development of national action plans. That is why, in September 2022, Argentina approved its second national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). This second plan was adapted to the new realities and existing needs both externally and internally through an intersectional approach to violence and cross-cutting security. It is also sensitive to gender and such other identity categories as race, class and sexual orientation, as well as to the particularities of local, regional and international environments. It highlights the situation of rural, Afro-descendent, indigenous, migrant, displaced populations as well as diverse women. This second plan also introduces specific actions on preventive diplomacy and mediation, cybersecurity and climate change.

For our country, the implementation of the set of Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security is not only of the utmost importance in our foreign policy, but it is also part of the commitments assumed through various international instruments for the protection of women's human rights, several of which have constitutional status in my country.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that, as Argentina is a country in a region of the global South where armed conflicts are not widespread, the strengthening of regional policies on women, peace and security with a preventive approach is one of the most valuable contributions that our country makes to the women and peace and security agenda, as it aims to prevent social conflicts that could lead to outbreaks or other forms of violence that could potentially destabilize the region.

The women and peace and security agenda should be one of the priorities, not only of this Security Council, but of the United Nations as a whole. Women are agents of change and pillars of the community. Argentina remains committed to this vision and understands that the women and peace and security agenda is a key element in efforts to build international peace and security.

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

Ms. Ahangari (Azerbaijan): We would like to thank you, Madam President, and your country, Mozambique, for convening today's open debate on this very important topic. It provides a welcome opportunity to review the implementation of commitments under resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent Security Council resolutions.

Although international law and standards have significantly developed over the years, women and children account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict and hate-driven violence. Non-compliance by States with their international obligations and the lack of accountability for violations of international humanitarian and human rights law continue to remain a serious challenge. While maintaining a consistent focus on advancing the women and peace and security agenda, it is important that the Council persistently reiterates its demand for strict compliance with international obligations and the end of impunity for serious violations.

Women and girls in Azerbaijan have seriously suffered from the devastating effects of the Armenian aggression over the past three decades. The occupied territories of our country were ethnically cleansed of their population of more than 700,000, half of whom were women. The war claimed the lives of thousands of women and girls. Last month marked the thirty-first anniversary of the genocide committed in the town of Khojaly, where hundreds of civilians, including 106 women, were brutally killed within a very few hours by the invading Armenian forces.

The tragic consequences of the occupation also include almost 4,000 missing citizens of Azerbaijan, among whom are 267 women. It was established that 98 of those women were taken as hostages. Although they were seen alive at the moment of captivity, their whereabouts are still unknown. We continue to raise awareness on this issue, including through annual resolutions of the General Assembly and the

Commission on the Status of Women on the topics of missing persons and women and children taken hostage in armed conflict.

The perpetrators of brutal crimes committed against Azerbaijani women continue to enjoy impunity. To date, Armenia has taken no steps to bring the perpetrators to justice or to investigate and prosecute the numerous horrific offences for which its military is responsible.

Even after the end of the conflict, 276 civilians of Azerbaijan, among them one woman, were killed or wounded by mine explosions in the liberated territories. Massive landmine contamination and continued refusal by Armenia to provide accurate and complete information about the minefields in these territories are among the major impediments to the ongoing recovery and reconstruction efforts and the safe return of the internally displaced persons.

With the end of the conflict, it is high time for Armenia to honour its international obligations, take practical steps to shed light on the dark pages of its aggression against Azerbaijan and cooperate in good faith to eliminate its harsh consequences, so that we can build a better future for our peoples and the region as a whole.

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

Mr. Hadjichrysanthou (Cyprus): First, allow me to thank you, Madam President, for organizing today's very important debate on the eve of International Women's Day.

My statement complements that of the European Union, to which we fully subscribe.

Almost 23 years have elapsed since the unanimous adoption by Security Council of resolution 1325 (2000). This was a historic moment, as it was the first time the Security Council recognized the role of women in peace and security. As we come closer to the twenty-fifth anniversary of the resolution, it is imperative to take stock of what we have achieved so far, but mostly to consider where we need to be by 2025 for the resolution's full implementation.

Despite positive steps and progress taken since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we are sliding back. It is undeniable that women and girls continue to be dramatically affected by armed conflicts; their rights are

violated, and they are excluded from decision-making processes related to peace and security. Furthermore, we are witnessing the rise of conflict-related violence around the world. Women and girls continue to be exposed to sexual and gender-based violence — online and offline — while these acts of violence remain in many cases unpunished. In this regard, we need to step up our efforts as States. Sexual violence in conflicts cannot be addressed in isolation, nor can it be separated from the status of women and the deeply rooted inequalities afflicting them. Perpetrators of these acts should be held accountable, and justice must prevail.

It is widely recognized that women have an indispensable role to play in the women and peace and security agenda, especially in prevention and conflict resolution. Still, we are experiencing a gap between the adoption and the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. The gloomy reality is that women are still excluded from peace processes and negotiating tables, which is detrimental to the efforts to achieve lasting peace and prosperous societies. Without the full, meaningful and equal participation of women in decision-making structures and negotiation processes, there is a risk that this objective will remain unaccomplished. In that regard, more actions are needed at the national, regional and international levels for gender mainstreaming and the inclusion of gender issues in the global agenda.

Cyprus welcomes all 105 national action plans that have been adopted in relation to resolution 1325 (2000). Cyprus is one of those Member States, as we adopted our first national action plan in 2020. The action plan to be implemented for the period 2021 to 2025 consists of four pillars — first, women's participation and empowerment; secondly, protection; thirdly, prevention and, fourthly, advocacy. Cyprus is determined to intensify efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and provide equal access to opportunities, including in the peace and security agenda.

As we move towards the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we have many challenges to overcome. It is our collective responsibility to amplify our efforts in achieving the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and adopt gender-sensitive approaches to create a more peaceful and prosperous world for all. Now is the time to translate our commitment to action.

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

Mrs. González (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is a pleasure to see you, Madam President, presiding over today's meeting. First, my country would like to congratulate you and Mozambique on its assumption of the presidency of the Council this month. We would also like to commend you for convening today's open debate. Members and non-members of the Council have the opportunity to share their views on the very important subject of women and peace and security agenda on its twenty-fifth anniversary.

We align ourselves with the statement made on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security.

First, we would like to make some general remarks and then a few comments in our national capacity.

It has been a difficult learning path over the past 25 years as we sought to implement the four pillars of resolution 1325 (2000). We believe that we have made considerable progress but much remains to be done, both internationally and nationally. With regard to the current situation, in the post-pandemic environment, my country is concerned about the plight of women and girls and the situation caused by the resurgence of armed conflicts.

Uruguay is committed to continuing its implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). That is why we have been promoting policies to facilitate women's access to the armed forces and law enforcement and encourage their participation in peacekeeping operations. Overall, we understand the crucial role of women in the entire process of preventing and resolving conflict. In that regard, in July 2022, we adopted our first national action plan on women and peace and security. After its approval, Uruguay once again committed to meeting international standards on gender equality in the area of peace and security and non-discrimination.

The plan is an exercise in systematizing policies and programmes related to the women and peace and security agenda. Over the years, Uruguay has made strides in areas such as the fight against gender-based violence and trafficking in persons and the protection of civilians in situations of conflict and cybersecurity contexts.

At the same time, our plan opens doors to new commitments, such as removing the structural barriers that prevent an increasing number of women from participating, without discrimination, in peacekeeping operations. One of the most important contributions we hope to make with our plan is to generate understanding and acceptance of the fact that the women and peace and security agenda can be applied above and beyond conflict and post-conflict situations. It can also be applied to strengthening the sustainability of peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

We intend to promote and consolidate that concept nationally to overcome major challenges, with the support of our partners, such as the various United Nations agencies, UN-Women and other relevant actors. I would also like to mention that, in the context of the Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations, Uruguay now has reports on the Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations Methodology at the Ministry of National Defence and the Ministry of the Interior, which has led to training for further work on measuring opportunities. Those reports have identified barriers to women's deployment in peacekeeping operations and issued recommendations so that each institution can adopt the necessary policies to improve the participation of women.

I would like to mention that we can continue working to that end as these debates allow for discussion with those dealing with armed conflicts on the ground and for those of us who wish to participate and cooperate in efforts to prevent conflicts. In that regard, members can count on my country to continue working to that end. We request the Security Council not only to continue these open debates, but also to make a greater commitment, according to the rules, to improving the participation of women in peacekeeping operations.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of El Salvador.

Mrs. González López (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to thank you, Madam President, for convening today's timely debate on women and peace and security. I also thank the briefers for their briefings.

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Canada on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security.

Although El Salvador recognizes the progress that has been made in implementing the agenda, it

is important to acknowledge the long road ahead in overcoming the barriers that prevent us from fully implementing resolution 1325 (2000). Against that backdrop, El Salvador calls on stakeholders to address the urgent challenges to the full implementation of all resolutions related to the women and peace and security agenda, which should lead to renewed commitments and action at the national and international levels.

Firmly committed to moving the agenda forward, El Salvador has implemented its women and peace and security national action plan for the period 2022 to 2024. It is a tool that guides the implementation of the agenda at the national level, including resource allocation and strategic planning, to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peacebuilding efforts.

With regard to international efforts, El Salvador recognizes the important role and contributions of women in United Nations peacekeeping operations. As a troop- and police-contributing country, we believe that we must urgently identify and address the challenges that prevent the full and meaningful participation of women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations.

Furthermore, we underscore the need for adequate, predictable and regular financing of peacekeeping activities. El Salvador therefore recognizes and highlights the Peacebuilding Fund, which is a reference point for other United Nations joint financing mechanisms. In my country, through the promotion of gender issues initiative, the Fund will support, for example, an increase in women's participation and presence in areas related to transitional justice, thereby building the capacity of those who participate in civil society organizations and women's networks and of leaders of territories that have been prioritized.

Lastly, we hope that today's open debate, held on the eve of International Women's Day, will lead to concrete action that enables us to make progress on the women and peace and security agenda. Indeed, lasting peace will be attainable only if we women take part in negotiations and peacebuilding, as we aspire to do.

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

Mr. Tun (Myanmar): I wish to congratulate Mozambique on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I thank you, Madam President,

for organizing today's important debate. I also thank the briefers for their insightful briefings earlier today.

As we approach the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), it is critical and timely that we reflect upon the women and peace and security nexus. The fabric of our society continues to face threats from violent conflicts, military coups d'état, forced displacement and climate crises.

According to the Secretary-General's report on women and peace and security (S/2022/740), women human rights defenders have increasingly been targeted with attacks that silence their voices and prevent them from participating in public life. In my country, Myanmar, following the illegal coup d'état attempt in February 2021, the military has killed many women protesters, including women human rights defenders. Thousands of women activists have been arbitrarily arrested, and several cases of abuse and ill treatment during detention have been reported.

Yesterday at the side event of the sixty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Woman, entitled "Using Technologies to Promote Gender Equality, and the empowerment and participation of women and girls in Myanmar", the brave women human rights defenders of Myanmar informed the international community of the alarming human rights situation of women and girls in Myanmar. In addition to atrocities against women and girls, including mass killings, rape, sexual violence and arbitrary arrests, the junta's forces conduct seizures of, and surprise checks on, citizens' mobiles on the streets and at their homes. Women human rights defenders are facing huge risks. The security forces have even arrested people for having a Facebook post that was critical of the illegal coup d'état attempt.

People in Myanmar are living with fear every day. People reject the military rule. They know how their basic human rights are being exploited under military rule. The people of Myanmar have called for the international community to take decisive action to save lives. Thus far, the honest opinion of the people has not been met with any effective action. As such, the people have no choice but to take up arms to defend themselves and their communities in order to restore democracy and protect their freedom and basic human rights.

Women and girls are at the forefront of the people's resistance to the military junta. They play various important roles. One role that I wish to point out is

that women human rights defenders record the military junta's atrocities and disseminate them to the relevant international organizations by using digital devices.

We are committed to creating a peaceful place for everyone, including women and girls. While the military desperately targeted civil society to diminish the voices of women, the National Unity Government of Myanmar, in line with the Federal Democracy Charter, took a people-centred approach to advance the women and peace and security agenda through civic actors. Therefore, it is imperative to recall that the international community should not be deceived by the military junta's unfounded promises. It is committing international crimes, creating violence, burning houses and villages, engaging in arbitrary arrests and killing people.

The aspirations and determination of the people in Myanmar are crystal clear. Our resistance will continue until the end of the military dictatorship, the restoration of democracy and the building of a federal democratic union. In that regard, I appeal to the Council to use all tools at its disposal to take decisive action to meet the Myanmar people's aspirations. In doing so, it will create a civic space that is conducive to the meaningful participation and contribution of women in the peace and security sectors of Myanmar.

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

Mrs. Nabeta (Uganda): Uganda congratulates the Republic of Mozambique on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. We thank you, Madam President, for convening today's meeting on the eve of International Women's Day. We also thank the briefers for briefing us on progress. I assure members of Uganda's full support.

Women, peace and security and development are inextricably linked. Uganda remains committed to the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, as enshrined in resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions. The Government of Uganda launched its third national action plan on women and peace and security in March 2021, for the period 2021 to 2025. Uganda's third action plan is one of the first in the world to address women and peace and security issues related to climate change and outbreaks of diseases and pandemics, such as Ebola and the coronavirus disease.

The overall goal of the plan is to promote sustained peace and security through the enhanced meaningful participation of women in peace and development processes. The plan has four outcome areas, namely, preventing all forms of violence, promoting the meaningful participation of women in leadership and governance at all levels, strengthening the capacity of women to mitigate and prevent natural and human-made disasters and strengthening the institutional and coordination mechanisms of the women and peace and security agenda at all levels.

Uganda has made significant strides not only in supporting the advancement of the women and peace and security agenda, but also in promoting women's full participation in governance, stability and development. The number of women in the Cabinet increased from 28 in 2016 to 35 in 2021, including by filling the positions of Vice-President, Prime Minister and two Deputy Prime Ministers out of three.

Critical ministries, such as education, health and energy and lands, are led by women. Women are also well represented in the judiciary, business, academia and the diplomatic service. That has put Ugandan women at the centre of ensuring peace and security, as well as tangibly contributing to policy development, planning and the implementation of development processes.

During the two decades of war waged by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in northern Uganda, women at the grass-roots level in the local areas of Acholi, Lango and Teso risked their lives and worked hard to convince the mothers and wives of LRA combatants to persuade their sons and husbands to end the insurgency. Subsequently, through the Uganda Women's Peace Coalition, women played a central role in the peace process, which ended two decades of a brutal war. Their contribution to post-conflict transformation, through the Women's Task Force for a Gender Responsive Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda, was crucial in rebuilding normalcy, ensuring peace and promoting development.

Uganda is party to a number of regional and international instruments relevant to the women and peace and security agenda, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the African Union's Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region's Pact on Security, Stability

and Development in the Great Lakes Region and the Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children, among others.

The displacement of people due to armed conflict, terrorism and food insecurity, among other things, disrupts lives and livelihoods. Uganda is currently hosting 1.5 million refugees, the majority of whom are women and children from neighbouring countries. The specific protection needs for women in such displacement situations will require strengthened support from the international community. Uganda maintains a generous open-door policy towards refugees and asylum seekers, making it the largest refugee-hosting country in Africa and among the top three hosting countries in the world. Furthermore, working in partnership with State and non-State actors, the Government has put in place a number of measures to ensure that gender provisions in peace agreements are addressed at the national, regional and international levels.

In conclusion, we wish to make the following recommendations. There is a need to mainstream gender in early-warning systems, peacebuilding and conflict-resolution processes and recovery and reconstruction programmes including disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration. Secondly, there is a need to implement interventions that enhance women's economic empowerment as a means to increase their bargaining power in domestic settings and promote self-reliance as a way of promoting peace in the home.

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

Mr. Hossain (Bangladesh): I express my appreciation to you, Madam President, for presiding over today's debate until this late hour. I also thank the presidency of Mozambique for organizing this ministerial open debate on women and peace and security. I thank the briefers for their comprehensive briefings earlier today.

Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Canada on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security.

As we approach the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), we recall the contribution of the delegation of Bangladesh to that groundbreaking agenda as a non-permanent member of the Council in 2000. As the President of the Council in March 2000, Bangladesh

led a presidential statement (S/PRST/2000/10), which was the precursor to that historic resolution.

Our commitment to that agenda stemmed from the spirit of our liberation war in 1971. It was not just the victimhood of more than 200,000 women in the world that makes that resolution relevant for us. Over the years, the women of Bangladesh have taken the role of protector, be it in complex theatres of peacekeeping in the remotest parts of the world or at home, participating in disaster management, relief and recovery efforts, providing support to the forcibly displaced Rohingyas sheltered in Bangladesh or taking part in prevention efforts against violent extremism. Women in Bangladesh truly represent what the resolution aimed to achieve in 2000.

In the past 22 years, several resolutions have been adopted to buttress the process initiated in resolution 1325 (2000), which is a manifestation of the strong political commitment of the international community to the women and peace and security agenda. However, despite all efforts, the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) remains uneven, with multifaceted challenges. Women continue to bear the brunt of conflict, which they have no role in starting. Their participation in peace processes is far from equal. In most cases, they also remain deprived of the dividends.

Against that backdrop, allow me to highlight a few points.

First, despite adopting 10 resolutions on women and peace and security and incorporating related language in many Security Council resolutions in the past five years, the implementation of the agenda remains unsatisfactory. We emphasize the importance of more systematic follow-up on the provisions of the women and peace and security agenda in Council resolutions, including through close coordination with the Peacebuilding Commission and UN-Women. We also take interest in the ongoing process of developing the New Agenda for Peace, in which the Secretary-General has emphasized putting women and girls at the centre of the security policy.

Secondly, ensuring gender-responsive peacekeeping is essential in enhancing the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations. We encourage the further strengthening of women's participation in peacekeeping operations, in quantitative and qualitative aspects alike, through the full incorporation of the women and peace and security agenda in the mandates of peacekeeping operations.

Thirdly, one of the most important tools for implementing the women and peace and security agenda is the development and implementation of national action plans. It is encouraging that 103 countries have formulated such plans. More efforts are needed to support countries in developing and implementing national action plans, as well as regional action plans, where applicable. Moreover, we underscore the need to extend financial support to national Governments for the implementation of national action plans.

Fourthly, increased efforts are needed to harness the potential of the women and peace and security agenda in various prevention and protection measures. In that regard, investing in women's full, equal and meaningful participation; preventing violent extremism; addressing the adverse impacts of climate change; disaster risk reduction, as well as in humanitarian emergencies, is critical. Bangladesh has made significant progress in that regard. Our Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief received the United Nations Public Service Award 2021 for ensuring gender equality in disaster preparedness. We are ready to share our experiences and best practices with other countries.

Finally, we call for redoubled political commitment at the global and national levels to realize the objectives of resolution 1325 (2000). I thank you, Madam President, and congratulate you and all women and girls of the world on the eve of a happy International Women's Day.

The President: I now give the floor to the observer of the Holy See.

Monseigneur Quirighetti: As we approach the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), it is both timely and appropriate that we reassess how to best address the unique needs of women in conflict and their important role in conflict prevention and resolution. Over the past few years, violence, including sexual violence, against women and girls has increased, while women's representation in peace processes has declined, demonstrating that the current approach is falling short.

As Pope Francis noted in his January address to the diplomatic corps accredited to the Holy See, when

human rights are fully recognized for all, women can offer their unique contribution to the life of society and be the first allies of peace. Despite that, he observed that in many countries women are considered second-class citizens, facing violence, abuse and limited access to education, employment, health care and other basic necessities. The Holy See condemns such treatment and deplores the situation faced by many women and girls who are systematically denied the benefit of education.

During his recent Apostolic Journey to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, Pope Francis highlighted the potential of women to transform violent societies into peaceful ones, in which they are protected, respected, valued and honoured. To unlock that potential, the Council must ensure that women, especially mothers, who know how life is generated and safeguarded, receive opportunities to participate more fully in peace processes and in all facets of political life and decision-making processes.

The women and peace and security agenda cannot be successfully implemented unless the primary drivers that contribute to the worsening circumstances of women and girls are addressed. Those include not only conflict, such as the war in Ukraine and the often-forgotten conflicts in Africa and the Middle East, but also extremism and the diversion of ever more resources towards arms expenditures, including for nuclear weapons, whose effects have a disproportionate impact on women and girls.

In conclusion, allow me to return to the words of Pope Francis, who recognizes that the tender love of mothers, who give life to the world, and the presence of women are the true alternative to the baneful logic of power that leads to war.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I wish to thank all participants for attending today's meeting and for their support to Mozambique's presidency of the Security Council. I thank all participants for their important contributions.

The meeting rose at 7.50 p.m.

Annex I**Statement as provided by the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations**

[Original: Arabic]

At the outset, I should like to congratulate the Republic of Mozambique for assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March and to wish its delegation all success. I should also like to thank the Republic of Malta for having successfully led the Council over the past month.

Tomorrow we commemorate International Women's Day, as we believe in the importance of the leading role of women and their efforts towards achieving development as well as their efforts in all areas of life. The delegation of Iraq appreciates the sacrifices and efforts made by Iraqi women in supporting the march undertaken by the Republic of Iraq.

In that regard, we need to emphasize women's rights to use all their talents and skills to achieve their goals and aspirations for building communities and making their dreams come true.

As for the twenty-fifth anniversary of adopting resolution 1325 (2000), Iraq was one of the first Arab States to respond to the call to put in place a national plan for the implementation of that resolution with a view to ensuring the effective and meaningful participation of women.

In that connection, my country's delegation would like to make the following points.

In Iraq, 97 women hold seats in the current session of the Parliament. That number is greater than the quota allocated for women, which accounts for 83 seats. That underscores that women have a more effective role. My Government is proud that a significant number of women hold leadership positions throughout the executive and legislative branches.

Iraq launched its second national plan (2021–2024) for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), with a view to ensuring the effective participation of women. That plan incorporates a number of items noted in the joint communiqué signed between Iraq and the United Nations in 2016 towards ensuring reparations for the victims of sexual violence and following up on the implementation of programmes and activities in coordination with the Government and civil society organizations.

The Iraqi Government is developing a national strategy for Iraqi women for the period 2023–2030 that addresses the issues of participation, economic and social empowerment and the challenges that women face. That strategy includes, inter alia, reviewing scientific and humanitarian courses for ensuring awareness about women's rights and social justice. It also includes reviewing the law on mandatory learning to cover the intermediate level. The Ministry of Higher Education highlights the plans that support the participation and building capacity of female students in universities, while protecting them through holding seminars that deal with electronic extortion.

One of the noteworthy measures that the Government has taken is the establishment of centres for protection from domestic violence. Such centres were

opened in four governorates, and we are working on issuing standard instructions on organizing the work at those centres.

The Iraqi Parliament has activated law No. 8 of 2021, concerning the compensation of Yazidi women survivors, and established a directorate within the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs for the protection of Yazidi women. Instructions were issued to facilitate the implementation of that law with respect to the victims. Approximately \$19 million of the budget has been allocated to pay the salaries pursuant to that law.

On the occasion of the sixth anniversary of the victory of Iraq in its war against the terrorist organization Da'esh and the recovery of its territories, we recall the patience and suffering that women and girls in Iraq have endured after Da'esh terrorists came to Iraq.

Iraq has been making concerted effort to address the harm done by terrorism and complete the process of bringing justice to the victims and their families, while ensuring that the process is not drawn-out, as delayed justice might enable perpetrators to escape punishment and undermine the essence of achieving justice. In that connection, my country's delegation reiterates that is important and necessary for the United Nations Investigative Team to hand over all evidence from the investigations to the judiciary of Iraq, in accordance with its mandate and competence, with a view to trying the accused in a comprehensive, just and transparent manner and without delay.

My country's delegation believes in the important and effective role of women in development and construction. Prosperity and progress cannot be achieved without enabling women economically and socially. That is possible through realizing gender equality, equal opportunities and eliminating all kinds of discrimination, while providing women with all the tools needed for letting them play an effective and influential role in the society.

In conclusion, my country's Government commends the international efforts and those of civil society organizations to establish gender equality and empower women and girls.

Annex II

Statement as provided by the Permanent Mission of Bulgaria to the United Nations

Bulgaria aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of the European Union and the representative of Canada on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security. I would like to further emphasize a few points in my national capacity.

At the outset, allow me to thank Mozambique for convening today's highly relevant open debate and to welcome the recommendations set forth in the most recent report of the Secretary-General. I would also like to acknowledge the participation in this debate of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mozambique, Her Excellency Ms. Verónica Nataniel Macamo Dlhovo, and thank the briefers for their clear-sighted and enlightening briefings.

As a strong supporter of the women, peace and security agenda and as a current member of the Peacebuilding Commission, Bulgaria would like to make the following observations.

First, today's debate is taking place at a crucial juncture. As the concept note contained in document S/2023/146 rightly points out, we are at the midpoint between the twentieth and the twenty-fifth anniversaries of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). We have also travelled halfway through the decade of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and we are in the process of actively engaging with the implementation of the Secretary-General's comprehensive vision for effective multilateralism as described in his report *Our Common Agenda*.

As we approach these important milestones, we are sadly observing that, despite the progress made, we continue to lag behind in terms of the full, equal and meaningful participation of all women and girls in peacebuilding, security and political and social life. We are even witnessing a clear rollback of women's rights in many places around the globe; Afghanistan, Myanmar, Yemen and Syria are just a few cases in point. Further, conflict-related incidents of sexual and gender-based violence are reported on a daily basis as a result of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which has taken the heaviest toll on women and children.

In the 23 years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we have learned that no matter how dangerous it might become, women will continue to be at the forefront of peacebuilding efforts and remain firm in rejecting political settlements that do not guarantee their rights. It has become equally clear that merely including women in peace negotiations does not in itself ensure that gender issues are integrated into the peace process. What is required is real gender expertise in each step of the process.

In a further effort to respond to the guiding questions in the concept note for today's debate, I would like to emphasize the need for gender data and analysis to inform each phase of the adoption and implementation of peacekeeping mandates and in the pursuit of national peacebuilding priorities. Such an approach would also be indispensable for expanding gender-responsive financing and increasing donor support for such dedicated financing mechanisms as the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

Turning now to our national implementation of the woman, peace and security agenda, I would like to point out that our current national action plan already includes policies that promote the meaningful participation of women in decision-making in conflict situations, for example, women mediators participating in programmes and trainings on the non-violent resolution of disputes and conflicts; the application of the gender-equality principle to the selection and promotion of staff in our security and defence authorities; and applying the women, peace and security agenda to issues related to migration, asylum and integration for women seeking international protection in Bulgaria.

In conclusion, Bulgaria reaffirms its unconditional support for women's rights and the women, peace and security agenda and is convinced that the inclusion and participation of women and girls would result in significant progress in conflict prevention and peacebuilding and would inspire women and girls everywhere to become game-changers and ethical leaders working to forge an equitable, sustainable and peaceful future.

Annex III

Statement as provided by the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations

I would like to express appreciation to Mozambique for convening today's open debate on this important matter.

The Republic of Korea aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Canada on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security. I would like to deliver the following statement in my national capacity.

Resolution 1325 (2000) has been a milestone for women and peace and security, affirming that women should be key agents in all peace processes. In reality, however, women are still disproportionately affected in conflict-related situations, and that requires our redoubled efforts to protect their human rights and amplify their voices in peace processes. The Republic of Korea has proudly increased its endeavours to implement the women and peace and security agenda. Since 2014, we have established and implemented three national action plans in collaboration with civil society. In particular, we have been working to build international cooperation on women and peace and security by hosting an annual international conference. In December 2022, we held the fourth such conference in Seoul, which discussed women and peace and security, focusing on Asia, including Myanmar, Afghanistan and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In parallel, we have also supported the survivors of conflict-related sexual violence in Africa, such as the Sudan and Cameroon, with our development projects in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund.

Furthermore, we plan to provide capacity-building training in Seoul for women military officers, especially for future peacekeeping operations in Africa, in collaboration with UN-Women.

In the context of women and peace and security, it is critical that voices from every corner of the world be heard. Unfortunately, we cannot hear the stifled voices of women in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, a hidden war zone in the world. I recently met the co-author of a book about a North Korean female defector Jihyun Park, entitled *The Hard Road Out*, which was selected as one of the most noteworthy books by *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Washington Post*. The defector describes her life before settling down in the United Kingdom as "abandoned" and "betrayed". She says, "Life there is unimaginable, and no one has the right to complain."

At the conference on the human rights of women and girls in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea held in Seoul a month ago, several United Nations experts expressed their grave concerns about the deteriorating human rights situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, especially with regard to women suffering from routine and traumatizing sexual exploitation and abuses in prison camps. At the same time, women escaping from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continue to face many acute challenges. Last month's report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on promoting accountability for human rights violations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea highlighted the heartbreaking cases of female victims of trafficking, forced labour, forced marriages and forced repatriation by neighbouring State authorities.

In order to ensure that they do not remain mere victims, the international community should pay special attention to the women defectors from the Democratic

People's Republic of Korea, who have survived life-or-death crises and have chosen to speak up for those who are being silenced. The Republic of Korea, as a candidate for membership on the Security Council for the 2024–2025 term, is firmly committed to continuing its support to raise the voices of suffering women around the world to faithfully implement the women and peace and security agenda.

Annex IV

Statement as provided by the Permanent Mission of Namibia to the United Nations

Namibia thanks you for organizing this open debate on the issue of women and peace and security. As a champion of the women and peace and security agenda, we are, as always, encouraged by the overwhelming support for this open debate.

Resolution 1325 (2000) was borne out of the need to promote women's participation in efforts and processes aimed at pursuing peace and security, the prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls and the protection of women in conflict and non-conflict situations, including in the context of unauthorized seizures of power.

Documented evidence demonstrates that, although peace is more long-lasting as a result of women's meaningful participation in peace, security and humanitarian processes, that value does not consistently translate into women's inclusion or participation in peace negotiations and implementation mechanisms.

Namibia adopted its first national action plan in 2019 for the period 2019-2024, which would take us to right before the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). That national action plan was developed not as a stand-alone tool, but as a complement to other mechanisms and frameworks developed to advance women's rights in Namibia. In the national action plan, Namibia committed to creating "a safe and peaceful Namibia, where all women, men, girls and boys have equal rights and live without fear or want and in dignity".

To achieve that, and ultimately the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, Namibia has aligned its outcome indicators with the African Union Continental Results Framework, where relevant, in line with our position that integrating the women and peace and security agenda in regional organizations and fostering implementation through the development of regional frameworks or action plans remain essential to driving the women and peace and security agenda.

Namibia also places an important emphasis on the nexus between the women and peace and security and the disarmament agendas. We note with particular concern the strong impact of the global arms trade on the insecurity of women and girls in and out of conflict situations, as well as the increasing impact of small arms and light weapons (SALW) on women and gender-based violence, particularly the impact of the illicit trade's effect of perpetuating conflict and instability. We must therefore mainstream the women and peace and security agenda in disarmament and establish coherence between the women and peace and security and the disarmament agendas, recognizing the existing links and reciprocal impacts on both agendas.

We also call on the Security Council to support the collection of data on SALW, disaggregated by age and sex.

As we move towards 2025 and beyond, I would like to highlight some areas in which a women and peace and security agenda lens could lead to more balanced and sustainable solutions, particularly in the context of dealing with the challenges of tomorrow. Those are cyberspace and security, climate change, countering violent extremism and trafficking in persons.

Additionally, we must also adopt gender-responsive national budgets, designed in collaboration with women and civil society, including at the local and grass-roots

levels, inter alia for national action plans on women and peace and security and other relevant national mechanisms on women and peace and security.

There is no need to reinvent the wheel. We have the necessary tools to drive the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda on hand. To see tangible change, we must redouble our efforts to continue to advocate for the agenda and promote the positive role that women do and can play in peace and security-building efforts.

It is not only time, but in fact essential that women be adequately represented in political decision-making and peace negotiations at the national, regional and international levels. That is Namibia's commitment, and we enjoin all of us to renew and strengthen our collective responsibility towards the maintenance of international peace and security and the promotion of the well-being of the peoples of the world and international cooperation by further strengthening the women and peace and security agenda and its implementation.

Annex V**Statement as provided by the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations**

[Original: English and Spanish]

For the past 23 years, in the Security Council, we have commemorated the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) — a resolution that has yet to deliver on its promise. In that regard, let me make three points.

First, most resolutions under the women and peace and security agenda condemn sexual and gender-based violence as a weapon of war. However, the Council has yet to examine online gender-based violence within its normative framework, let alone its cross-cutting aspects. While women and girls face serious barriers to Internet access and connectivity in rural and conflict-affected regions, online violence prevents them from participating in discussions, including in private and cordoned-off spaces, which affects their full and meaningful participation in the full spectrum of negotiation, finalization and implementation of peace agreements. Likewise, online gender-based violence violates their fundamental rights, such as the freedom of expression and political participation, without which there can be no lasting peace.

Costa Rica also regrets that online gender-based violence continues to be perceived as less serious than violence that takes place in the “real world”. Both emanate from the same root causes, including inequality in gender relations, patriarchal stereotypes and the lack of prevention and accountability.

Secondly, the Council must acknowledge that denying education to girls and women poses a threat to international peace and security, as women’s minds have also become a new battleground. Such intellectual violence is linked to sexual violence and other structural forms of violence against women. Costa Rica calls on the Security Council to adopt a new draft resolution that acknowledges the importance of girls’ education not only as a fundamental human right, but as a decisive factor in achieving the inclusion and political, social and economic empowerment of women.

Thirdly, Costa Rica calls on the Council to include once and for all the issue of disarmament under this agenda item and the implementation of national action plans. Women and girls are often described as “vulnerable”. But what makes them vulnerable to gender-based and sexual violence is the availability of weapons and the lack of regulations governing their ammunition. Furthermore, we must urgently consider the repercussions of gender norms, including militarized masculinities, in terms of violence, armed conflict and the production, manufacture, acquisition, possession and use of lethal weapons.

All of the resolutions under the women and peace and security agenda focus more on protecting women’s bodies than on unleashing their full potential. Evidence shows us that when women have access to opportunities and participate in decision-making, their work has an enormous and positive impact on their families, communities and countries. Undeniably, gender equality is one of the most solid foundations on which we can build peace together. That is why we must continue to redouble our efforts to eliminate the barriers, violence and discrimination that rob them of their place at the decision-making table.

May this occasion serve to redefine and modernize the agenda and prioritize women’s leadership and the defence of their rights, at a time when the most vulnerable women and girls need us the most.

Annex VI

Statement as provided by the Permanent Mission of Slovakia to the United Nations

We thank the presidency of Mozambique for organizing this open debate, which is intended to provide an opportunity to take stock of the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda and to reaffirm women's key role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. It also highlights the need for the adoption of a gender perspective in peace agreements and to protect women and girls from gender-based violence.

Despite the fact that the Security Council has adopted nine further resolutions under the women and peace and security agenda since resolution 1325 (2000), the Secretary-General, in his report from the last October, was unequivocally clear:

“Despite the normative agreement dating back to the year 2000 and the evidence that gender equality offers a path to sustainable peace and conflict prevention, we are moving in the opposite direction. Today, the world is experiencing a reversal of generational gains in women's rights, while violent conflicts and military expenditures, military coups, displacement and hunger continue to increase”.

We could not agree more with his words. Contrary to progress made since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), it would be irresponsible to cover our eyes from statistics that reflect reality.

The reality is that we are facing the highest number of conflicts since the end of the Second World War. We therefore consider it crucial to call on all stakeholders once again to reiterate their strong support for the full and equal participation of women in all efforts to create and maintain international peace and security, while adopting and supporting concrete and targeted measures. It is essential that the Security Council continue to systematically and consistently advance, advocate for and promote the women and peace and security agenda in all its work.

We wish to stress that women not only contribute substantially to conflict prevention and resolution, but also continue to be particularly affected by conflict situations. In this respect, we are horrified by the allegations of conflict-related sexual violence perpetrated by Russian forces. Slovakia calls for the immediate cessation of Russian military activities in Ukraine and the unconditional withdrawal of all Russian troops from the whole territory of Ukraine. In this regard, we urge the Russian Federation to fully implement all relevant General Assembly resolutions, including resolution ES-11/6, of 23 February. It is not only us who said it. The votes of the other 140 States spoke for themselves, confirming that Russia's actions are unacceptable to the democratic world.

Annex VII

Statement as provided by the Permanent Mission of Türkiye to the United Nations

We congratulate Mozambique for assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March.

Let me also thank the presidency for keeping the focus of the Council on the women and peace and security agenda this month, when we observe the International Women's Day and during the current session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

The adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), almost a quarter century ago, was a milestone in addressing the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women.

Resolution 1325 (2000) is also a landmark resolution, underlining the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding.

The severe effects of conflicts on women and girls continue in various geographies and need our thorough examination and gender-sensitive responses.

Those efforts should be based on women's equal and full participation as active agents in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace-building and peacekeeping, as resolution 1325 (2000) underlines.

Women's representation and active participation in decision-making processes in the fields of diplomacy and security serve a vital function in addressing multifaceted challenges and achieving sustainable solutions.

Türkiye actively promotes the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in international platforms, including the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and NATO.

In line with the spirit of resolution 1325 (2000), Türkiye supports the empowerment and well-being of women and girls in various emergency, conflict or post-conflict contexts, through comprehensive development assistance programmes.

Our projects in Afghanistan and Somalia, especially in the fields of education and health services, are concrete examples of our efforts to this end.

The Turkish Government also continues to provide multifaceted services to offer dignified living conditions for over 4 million refugees who sought refuge in Türkiye, the majority of whom are Syrians.

Refugee women and their children benefit from psychosocial support, protective services in response to violence against women; child support centres; institutions for children in need of care; socioeconomic support within family; livelihood opportunities and social cohesion programmes.

During our presidency of the Group of 20 (G20) in 2015, we pioneered the establishment of the Women 20 platform to ensure that gender considerations are mainstreamed into G20 work.

We are also proud to play a leading role in the establishment of the Women Consultative Council within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the resolution 1325 (2000) will present a valuable opportunity to take stock of this agenda and discuss how we can further strengthen and streamline it in all our peace and security-related work for the next decade.

Türkiye will continue to contribute to advancing the women and peace and security agenda.

Annex VIII

Statement as provided by the Permanent Mission of Chile to the United Nations

[Original: Spanish]

We thank Mozambique for convening this open debate. We also thank the speakers for their presentations and background information.

Concerns about the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda is closely linked to the development of national action plans to guide local work on gender mainstreaming in the armed forces and law enforcement, as well as on the participation of women in peace processes, security institutions and leadership positions that lead to the construction of more egalitarian societies.

Chile is currently developing its third national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), with a view to developing a transformative instrument in the work of the armed forces and police and civilian institutions linked to the issue. An intersectional and intercultural approach has been taken in developing the third national action plan, with a view to addressing structural discrimination in the armed forces and law enforcement and ensuring an effective State response to peace and security issues.

We invite States to develop a national action plan or to update it. Chile, like other countries, is eager to share its experience.

National action plans should respond to one of the concerns raised for this debate by planning and developing effective measures to protect women and girls during armed conflict. At present we see that protection measures are becoming less and less effective. The increase in sexual violence in conflict, threats and attacks on women human rights defenders — virtually and in person — and the spread of misogynistic discourse on social media are strongly correlated with the sense of impunity enjoyed by perpetrators.

The Council must make a firm and renewed commitment to preventing impunity and seeking innovative measures to bring perpetrators to justice.

It is also imperative for the Council to ensure that all peacekeeping operations have personnel trained in addressing gender issues and in the prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence, which will provide robust protection for women and girls and be a first step towards their empowerment and meaningful participation. To enhance that participation, the Council and the Secretariat can promote three specific measures already discussed in this regard — supporting the economic and social empowerment of women affected by armed conflict, institutionalizing the participation of local and international women's organizations in political processes related to peace and security, and promoting women's leadership at all levels of the multilateral system.

Finally, we would like to draw attention to the emerging threats affecting the security of women and girls. The trafficking and diversion of small arms and light weapons has plunged Latin America into a situation of violence that must be addressed and prioritized by the Council. The national action plans for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) should set 2025 as the deadline to respond to that situation, which, like other traditional and emerging threats, affects women and girls differently.