



Security Council

Eightieth year

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Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Nebenzia/Ms. Zabolotskaya	(Russian Federation)
<i>Members:</i>	Algeria.	Mrs. Messaoud
	China.	Mr. Fu Cong
	Denmark	Ms. Landi
	France	Mr. Dharmadhikari
	Greece	Mrs. Balta
	Guyana	Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
	Pakistan.	Ms. Saleem
	Panama	Mr. Alfaro de Alba
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Cha
	Sierra Leone	Ms. Mahoi
	Slovenia.	Mr. Žbogar
	Somalia	Mr. Mohamed Yusuf
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Young
	United States of America.	Ms. Shea

Agenda

Women and peace and security

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Women and peace and security

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czechia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Germany, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, the Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, Uruguay and Viet Nam to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Sima Sami Bahous, Executive Director, UN-Women; Ms. Olga Uskova, Founder and President of Russian leading information technology company Cognitive Technologies; and Ms. Noura Erakat, human rights attorney, author and legal scholar.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I also invite the following to participate in this meeting: Her Excellency Mrs. Hedda Samson, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations; His Excellency Mr. Maged Abdelfattah Abdelaziz, Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations; His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Fathi Ahmed Edrees, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations; Ms. Elyse Nicole Mosquini, Permanent Observer and Head of the Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross to the United Nations; and Mr. Nabhit Kapur, Permanent Observer for the Pan African Intergovernmental Agency for Water and Sanitation for Africa.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I warmly welcome the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, and give him the floor.

The Secretary-General: Twenty-five years ago, resolution 1325 (2000) gave voice to a simple truth: women's leadership is central to just and lasting peace. And over the past quarter-century, the women and peace and security agenda has inspired countless resolutions, reports and round tables.

But let us speak frankly. Too often we gather in rooms like this one — full of conviction and commitment — only to fall short when it comes to real change in the lives of women and girls caught in conflict. We speak of inclusion, yet far too frequently women remain absent from negotiating tables. We speak of protection, yet sexual violence persists with impunity. We speak of leadership, yet women peacebuilders are underfunded, under threat and underrecognized. And we all lose — women and men, girls and boys.

My report on women and peace and security is a record of what has been achieved, a chronicle of where we have fallen short and a warning of what we risk losing. We know that progress is possible. More than 100 countries have adopted national action plans on women and peace and security. Women have led local mediation, shaped new laws and advanced justice for survivors of gender-based

violence. United Nations peacekeeping has doubled the number of women in uniform. Gender provisions in peace agreements have become more common. And women's organizations have helped transform post-conflict recovery and reconciliation in communities worldwide.

But gains are fragile and — very worryingly — going in reverse. Around the globe, we see troubling trends in military spending, more armed conflicts and more shocking brutality against women and girls. Last year, 676 million women lived within 50 kilometres of deadly conflict events — the highest number in decades. Sexual violence surged, with documented incidents against girls rising by 35 per cent. In some places — alarmingly — girls accounted for nearly half of all victims. Maternal mortality is rising in crisis zones. Girls are being pulled from school. Women in public life — politicians, journalists and human rights defenders — are being targeted with violence and harassment.

In Afghanistan, the systematic erasure of women and girls from public life is in overdrive — with appalling restrictions on access to education, employment, healthcare and justice, and surges in sexual violence and maternal mortality.

In the occupied Palestinian territory, the Sudan, Haiti, Myanmar and beyond, women and girls face grave risks and horrific levels of violence.

And while women's organizations remain lifelines for millions in crisis, they are being starved of resources. In a survey conducted by UN-Women just a few months ago, 90 per cent of local women-led groups in conflict settings reported financial distress. Nearly half expected to shut down within six months.

One year ago, I launched the Common Pledge to Increase Women's Full, Equal and Meaningful Participation in Peace Processes. Since then, 39 entities — including Member States, international and regional organizations, and others — have adopted it. We must now ensure that commitments translate into concrete action. We have also set an initial target for at least one third of the participants in United Nations-led peace processes to be women. The ultimate goal is to reach gender parity in all peace and security processes.

We are continuing to consult with women-led civil society and women peacebuilders, who are the drivers behind holistic and sustainable peace. And around the world, we are supporting women's access to education, mental health services and economic opportunity — even in the most restrictive environments. We are documenting violations, advocating for justice, and amplifying the voices of women peacebuilders. Now is the time for Member States to speed up commitments on women and peace and security as world leaders pledged in the Pact for the Future.

My report lays out a number of steps to do just that.

First, we must increase funding by ramping up investment in peace — especially for women's organizations in conflict-affected countries — and gender equality.

Second, we must ensure participation. Women must be at the table — not as tokens, but as equal partners. Binding targets and quotas are essential.

Third, we must promote accountability for those responsible for all acts of gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence.

Fourth, we must guarantee protection, enforcing zero tolerance for violence against women peacebuilders and human rights defenders.

Fifth, we must anchor commitments on women and peace and security in national laws, policies, planning, budgets and programmes.

Sixth, we must transform women's economic security through employment, social protection and property and inheritance rights.

Seventh, we must support women's organizations in conflict and displacement settings with direct, flexible and quality funding.

Eighth and lastly, we must launch a gender data revolution to close information gaps, especially in critical areas such as conflict-related sexual violence, and to ensure that women's experiences and needs are visible and addressed.

(spoke in French)

The women and peace and security agenda must deliver concrete results: more women shaping peace agreements, security reforms and recovery plans; more survivors accessing justice and essential services; and more communities drawing on the strength and vitality of all their members.

Resolution 1325 (2000) is clear: women are leaders of peace for all. The world does not need more reminders of that truth; what it needs is more results that reflect it.

The President *(spoke in Russian)*: I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing. I now give the floor to Ms. Bahous.

Ms. Bahous: I thank you, Mr. President, for convening us, and I thank the Russian presidency for hosting this open debate.

We meet on the eve of the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), a milestone born of the multilateral system's conviction that peace is more robust and security more enduring when women are at the table. Yet the record of the past 25 years is mixed: bold, admirable commitments have been followed too often by weak implementation and chronic underinvestment.

Today, 676 million women and girls live within reach of deadly conflict, the highest figure since the 1990s. It is lamentable, then, that we see today rising military spending and renewed pushback against gender equality and multilateralism. These trends threaten the very foundations of global peace and security.

This anniversary must be more than a commemoration. Women and girls who live amid conflict deserve more than commemoration. It must instead be a moment to refocus, recommit and ensure that the next 25 years deliver much more than the last.

A belief in the core principles of resolution 1325 (2000) is shared by women and men everywhere. Whether through our work at country level, including in conflicts, or in the recent Member State commitments for the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, we know that our women and peace and security agenda — our conviction for equality — enjoys the support of an overwhelming majority of women and men and of Member States.

Even in Afghanistan, UN-Women's ongoing monitoring shows that 92 per cent of Afghans, men and women alike, think that girls must be able to attend secondary education. It is also striking that a majority of Afghan women say they remain hopeful that they will one day achieve their aspirations. This is despite everything they endure under Taliban oppression. Their hope is not an idle wish; it is more than a coping mechanism. It is a political statement — a conviction and an inspiration.

As we meet to discuss the women and peace and security agenda, the painful situation in the Middle East, especially for women and girls, remains on our minds and in our hearts. Two years into the devastating Gaza war, amid the killing, the pain and the loss, a glimmer of hope emerges. I join the Secretary-General in welcoming the positive responses to President Donald Trump's proposal to end the Gaza war, to implement an immediate and lasting ceasefire, to secure the unconditional release of all hostages and to ensure unhindered humanitarian access. We hope that this will lead to a just and lasting peace for Palestinians and Israelis alike, where all women and girls live with dignity, security and opportunity.

The trends documented in the Secretary-General's report (S/2025/556) should alarm us. It is understandable that some might conclude that the rise and normalization of misogyny currently poisoning our politics and fuelling conflict is unstoppable. It is not. Those who oppose equality do not own the future — we do.

The reality is that, globally, suffering and displacement will likely rise in the face of seemingly intractable conflicts and growing instability. It is a painful fact, but we must be prepared for the situation to become worse before it becomes better for women and girls.

This will continue to be exacerbated by short-sighted funding cuts that already undermine education opportunities for Afghan girls; curtail life-saving medical attention for tens of thousands of survivors of rape and sexual violence in the Sudan, Haiti and beyond; shutter health clinics across conflict zones; limit access to food for malnourished and starving mothers and their children in Gaza, Mali, Somalia and elsewhere; and fundamentally erode the chance for peace.

Yet despite the horrors of wars and conflicts, women continue to build peace. Women are reducing community violence in Abyei and the Central African Republic and mobilizing for peace in Yemen, the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In Haiti, women have managed to achieve near parity in the new Provisional Electoral Council and increased the quota for women in the draft constitution. In Chad, women's representation in the National Assembly has doubled. In Syria, the interim Constitution ratified this March mandates the Government to guarantee the social, economic and political rights of women and protect them from all forms of oppression, injustice and violence. In Ukraine, women have achieved the codification into law of gender-responsive budgeting, including across national relief efforts. Whether mediating, brokering access to services or driving reconstruction, among other roles, women's leadership is the face of resilience — a force for peace.

The Secretary-General has just spoken to UN-Women's recent survey findings, which highlight how current financing trends are endangering the viability and safety of women-led organizations in conflict-affected countries. We believe there is no alternative but to change course and invest significantly in women's organizations on the front lines of conflict.

The past 25 years have seen an emphasis on investing in transnational security and international legal institutions. This has not been matched by attention to investing in national capacities and social movements. And while attention to the women and peace and security agenda has been focused on global capitals and major cities of conflict-affected countries, it must also become localized and reach the remote areas that are worst affected and where it makes the biggest difference. This is true for information, funding, policy implementation, services and more.

Recent years have seen a much-needed increase in attention to conflict-related sexual violence, one that is greater than ever before. We have taken huge strides in ending the silence, chipping away at the impunity that emboldens and enables perpetrators. These efforts must be redoubled, giving greater attention to reproductive violence and gender-based persecution in accountability initiatives and a more comprehensive understanding of atrocities disproportionately affecting women and girls in conflict.

In the next 25 years of the critical women and peace and security agenda, it is crucial that we see funding earmarked, robust quotas implemented, clear instructions and mandates and accountability measures in place that make failures visible and have consequences.

Allow me to leave Council members with five calls to action that need full attention in the coming years.

First, affirmative action must be taken to ensure that women take their rightful place at the peace-making tables, and consistent support must be provided to them as peacekeepers, peacebuilders and human rights defenders. This must become a hardwired feature of the way we conduct the business of peace.

Secondly, the impact of this agenda must be measured by the number of women who participate directly in peace and security processes and by the relief that women receive in the form of justice, reparations, services or asylum.

Thirdly, violence against women and girls must be ended; emerging forms of technology-facilitated gender-based violence must be addressed; and harmful narratives, both online and offline, must be challenged.

Fourthly, impunity for atrocities and crimes against women and girls must be ended, international law must be respected and upheld, the guns must be silenced, and peace must always be in the ascendency.

Fifthly, the women, peace and security agenda must be embedded ever more deeply in the hearts and minds of ordinary people, particularly young people, both boys and girls. It is they who will determine the future of our ambitions, ambitions that must ultimately become theirs too.

Above all, the coming few years should see Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) implemented fully, across all contexts. When women lead, peace follows. We made a promise to them 25 years ago. It is past time to deliver.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Ms. Bahous for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Uskova.

Ms. Uskova (*spoke in Russian*): First and foremost, I wish to thank the United Nations Security Council for the opportunity to speak to women from all over the world from this rostrum.

My name is Olga Uskova. I am the President of the Cognitive Pilot company, a leading developer of artificial intelligence (AI)-based systems for autonomous ground transport. We manufacture artificial brains for tractors, harvesters and sprayers — any vehicles that carry out, without the participation of humans, a whole range of agrotechnological tasks. Our robots significantly enhance the effectiveness of farm work, making it easier and more comfortable, and enabling the cultivation of new lands in hard-to-reach regions. Our goal and mission for the planet is food security for every person in our country and in the world. Today, smart robots are working in all countries around the world, and their presence continues to expand.

In Russia, historically, since the times of the Soviet Union, women have widely participated in the most complicated and advanced scientific and technological areas. Today, out of the 73 patents for robotics and AI-related inventions registered by our company, 28 are held by teams led by women scientists, programmers and engineers.

Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the world has undergone a transformative revolution that has affected almost all core systems and institutions on Earth, including financial, political, social and economic systems. The world is now no longer unipolar. Numerous new military conflicts have broken out across the planet and key problems facing people, such as hunger in certain countries, have worsened, while the crisis of overconsumption has increased in other areas.

Natural and artificially contrived epidemics of deadly diseases have once again emerged, and the number of terrorist attacks against civilians in different parts of the world has risen. Today, there is a fundamental shift in risk models for all population groups, especially women, as the result of domestic and external conflicts involving the use of various forms of violence.

On the one hand, the revolution in social networks has made the world completely transparent in terms of information. Information is being spread globally, instantly, virtually limitlessly, and in many cases this means that information obtained by parties prone to aggressive behaviour seemingly “allows” them, so to speak, to engage in activities that had previously been viewed as beyond the realms of the morality, culture and national traditions of this or that people.

The active use of generative AI to create social network content allows for large-scale manipulation of the public consciousness of those involved in conflicts, which fuels hatred and brutality and provokes violence with grave consequences. This so-called “universal” model, namely the morals defined by social media and new AI technologies, such as deepfakes, causes all parties to conflict to be dehumanized, and leads to the artificial manipulation of peoples en masse, pitting them against one another for the advancement of small, elite groups.

First and foremost, women and children all around the world will be affected. Fundamental principles are being replaced by manipulative algorithms under which shopping is pitted against motherhood, the laws of egotistical consumption are pitted against care for fellow human beings and artificial transsexuality on the basis of pharmacological tools is pitted against femininity and natural beauty. As a result, the social fabric is being torn at the national level, while aggression is growing internationally.

Beyond the changes in the information agenda, in recent years we have seen the emergence of a new paradigm when it comes to armed conflicts, with different types of autonomous robots and drones becoming the main means of destruction, instead of weapons handled by people. Very soon, literally in one to two years, the modern pace of development of tools for AI-based deep learning will allow these systems to carry out military missions without any human participation. In the overwhelming majority of cases, robots will not morally distinguish whether their targets are armed combatants or civilian women or children.

Seven years ago, I travelled on a humanitarian mission to a country in Africa. I remember a typical “tourist breakfast” — crackers with condensed milk. We had to take pills for our stomachs, and we had to bring our own water, bottled water, and wear gloves on our hands and masks on our faces. Sometimes, I see the women and children of that country in my dreams. I see their eyes and their bones jutting out and the flies and worms swarming, while well-fed white adults are distributing assistance nearby. This is completely immoral and beyond comprehension. Today, right now, when somebody leaves a pastry unfinished in a cafe in New York or Moscow, yet another child in Africa may have died of hunger.

Why did I make that agonizing trip? I needed this for me and my team to fully understand why we were carrying out this project of creating robots for agriculture and building artificial brains for agricultural machinery. There were too many moral and social issues raised in relation to automated farming. I was looking for an answer that would work for all countries, independent of the political system or national and climate-related specificities and, therefore, I turned to experts with my request to take me on a humanitarian visit to Africa. I did not want to just learn about it — I wanted to see and feel things for myself.

Last night I returned from Belgorod, a city in southern Russia. It is altogether different to see a war movie than to actually participate in a war. The leadership of the Belgorod Metropolitanate is carrying out a humanitarian mission. The nuns from the Marfo-Mariinsky convent are helping in hospitals, teaching women and children to take cover from Ukrainian drones, to correctly use tourniquets and to help civilians get out in case of danger. In Belgorod, some children and their mothers have panic attacks, children are wetting their beds and students have to study

remotely. Yesterday the governor said: “It is dangerous to bring children to schools and kindergartens and if you can leave a young child at home, do that.”

One needs to understand that the two-dimensional world of screens, computers and smartphones, which the so-called civilized world has immersed itself in, has blunted the reality and the pressing nature of the acute global problems. For many, it is as if they are watching a film about earthly afflictions from the comfort of their own homes. They are a bit scared, a bit angered and sometimes a bit weepy, feeling sorry for the children who are hungry or are dying from injuries received from shrapnel and explosions, but after that they turn off the screen and go to the kitchen to eat a treat and then write sentimental posts on social media. I remember the grief of children, and I sensed it with my entire body: the smell, the visceral fear, the feeling of witnessing a senseless, impossible death and the fate of thousands of people become nothing. These people will not have a future filled with new experiences and emotions; there was not enough justice and love in this world for them. Their lives were extinguished.

We are launching robotized tractors and harvesters across the world so that no child’s mother or father is blown up again, be it by landmines or drones, as they harvest wheat in the fields, so that babies of Belgorod can smile as they greet their parents as they return from work alive, so that the children of Africa can have bread harvested in Russia and no longer die of hunger and bombs. This summer I flew from wheat fields to soy fields, sunflower fields and corn fields, and the energy of the field where crops are growing ripe is like the energy of the ocean, as the cultivated land gives life. We all come from the earth, depend on it for food and will go back down into it. We are the Earth. It is common to all of us.

We suggest a number of concrete measures. New international rules must be adopted for the conduct of war with the use of AI-based weapons. New criteria for the qualification of war crimes must be introduced so that, similarly to the civilian sector, responsibility in certain cases would be borne by those who manufacture and develop such weapons.

A serious demand has arisen in the world, a demand for the truth, particularly in relation to the operation of social media. It is necessary to establish an internationally recognized mechanism for analysing information and detecting deepfakes within news streams. A working body should be established under the auspices of the United Nations, comprising representatives of major digital platforms such as Telegram, Google, Facebook, VKontakte and others, to carry out systematic work to prevent the use of misinformation and disinformation aimed at inciting hatred and provoking violence — primarily against women and children.

In today’s world, economic interests tend to prevail over political and religious ideas. Therefore, the public disclosure of information on the financial sponsors of groups that practise violence and manipulate public consciousness — and their exclusion from the global economic system — is essential to ensuring security worldwide.

I am grateful for the opportunity to share all of this with the Council.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Ms. Uskova for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Erakat.

Ms. Erakat: I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to brief the Council today.

I am Noura Erakat, a Palestinian-American human rights attorney and author.

Twenty-five years ago, when this body adopted resolution 1325 (2000), the Security Council made an unabashedly feminist commitment to advance gender equality because it understood that women are critical agents for a just peace.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in Palestine, where, for decades, courageous Palestinian women have resisted dispossession, removal, apartheid and now genocide. Yet, nowhere have the tenets of the women and peace and security agenda — equality, inclusivity, accountability and respect for human rights — been more out of reach.

In Gaza, one woman and one girl have been killed every hour for the past 730 days. Despite the recent enthusiasm to end this war, the terms of the current proposal are setting up Palestinians to live under permanent occupation and siege. The end of this genocide cannot come at the expense of accountability and justice for its survivors.

The voices of Palestinian women have been notably absent from this Chamber. I am here today because my Palestinian sisters cannot be. Those who are able to travel outside the besieged bantustans that Israel has created across Palestine are being denied visas to the United States. Others are facing reprisals for speaking out. The Council should be doing everything in its power to recognize and support Palestinian women as agents of change. But when a people are enduring genocide, the first priority is life.

Today I will show how Israel's ongoing Nakba in Gaza intends to destroy the Palestinian people, in violation of the Genocide Convention. I will detail how attacks on the reproductive capacity of Palestinian women and girls collectively aim to eliminate the possibility of a Palestinian future — in four stages.

First, it is a struggle for Palestinians to survive, let alone to conceive in Gaza. Ninety-two per cent of residential buildings have been destroyed, leaving no quarter for privacy or intimacy. Further, the systematic sexual abuse and torture of Palestinians in captivity — including the rape of men, women and children; filmed forced nudity; and electrocution of genitalia — have resulted in mental and physical trauma that impede the ability to engage in sexual intimacy at all.

Recently, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel concluded that the bombing of the Al-Basma fertility clinic, which destroyed 4,000 embryos and over 1,000 vials of sperm and unfertilized eggs, was a measure intended to prevent births. Between 2022 and 2025, the birth rate of Palestinians in Gaza declined by 41 per cent.

Secondly, even if Palestinian women manage to conceive, it is a struggle to carry life to full gestation. In addition to the trauma of incessant bombardment, attacks on medical facilities and hunger and disease, it is impossible for women to meet their basic needs, let alone access their sexual and reproductive rights. Shema Jaber Thabet became pregnant with her first child during the genocide. On the day her shelter in Nuseirat was bombed, Shema described how she fled on foot without a destination, how she saw women fainting from shock and children screaming in fear, how she felt that it was truly a day of judgment. A week later, doctors told her that her baby would not survive. By 2024, the rate of miscarriage in Gaza had increased by 300 per cent.

Thirdly, even if Palestinian women manage to carry life, it is a struggle to deliver. As of August, some 55,000 Palestinian women lacked access to prenatal care, increasing the risk of post-partum haemorrhage — the leading cause of maternal death. Maha went into labour in Rafah when the city, originally home to 300,000 people, was sheltering 1.5 million. She was turned away from the hospital due to capacity constraints and was forced to deliver in a public bathroom. Maha is not an exception: every week, at least 15 women in Gaza deliver in appalling conditions. And those who do reach a hospital do not fare much better, like Shaimaa Ftouh, who endured a caesarean section without anaesthesia. She described the pain as beyond human tolerance.

Fourthly, even if women and their babies survive, it is a struggle to keep Palestinian newborns alive. Famine has been confirmed in Gaza. Over 60 per cent of pregnant and breastfeeding women are unable to produce milk due to malnutrition. As these women starve, they grow faint with anaemia, their teeth may fall out and their immune systems — already weakened by pregnancy — become even more vulnerable to disease. Many will give birth to underweight babies. Amira's parents were able to feed her until she was six months old, but when she caught an infectious disease, her parents could do nothing but watch her die. Amira is among at least 450 babies who were born and killed during the genocide.

Taken together, these four stages of attack — on survival and intimacy, pregnancy and gestation, labour and delivery, and childrearing and parenting — show the intensity of the attack on the ability of Palestinians in Gaza to reproduce and continue life.

This was always the intention. In May 2025, Zehut party leader and former member of the Knesset, Moshe Feiglin, stated, "Every child in Gaza is the enemy. We need to occupy Gaza and settle it, and not a single Gazan child will be left there." He has not been prosecuted for incitement to genocide. Despite an arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC), former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, who referred to all Palestinians as human animals, remains at large.

Just two days after the United Nations Commission of Inquiry concluded that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza, the United States cast its sixth veto of a Security Council resolution calling for a ceasefire (see S/PV.10000). It is now advancing plans to absolve alleged war criminals, to whitewash a genocide that we have all witnessed and to render — once again — Palestinian self-determination into a question at the mercy of outsiders. As enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, our inalienable rights cannot be subject to negotiation.

Palestinians have a right to self-determination in our ancestral homeland — a homeland that has etched the shape and colour of our embroidered dresses, that has entwined our family lineages through marriage, that has flavoured our most exquisite dishes with the bite of pomegranate molasses and the tang of green olives harvested in the fall; a homeland that has provided grammar for our poetry and holy sites for our worship and pilgrimage. Our survival cannot be conditioned on surrendering our right to build a collective future on this land — a future that makes life worth living. And our refusal to surrender is precisely why this campaign aims to destroy the Palestinian people. In its current form, the United States proposal is contingent on the removal of Palestinians from the helm of their political future. As emphasized by United Nations experts on Friday, the political outcome that we all so desperately want cannot be based on outright violations of international law.

Council members cannot allow brute power to unravel our humanity. I therefore urge the Council to insist that any solution to end the genocide not come at the expense of accountability or respect for international law; to ensure, as stipulated by the International Court of Justice, that the end of occupation is overseen by the United Nations, not Israel and its allies; to protect the integrity of ongoing proceedings in the International Court of Justice and the ICC; to end the transfer of arms and other equipment or items, including jet fuel, to Israel; to pursue the prosecution of individuals, corporations and media companies complicit in genocide; and to ensure that Palestinian women can meaningfully participate in rebuilding their societies and ultimately forging our collective future.

Should Council members be paralysed by fear, I encourage them to look to Palestinian women — they refuse to surrender. Neither should the Council.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Ms. Erakat for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Ms. Mahoi (Sierra Leone): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this high-level open debate. I thank His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for his briefing and the comprehensive annual report on women and peace and security (S/2025/556), which highlights the urgent need to address deteriorating conditions for women and girls. I also thank Ms. Sima Bahous, Executive Director of UN-Women; Ms. Olga Uskova, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Cognitive Technologies; and Ms. Noura Erakat of Rutgers University for their important insights.

The women and peace and security agenda remains a vital framework for advocating women's rights to full participation, protection and leadership in peace and security. Yet, 25 years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), women and girls continue to face alarming levels of conflict-related sexual violence, targeted attacks, forced displacement and reduced funding for women-led peacebuilding, all compounded by accelerated drawdowns of United Nations peace operations. The Security Council must speak with one clear and resolute voice to advance the four pillars of the women and peace and security agenda.

As we commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), our actions must go beyond symbolism. The Secretary-General's report not only provides a detailed analysis of the state of women and girls, it also offers a road map for change. Despite progress, women remain disproportionately affected by conflict and restrictive policies, and their participation in peace processes, critical to sustainable peace, remains too limited. With conflicts intensifying, hard-won gains in gender equality and women's protection are under severe threat. Reproductive rights are being rolled back, depriving millions, including survivors of sexual violence, of essential healthcare. From the Sudan to Haiti and Gaza to Ukraine, significant gaps persist in protecting women and girls and meeting their needs. In the Sudan alone, more than 6 million displaced women and girls face systemic violence as a weapon of war, compounded by attacks on hospitals and restrictions on aid, driving maternal and infant mortality higher. Similar accounts emerge from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gaza, Haiti, Myanmar, Ukraine and beyond, rooted in entrenched gender inequality.

In view of these realities, Sierra Leone proposes three key priorities for strengthening the women and peace and security agenda.

First, protecting women and girls from violence, in particular sexual and gender-based violence, must remain central to peacekeeping and peacebuilding mandates. As we strengthen the protection of civilians components of peace operations, we must ensure that women and girls can access humanitarian aid, sexual and reproductive healthcare and justice, all within a survivor-centred approach. This requires integrating women and peace and security across every phase of peacekeeping, political missions and transitions, including drawdowns. Such integration demands stronger collaboration among United Nations peace operations, regional organizations, national Governments, civil society organizations and community groups — partnerships that are even more crucial amid funding shortfalls. We support calls to increase the participation of women peacebuilders in implementing United Nations-supported projects and to adopt more flexible financing models for the Peacebuilding Fund and other pooled funds, enabling direct access for civil society organizations.

Secondly, women's inclusion in peace processes is essential for lasting peace. Sustainable solutions must reflect diverse perspectives. We urge all mediation actors to sign the Secretary-General's common pledge to increase women's full, equal and

meaningful participation in peace processes, launched during last year's women and peace and security debate (see S/PV.9760), to fast-track women's direct involvement in peace talks.

Sierra Leone's own experience illustrates the transformative impact of women's participation in peace and security. Women were pivotal in our transitions from the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, a peacekeeping mission in the aftermath of the civil war, to the integrated missions, the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone, which supported post-conflict peacebuilding. Our Government continues to invest in gender equality as part of our peace and development agenda, including through the adoption of three national action plans on women and peace and security. Legislative reforms such as the Domestic Violence Act, the Devolution of Estates Act, the Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act, the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act, the Child Marriage Act and the "Hands Off Our Girls" initiative championed by our First Lady, Ms. Fatima Maada Bio, in addition to President Julius Maada Bio's declaration of rape as a national emergency, reflect Sierra Leone's commitment. Broader legal reforms to strengthen women's political, social and economic rights have further advanced the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

Thirdly, the Security Council must remain steadfast in promoting the women and peace and security agenda and strengthening justice and accountability for victims. As the first African country to co-chair the Security Council's Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security, Sierra Leone has consistently championed stronger women and peace and security mandates in peace operations. In the past two years, the Council has repeatedly called for women's full, equal and meaningful participation in peace talks, including in the Sudan and South Sudan. It has imposed sanctions on perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence in Haiti, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Sudan and affirmed that sexual violence and trafficking constitute grounds for sanctions against members of Da'esh. It has urged the Taliban to reverse restrictions on women and girls in Afghanistan, reaffirmed women's rights to know the fate of missing relatives and to access custody, property and land — rights that are especially relevant in Syria — and called for non-discriminatory access to sexual and reproductive healthcare for survivors in conflict and post-conflict settings.

Thirty years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and 25 years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the gains that we have made in advancing gender equality and amplifying women's voices must be protected and expanded. Sierra Leone reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the principles of resolution 1325 (2000) and the broader women and peace and security agenda. We fully support the Secretary-General's call for increased overseas development assistance to support gender equality and women's organizations in conflict contexts. It is time to turn words into action by setting ambitious policies and measurable targets for women's political, social and economic empowerment at the national, regional and global levels and by providing the resources needed to achieve them. Let us invest in the future — a future in which women and girls live as equals and which is defined by peace, stability and opportunity for every man, woman, boy and girl.

Mr. Young (United Kingdom): I would like to thank the Secretary-General and today's briefers.

Twenty-five years ago, the Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000), delivering a united message that for peace to be sustainable, it must be inclusive. This means that it must entail women's full, equal, meaningful and safe participation.

While there has been much to celebrate since then, decades of hard-won progress are under threat. From the Sudan to Ukraine and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, conflict and violence is escalating, and women and children continue to bear the brunt. Women in Gaza are suffering from violence on an unprecedented scale and a lack of access to basic services and healthcare. I pay tribute to the courageous women across the globe who have dedicated their lives to peace and security, often in the most challenging circumstances.

The United Kingdom remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing the women and peace and security agenda globally. There are three areas on which we must focus our attention and take collective action.

First, as underlined by the Secretary-General, we must do more to turn our commitments on women's participation into action. The United Kingdom has supported greater involvement of women in peace processes in the Sudan and the Philippines, in peacebuilding in Myanmar and Syria, in defence in Ukraine and in reconciliation efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The increasing threats and reprisals against women who engage in peace and security are unacceptable. The United Kingdom will continue to work with UN-Women to help Member States to prevent and mitigate the impact of reprisals.

Secondly, we need renewed efforts to prevent conflict-related sexual violence and strengthen justice and accountability for survivors. Since 2012, the United Kingdom has spearheaded the flagship Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative. And we continue to work consistently to confront rising violence against women and girls, including in Ukraine, the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We commend Ukraine's leadership of the International Alliance on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict and their important work to respond to sexual violence perpetrated by Russian forces. We call for an end to impunity and urge decisive action around the world to support survivors and to ensure that their voices shape our response.

Thirdly, we must address the changing nature of conflict and the impact that this has on women and girls. On the front line and online, people are being targeted because of their gender, which is undermining national security and exploiting societal vulnerabilities. The rights of women and girls are under attack, threatening our shared national security and our global security. Humanitarian and health crises are being exacerbated by reproductive violence and the gendered impacts of conflict. In Gaza and the Sudan, pregnant and breastfeeding women are suffering from acute malnutrition and have lost access to critical reproductive health services. In Yemen, a woman dies in childbirth every two hours, which is less time than we will spend in the Chamber today.

The past 25 years have shown us that efforts to champion the role and rights of women and girls in peace and security can deliver meaningful change. We must redouble our efforts to protect those gains and accelerate implementation for the current and the next generation of women and girls.

Mr. Dharmadhikari (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN-Women, Ms. Sima Bahous, for their statements and their commitment to the women and peace and security agenda.

Twenty-five years on from the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the agenda has allowed noteworthy strides to be taken. The protection of women in armed conflict and their participation in peacekeeping are now part and parcel of the mandates of peace operations, such as in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, and peace agreements. For instance, the peace agreements in Colombia and

South Sudan come to mind. Even though they remain underrepresented, women have an increasing presence in national diplomatic services, among troops, in the ranks of the police and in the United Nations generally.

Nonetheless, the stark deterioration of the situation of women in armed conflict and the upsurge in assaults on their rights are imperilling the agenda. In Gaza, the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Burma and in many other conflicts, the vulnerability of women and girls, their prevalence among the casualties and the number of verified cases of sexual violence are unprecedented. In Ukraine, the armed forces of a permanent member of the Council — Russia — are committing rapes and other forms of sexual violence against civilians and prisoners of war. In Afghanistan, the segregation of women at the hands of the Taliban is so extensive as to be capable of constituting a crime against humanity.

In response, we must safeguard the gains of the past two decades and put the women and peace and security agenda back at the heart of the endeavours of a reformed United Nations and effective multilateralism. I will underscore four levers for action available to Council members.

First, it is necessary to continue increasing women's participation in every facet of peacekeeping. In line with general recommendation No. 40 (2024) of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, it is important to increase women's representation in decision-making systems in advancing towards the goal of parity, including in the governance of the United Nations. We must foster initiatives aimed at promoting women's participation in peace processes and peace operations. Training for uniformed women springs specifically to mind.

Secondly, the Council's resolutions on women, peace and security must be properly enforced on the ground. France will continue to negotiate in favour of these resolutions remaining at the core of peace operations' mandates. France is also advocating for the presence of women's protection advisers and military gender advisers in those operations to be boosted.

Thirdly, it is necessary to combat impunity and strive for reparation for the victims. We must provide greater support to national authorities in this respect, in particular judicial authorities. We commend the endeavours of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Pramila Patten, and her efforts to establish an international network of prosecutors tasked with combating the impunity of perpetrators of sexual violence in conflict. We are advocating greater use of Council sanctions targeted at those responsible for those crimes. France reaffirms its full support for the International Criminal Court and the international mechanisms that are investigating sexual crimes.

Fourthly, United Nations and civil society organizations, which are playing a crucial role on the ground, must be supported. France commends the dedication of UN-Women and the United Nations Population Fund in implementing the women and peace and security agenda. France is also championing feminist organizations through a dedicated national fund, one of the largest worldwide in geographic and financial terms.

As France is about to adopt its fourth national action plan on women and peace and security, the 2026–2030 plan, which will consider emerging issues such as digital technology and climate change, I wish to salute the women negotiators and mediators, the uniformed women, the women humanitarian workers and representatives of civil society and the countless other women who, day in day out, are working for peace; their courage compels us to do so. As a token of that commitment, the women and peace and security agenda will be one of the main themes of the fourth Ministerial Conference on Feminist Foreign Policy to be held in Paris on 22 and 23 October.

Ms. Shea (United States of America): I would like to thank Secretary-General Guterres for his report (S/2025/556) and presentation today. I also acknowledge Executive Director Sima Bahous, Ms. Olga Uskova, and Ms. Noura Erakat for their contributions to framing this debate.

The United States welcomes the opportunity to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), adopted by the Council at the turn from one century to the next. That resolution itself is a turning point in the way the Security Council, the United Nations and its Member States came to understand the elements of peace and security and has, in turn, changed how we address challenges and threats to international peace and security.

In the quarter-century since we adopted resolution 1325 (2000), recognition of the role that women play in peace and security changed the way the Security Council structures peacekeeping operations. Today, there are currently almost 6,000 women peacekeepers serving across 11 United Nations peacekeeping missions — nearly 10 per cent of all peacekeepers.

I must address allegations of genocide made in this debate. These accusations are categorically false and fuel antisemitic hatred and violence around the world. America fully supports Israel's right to defend itself. Israel has taken numerous measures to limit harm to civilians and to address humanitarian needs. The loss of civilian life in Gaza is tragic. But the responsibility for this conflict rests with Hamas, which could have stopped the fighting long ago by freeing the hostages and agreeing to the ceasefire terms accepted by Israel.

Moreover, it was shocking to hear the disparagement of the peace deal, voiced by one of the briefers. President Trump's comprehensive plan to end the Gaza conflict sets a path forward for the immediate end of the war, the immediate release of all 48 hostages, the complete disarmament of Hamas, the demilitarization of the Gaza Strip and the economic development of Gaza. The plan, which has been accepted by Israel welcomed by the Palestinian Authority and has the broad support of a number of partners from Arab and Muslim-majority States, from Türkiye to Indonesia, will allow Gaza to begin a peaceful and prosperous future, while ensuring that Hamas no longer threatens Israel. We urge Hamas to accept the deal on the table. And we call on all Member States to give the plan their full support and demand that Hamas immediately accept it.

The Women, Peace and Security Act, which President Trump signed into law in 2017, provides a legal framework that codifies the objectives of resolution 1325 (2000) and guides our work, both at home and abroad, on these issues.

The United States is also proud of our leadership role on this issue as penholder in the Council on the issue of sexual violence in conflict. And the United States has played a key role in the launching of the conflict-related sexual violence mandate through resolution 1888 (2009).

Mr. Alfaro de Alba (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): We express our gratitude to the Russian Federation for organizing this important open debate on women and peace and security. We also appreciate the valuable contributions of Secretary-General António Guterres and UN-Women Executive Director Sima Bahous, who we thank for her tireless efforts to protect the rights of women. We also thank Ms. Olga Uskova for her fascinating briefing and Ms. Noura Erakat for her moving and powerful briefing, both on behalf of civil society.

Thirty years ago, the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action marked a turning point in the recognition of women's role in peace and development. Five years later, that momentum was consolidated with the unanimous adoption, by

consensus, of resolution 1325 (2000) in the Security Council, forever transforming the international peace and security agenda.

For the first time, the Council recognized that sustainable peace cannot be achieved without the leadership, participation, and protection of women in conflict situations. It was a historic breakthrough, but also a reflection of decades of struggle by women's movements around the world in defence of dignity and life.

The women and peace and security agenda was born out of the momentum generated by courageous and visionary interregional alliances. That same interregional spirit gave rise to the Shared Commitments on women and peace and security in the Security Council, led by Ireland, Mexico and Kenya. This geographical diversity is no coincidence: it shows that this agenda belongs to the whole world. And it is in that plurality that its legitimacy and strength lie.

From Latin America and the Caribbean, the push for gender equality and the women and peace and security agenda has been steadfast and visionary. It was from the global South that we raised the voices of women in conflict contexts, insisting that lasting peace cannot be built without women. Countries such as Panama, without an army or expansive geopolitical agendas, exercise leadership through consistency and diplomacy, guided by the conviction to defend the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Over the past 25 years, we have witnessed remarkable progress: the recognition of sexual violence as a war crime, the growing inclusion of women in peace processes and the strengthening of national and international legal frameworks for gender equality. The positive impact of women's participation in peace agreements has been documented and is evident in concrete experiences.

But we also know that progress has been uneven and, in many contexts, fragile. More than 670 million women live near areas of active conflict — an unprecedented number. Setbacks in women's rights in contexts such as Afghanistan, Myanmar, Haiti, the Sudan, Yemen and Syria, as well as systematic attacks on women human rights defenders, remind us that commemoration is not enough: it is important to act, to enforce their rights, to seek protection mechanisms and to value their contributions.

Women peacebuilders and human rights defenders are the ones who, from within their communities, have sustained the social fabric, documented abuses and demanded justice. However, their visibility often makes them targets of attacks in digital spaces and in their communities. We must protect those who protect peace and ensure their access to resources, security and legitimacy.

In this regard, Panama strongly believes that we must strengthen our capacity for data collection and accountability. As the Secretary-General's most recent report (S/2025/556) points out, we cannot move forward if we do not close the data gaps on women and peace in humanitarian and conflict contexts.

Another essential aspect is funding. The targets of 15 per cent of peacebuilding funds, earmarked for gender equality, and 1 per cent, channelled directly to women's organizations in conflict zones, must become the norm rather than the exception.

Panama, as a signatory to the Security Council's statement of shared commitments on women and peace and security, reiterates its determination to uphold international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law. We strongly support international institutions of justice, such as the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice, in their work on accountability for serious violations of the rights of women and girls.

Resolution 1325 (2000) opened the door to a profound transformation. However, 25 years later, that door remains only half open. We have the knowledge, we have

the tools and we have the mandate. What is needed now, and what is missing, is the political will to move from promises to concrete results. Panama reaffirms today its commitment to this agenda, as part of its vision of sustainable peace, centred on human dignity, women's rights and justice. Let us work together so that, next year, we celebrate not just another commemoration, but tangible changes in the lives of millions of women and girls who still await justice and protection and deserve the chance to resume their life projects.

Mr. Mohamed Yusuf (Somalia): At the outset, allow me to begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, on assuming the presidency of the Council this month. Somalia extends its sincere wishes for a successful term and pledges its full support.

We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his insightful remarks and to all briefers for their valuable contributions to this vital discussion on advancing women's rights within the framework of peace and security.

We express gratitude to all advocates and leaders who tirelessly work towards our shared objective.

Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), my delegation has acknowledged the significant progress made in integrating gender perspectives into peace processes and recognizing the crucial role of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. There is ample evidence. When women participate in peace negotiations, the resulting agreements are more inclusive and durable, strengthening communities recovering from conflict.

Despite these advances, we continue to face daunting challenges. We are witnessing setbacks in women's rights, especially in the occupied Palestinian territories and in regions in which non-State actors perpetrate violence against women. A persistent lack of gender-disaggregated data further limits our ability to understand women's specific needs and contributions, hampering effective policy and action. In this context, my delegation wishes to highlight four key points.

First, we emphasize the importance of supporting national and regional initiatives, such as the African Union Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls. This treaty assists Member States in preventing, criminalizing and responding to gender-based violence, especially in conflict settings, while prioritizing the rights and voices of survivors. The African Solidarity Initiative also demonstrates the power of leveraging local expertise and resources to support survivors and peacebuilding. We encourage international partners to support and align their efforts with these frameworks for a unified response.

Secondly, we underscore the critical importance of improving the collection, analysis and use of gender-disaggregated data. Comprehensive data is essential for accurately assessing the challenges women face and measuring our progress. Somalia has taken concrete steps to address this gap. We have launched initiatives to improve the quality and availability of gender data, including national surveys, and collaborated with the Somali National Bureau of Statistics in order to integrate gender indicators into data collection efforts. These initiatives inform our national action plan on resolution 1325 (2000) and our national strategy on combating violence against women and girls, enabling us to track trends, identify gaps and design evidence-based policies. We urge all Member States and partners to invest in similar data systems and share best practices.

Thirdly, we must strengthen accountability mechanisms to end impunity for gender-based violence, which remains a serious obstacle to peace and security. Supporting national and international investigations and prosecutions is critical. Accountability must be tied to measurable progress in women's protection.

Fourthly, we must address the root causes that perpetuate violence against women, such as poverty and inequality.

True protection for women and girls will remain elusive as long as conflicts persist. Promoting the meaningful participation of women in peacebuilding and development is essential for creating safe, inclusive environments for all. Somalia is proud to have adopted and implemented a national action plan on resolution 1325 (2000) and a national strategy on combating violence against women and girls, prioritizing women's protection, participation and leadership. We are also advancing the ratification of the International Labour Organization Violence and Harassment Convention, No. 190 implementing a male involvement strategy and promoting change of social norms among civil society and youth. Women's leadership is growing through the African Women Leaders Network, and in Somalia women now hold 21 per cent of parliamentary seats. In addition, the first female Deputy Speaker of Parliament was elected, a historic step. We have also expanded women's roles in the civil service and improved access to healthcare, such as free medical services for all women. Parliamentarians continue to champion rights for women and children.

In conclusion, the journey towards lasting peace and security cannot be separated from the advancement of women's rights and leadership. As we have seen, time and again, societies are stronger, more resilient and more just when women are able to participate fully and without fear. Progress through national and regional initiatives shows that real change requires collective and sustained effort. Somalia is committed to advancing the women and peace and security agenda through partnerships with regional and international partners.

Ms. Landi (Denmark): Let me also thank the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN-Women and today's civil society briefers for their briefings and their commitment to the women and peace and security agenda.

Denmark recognizes the indispensable participation of women from civil society in the Council. We draw attention to the open letter to United Nations Member States on behalf of 661 civil society signatories published ahead of today's meeting.

Twenty-five years ago, the Council took a momentous step, one that recognized that peace is inextricably linked to gender equality and women's leadership. In the past 25 years, we have witnessed remarkable strides. Women have enabled sustainable peace in Colombia, Liberia and the Philippines. More than 100 countries have adopted national action plans on women and peace and security. A growing number of perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence in conflict have been brought to justice. The number of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations has increased drastically. But the promise of resolution 1325 (2000) remains far from fulfilled. Peace negotiations remain dominated by men, despite clear evidence that women's participation leads to more durable agreements. Decisions that shape the lives of millions are made without those who are most affected and most equipped to respond: women, survivors, grass-roots leaders. And women and girls continue to suffer horrific and rising levels of sexual and gender-based violence, both in and outside of conflict contexts. In short, we still have very far to go.

Between 2023 and 2024, the number of women and girls killed in conflict quadrupled from the previous two-year period. Seven out of 10 were killed in Gaza, where Palestinian mothers and their children are denied food and maternal healthcare, in violation of the Geneva Conventions. In the Sudan, women are wounded, displaced, raped and killed as markets, hospitals, schools and homes are targeted by the Rapid Support Forces and the Sudanese Armed Forces alike. In Afghanistan, women and girls have been erased from public life and stripped of education, freedom and dignity by the Taliban.

Around this table, let us recall that at the core of the women and peace and security agenda lies the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Is that not the reason we are here in the Council?

Against this dire backdrop, victims and survivors, however resilient they may be, require relief and support. Yet, the current context is one of deliberate denial of humanitarian assistance, of rapidly declining funding for life-saving services and sometimes even the purposeful killing of the very actors trying to bring relief. This is both unacceptable and illegal. Denmark's view is clear: the rights of women and girls, including their sexual and reproductive health and rights, are non-negotiable. Protecting humanitarian space is critical to fulfil these rights, and it is not optional — it is a legal obligation and an urgent imperative to save lives and empower solutions.

Today we pay tribute to the women's rights movement that led the charge to establish this agenda. They were rightly demanding that women have a seat at the table and that there should be nothing about women without women. Yet, 25 years later, women's voices are still sidelined or silenced, their lives threatened or attacked. Therefore, as we mark this milestone, we must move beyond rhetoric and commit to concrete actions: protecting women human rights defenders, ensuring their safe participation in decision-making and funding grass-roots women-led organizations. We further echo the Secretary-General's call for women to constitute at least one third of all participants in United Nations-led or co-led peace processes. We urge all stakeholders, including the United Nations, to make women's participation the norm at every stage.

In conclusion, Denmark remains as committed as ever, not least financially. We renewed this commitment in our fifth national action plan on women and peace and security launched this year, with new dedicated funding for women and peace and security initiatives to support the participation of local women in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding. But we are not here to celebrate rhetoric. We are here to demand results. The next 25 years must not be about more commitments — they must be about action, about power shared, about resources delivered, about protection ensured.

Mr. Žbogar (Slovenia): We thank the Russian Federation for organizing today's debate. We thank the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN-Women for their briefings and clear asks. Special thanks go to civil society briefers, who focused on humanity from different angles: Ms. Uskova, on how artificial intelligence technology can improve the lives of women and girls; and Ms. Erakat, on the horrors that human intelligence is capable of inflicting on women and girls if unchallenged.

Twenty years ago, the Council promised a more inclusive and peaceful world, a world in which the equality of women and men is not an ideal but the very foundation of lasting peace. Resolution 1325 (2000) was more than just another resolution; it was the beginning of a global movement with one simple message: peace begins when women are at the table.

This would never be possible but for the tireless efforts of civil society, whose advocacy laid the foundation for the women and peace and security agenda. Nor would it have been possible without Namibia's leadership, which proved that when grass-roots mobilization meets political will, real change becomes possible. Yet today, 25 years later, the momentum that once filled this room is almost gone and the pace of progress once made stalled.

As the Secretary-General warned in his most recent report (S/2025/556), the women and peace and security framework is under mounting pressure. It is facing rising gender-based discrimination, weakened legal protection systems, shrinking civic space and declining funding. These challenges are further compounded by the

proliferation of armed conflicts, increased militarization and diminishing respect for international law. As a result, the safety, dignity and human rights of women and girls continue to be undermined, and peace is left without its ally. Such a grim reality demands a new change. Allow me, then, to share some of my delegation's thoughts in response.

First, on women's right to participation, women's participation must be full, equal, meaningful and safe. Slovenia strongly supports the use of quotas as a tool to advance gender equality and to ensure that women have a seat at every table at which peace is discussed. We reaffirm our commitment to meeting the minimum United Nations targets for women's representation at all levels and stages of decision-making in peace and security, while striving towards full parity.

Secondly, on the need to support the civil society movements that sustain this agenda, we must return to the roots of the women and peace and security agenda. The women-led organizations that built it must be able to continue with their mission. My delegation is committed to increasing investment in gender equality, including in conflict-affected settings. We have expanded our support for UN-Women and continue to contribute to the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, with a focus on empowering local and women-led organizations. In the past seven years, we have virtually doubled the share of our programmable bilateral development assistance that includes a gender perspective. We remain committed to this course.

Finally, on upholding international law, the rights of women and girls and accountability, accountability is non-negotiable. Slovenia reaffirms its strong support for international accountability mechanisms that aim to end impunity for sexual and gender-based crimes, including reproductive violence and gender-based persecution. We underscore the importance of ensuring that perpetrators are held accountable, that victims and survivors receive justice and redress and that sexual and reproductive health and rights services are available and accessible for survivors of such violence. And in this sense, we welcome today's International Criminal Court judgment on crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in Darfur 20 years ago. Justice may be slow, but eventually it comes. Justice must also be co-created with those who are most affected, particularly at the community level.

We cannot advance gender equality without dismantling patriarchal norms. Real change means removing the barriers that keep women out of decision-making, both in times of peace and in times of conflict. The women and peace and security agenda must be central to peace and security, as women are providers of peace and security. It belongs in every discussion in this Chamber. This agenda is not only for women; it is for a more peaceful and inclusive future for all of us. Resolution 1325 (2000) started a global movement, driven by women-led groups. Today we are all part of this movement, with 113 countries adopting national action plans. Slovenia, whose third national action plan is about to be adopted, is among them. Now is the time to strengthen our political commitment to the women and peace and security agenda and to support it with funding. Now is the time to set up concrete targets and quotas for women's equal and meaningful participation. Now is the time to enforce a zero-tolerance approach to any violence against women and girls.

Peace cannot endure if half of humankind is left behind. My country stands firm: women and girls are equal partners in our societies, and we demand that they be treated as such.

Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett (Guyana): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's debate.

I thank Secretary-General António Guterres for his briefing and Executive Director Sima Bahous for her briefing and, indeed, for her and her team's untiring

efforts in advancing women's rights. I express appreciation to Ms. Olga Uskova and Ms. Noura Erakat for sharing their perspectives.

Milestone anniversaries are an opportunity for reflection on achievements and challenges and for renewed commitment to action. The adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) by the Council 25 years ago was a seminal moment for women in the peace and security context. It was formal recognition by the Security Council of the critical role of women in peace processes, the humanitarian response, post-conflict reconstruction and the prevention and resolution of conflicts. It also highlighted the need for enhanced protection for women and girls.

Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the Council has strengthened the women and peace and security agenda, creating a comprehensive and formidable body of policy and tools to empower and protect women in conflict situations. However, while there have been meaningful achievements on several fronts, the shortfalls are substantial. Achievement of the women and peace and security agenda has been stymied by lack of political will, funding deficits, a culture of impunity and disregard for international law. Women remain vastly underrepresented in peace processes and political leadership. Many who choose public roles are targeted by oppressive campaigns and harassment aimed at excluding and silencing them. Women civil society actors and journalists have not been spared.

On the protection side, the situation has deteriorated rapidly over the past two years, and the data is damning. Between 2023 and 2024, the number of women and children killed in armed conflicts quadrupled, compared to the previous two-year period. Gaza was the epicentre: 7 out of every 10 women killed in conflicts worldwide died in Gaza. Conflict-related sexual violence cases documented by the United Nations increased by 87 per cent in the past two years. In the Sudan, the United Nations reported a 288 per cent increase in demand for life-saving support for rape and sexual violence survivors from 2023 to 2024. The numbers are also alarming in Haiti and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Four years after the Taliban's takeover in Afghanistan, women and girls continue to be denied secondary and tertiary education, with their rights trampled upon and their voices silenced.

The Council has a critical role in ensuring implementation of its resolutions and decisions, including the robust women and peace and security agenda that it created. We have seen how consistent and united calls by the Council for women's full, equal and meaningful participation in peace processes, buttressed by support from the United Nations system and the activism of civil society, have yielded higher numbers of women mediators and peacekeepers and stronger legislative frameworks in many countries. Where the Council created strong mandates for missions with clearly defined gender protection roles, women and girls have benefited.

However, greater Council action and activism are needed to scale up implementation of the women and peace and security agenda to engender real changes for women and girls everywhere. The Council and, indeed, the wider international community must go beyond outrage and condemnation and use all available tools to stem the horrific violence against women and girls that we are witnessing. Addressing the wanton violations of international law, including international humanitarian law, and the pervasive culture of impunity can be effective in deterring perpetrators. Action should include sanctions on perpetrators of gross violations of women's rights, including conflict-related sexual violence. Importantly, sanctions should be lifted only when there are demonstrable efforts to prevent or respond to violations of women's rights.

The Council could also make greater use of its referral powers in relation to the International Criminal Court when national investigations and prosecutions fall short. Tangible support for survivors, including medical and psychosocial support, is

also necessary. We have seen how the destruction of healthcare facilities, in violation of international humanitarian law, has affected maternal and sexual and reproductive healthcare, with devastating results for women and newborns. Such crimes must not go unpunished. The shrinking presence of peacekeeping missions has weakened the Organization's ability to monitor violations of women's rights. Guyana supports the call in the Secretary-General's report (S/2025/556) for more efforts and resources to be channelled into the collection of gendered data to ensure that programmes and responses match needs.

History has shown that peace is sustainable when root causes are addressed, when approaches are inclusive, when weapons are laid down and when solutions are sought through dialogue and diplomacy. This twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) must galvanize our collective efforts. We know that meaningfully including women in conflict prevention, resolution and reconstruction will yield greater dividends in all peace efforts. This means that we must invest more political capital and financial resources to support women on the front lines of conflict so as to ensure their protection and safety and to guarantee them an equal place at every table.

Mrs. Balta (Greece): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this timely open debate. I would like to thank the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UN-Women, Ms. Sima Bahous, as well as Ms. Olga Uskova and Ms. Noura Erakat, for their insightful contributions. I would also like to express my delegation's full support for the mandate of the Executive Director of UN-Women and to thank her and her team for their tireless work in advancing the empowerment of women and girls worldwide.

Two weeks ago, we commemorated the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This month, we celebrate the 25 years since the adoption of landmark resolution 1325 (2000), on women, peace and security. Yet despite these achievements, the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2025/556) points to troubling regressions in many of the core goals of the women and peace and security agenda. This trend must be reversed. Sustainable peace and security are inseparable from gender equality and cannot be achieved without the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women.

I would like to make three points in that regard.

First, in the face of growing geopolitical tensions and conflicts and their disproportionate impact on women and girls, we need to uphold the protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all women. Greece condemns all violations, including conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence, and we stress the need for survivors' access to life-saving services, including sexual and reproductive health. The role of United Nations sanctions committees is crucial in this respect by ensuring that sexual and gender-based violence is incorporated as a stand-alone designation criterion in all sanctions regimes. In addition, all international accountability mechanisms should be explored for violations of the human rights of women.

Secondly, women are not passive victims of conflict but indispensable agents of peace. In that context, we fully endorse the Secretary-General's call for women to constitute at least 30 per cent of participants in peace processes. Participation is gender-equal only when it includes all women: peacebuilders and mediators, local and indigenous women, women from civil society organizations and the grass roots, activists and human rights defenders, whose protection from reprisals is also of paramount importance.

The same applies to political representation. Today, only 29 countries are led by women, and women constitute barely one fifth of Permanent Representatives

at the United Nations. Women's active participation in political and public affairs must be promoted so that decision-making truly reflects the interests of women and men equally.

Thirdly, Greece, as a women and peace and security champion and a signatory of the shared commitments on women and peace and security, has pledged to advance the role of women as agents of change. Driven by our national action plan on women and peace and security and by strong national legislation and policies, we have adopted a zero-tolerance approach to violence, and we have integrated gender mainstreaming across all public administration and budgeting processes.

To strengthen women's political and economic participation, Greece has introduced a 40 per cent candidate quota for elections and mandated 33 per cent gender representation on boards of directors of large listed companies. We are also reinforcing gender equality committees in universities and research institutions to combat discrimination and harassment.

A gender-equal world is a safer, more prosperous and more peaceful world. Greece will continue working with partners to ensure that our commitments are not rhetorical but real, resourced and results-driven. Let us renew our efforts so that the promise of resolution 1325 (2000) translates into tangible change for women and girls everywhere — for a better future for all

Mrs. Messaoud (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, we would like to express our deep appreciation to the Russian presidency for convening this important meeting. We thank the Secretary-General for his most recent report on women and peace and security (S/2025/556) and for his valuable briefing today. We share his conviction that the challenges facing the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda remain enormous and that we should redouble our efforts and shoulder our responsibilities. We also thank UN-Women's Executive Director Sima Bahous, Ms. Olga Uskova and Ms. Noura Erakat for their valuable briefings.

As we mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) and the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, we have an opportunity for genuine reflection: much has undoubtedly been achieved, but unfortunately there is still a long way to go towards achieving the desired goals. What pains us all is that women and girls in conflict areas are still paying the heaviest price.

The Algerian national experience has taught us that women cannot be just victims. They are actors, makers of history and keepers of memory. Algeria is proud that its women were at the forefront of its liberation revolution and that, after independence, they became the pillars of the modern State, contributing to political, economic, social and cultural life. The pioneering national reforms in many sectors have enshrined the principles of equality and justice and strengthened the status of women, especially as agents of peace, by embodying the women and peace and security agenda, Agenda 2063 of the African Union and the adoption of a national plan to implement Council resolution 1325 (2000).

While we take pride in what Algeria has achieved to improve the status of women, our hearts are heavy as we witness the tragedies that afflicts women and girls in many parts of the world, especially in Gaza. It is worth mentioning, as stated in the Secretary-General's report, that 7 out of every 10 women killed in conflicts around the world today wars are killed in Gaza alone. Is there a symbol that encapsulates the suffering of women that is more tragic than that of a land besieged, burdened and exhausted by two years of genocidal war along a narrow strip that is afflicted by one of the worst humanitarian crises of our time?

In Gaza, thousands of births occur under bombardment, without anaesthesia, without care and even without water. Women give birth in the rubble while death hovers around them, while girls live in the shadows of anxiety and depression, their lives turned into open wounds that may never heal. It is not only a human tragedy, but a stain on all of humankind.

On top of all that, more than half a million people are facing famine in Gaza, while another million are on the brink of a food emergency. United Nations staff have not been spared from this hell, with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East losing 310 of its staff, including at least 125 women.

These facts impose on us a great historic responsibility. It is no longer enough to draft resolutions on paper or to repeat slogans on equality and empowerment. What is needed today is strong political will, adequate funding, rigorous accountability mechanisms and, above all, the protection of women and girls in the field, not just on paper.

In that context, we reaffirm our support for the recommendations of the Secretary-General, as contained in his report, in particular those relating to establishing the full and equal participation of women through compulsory quotas in peace operations and in political and security reform processes; promoting accountability for crimes of sexual violence through national or international judicial mechanisms, while upholding a zero-tolerance policy for those who perpetrate grave violations of women's rights; and integrating women and peace and security plans into national laws, while ensuring their funding and implementation through close follow-up measures.

Because Algeria believes in women's leadership, it will remain, as always, true to its commitment to promote women's rights, to expand their effective participation in decision-making, to protect them from all forms of violence and to ensure that they play a pivotal role in peace and development processes.

What is happening in Gaza and other conflict zones is not an inevitable fate, but rather a moral and legal test that forces us to consider our responsibilities. History will not have mercy on those who collude or those who simply remain silent or stand by as observers.

From this forum, we renew our call for an immediate, permanent and unconditional ceasefire and for the unhindered entry of humanitarian aid to alleviate the suffering of women and children in Gaza caused by this genocidal war.

Mr. Cha (Republic of Korea): Let me join others in welcoming the participation of the Secretary-General in today's open debate and in thanking Under-Secretary-General Sima Bahous and the two additional briefers, Ms. Olga Uskova and Ms. Noura Erakat, for their insights. I also wish to warmly welcome Ms. Isata Mahoi, Minister of Gender and Children's Affairs of Sierra Leone.

The long list of speakers today underscores the significance of this open debate. Marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), this milestone offers us an opportunity to reflect on the progress made, confront the challenges ahead and chart the way forward to fully realize the women and peace and security agenda.

Over the past quarter of a century, the world has witnessed meaningful accomplishments in building stronger legal frameworks, advancing global consensus on gender-responsive peacebuilding and expanding efforts to ensure women's vital participation in peace processes. However, according to the Secretary-General's report (S/2025/556), it seems clear that we are far from achieving the transformative vision of resolution 1325 (2000). Major setbacks, including chronic funding shortfalls, shrinking civil space and persistent conflict-related sexual violence, continue to

obstruct the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). This clearly demonstrates the urgent need to redouble our collective commitment.

Please allow me to highlight three areas of focus.

First, sustained financial support must be directed to women leaders and organizations — the very backbone of local peace efforts, particularly at the grass-roots level. As the Secretary-General's report duly noted, however, local organizations remain among the most underfunded, despite their critical role in driving change from the ground up. To remedy this situation, we will continue our contribution to the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund — the only global mechanism directly supporting local and grass-roots women's organizations in crisis and conflict-affected settings.

Secondly, it is also essential to foster spaces that amplify women's voices and make their perspectives integral in decision-making. In this regard, the Republic of Korea annually hosts the International Conference on Action with Women and Peace as a platform to bring together diverse groups of women on the front lines of peace and security. This November, in Seoul, the seventh Conference will spotlight the implications of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence and intergenerational leadership, under the theme "WPS@25: Priorities and innovation for the future". We look forward to this gathering further advancing the women and peace and security agenda on its twenty-fifth anniversary through innovative means.

Lastly, protection must extend beyond conflict-related violence to address technology-facilitated violence — an emerging threat highlighted in the Secretary-General's report. In this vein, the Republic of Korea has spearheaded efforts to ensure that new technologies empower rather than endanger women. In collaboration with the Women Knowledge and Partnerships Centre in Seoul, the only hub in the Asia-Pacific region, we are advancing regional efforts to tackle digital threats by fostering knowledge-sharing and capacity-building.

The women and peace and security agenda was founded on the recognition that lasting peace is impossible without the protection of women, the advancement of their rights and the strengthening of their leadership. Twenty-five years on, the agenda remains as urgent and relevant as ever, particularly as women's rights continue to face rollbacks across the world. The Republic of Korea stands ready to work with all Member States and partners to ensure that the next 25 years will be the time to realize our shared vision, set out in resolution 1325 (2000).

Mr. Fu Cong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Secretary-General Guterres and Executive Director Bahous for their briefings, and I thank Ms. Uskova and Ms. Erakat for their statements.

This year marks the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. Over the decades, the global women's cause has been flourishing and making continued positive contributions to international peace and development. At present, with a volatile international situation and persisting violence, discrimination and economic inequality against women, the protection of women's rights and interests and the promotion of the women's cause call for greater solidarity and joint efforts from the international community.

I wish to share a few observations.

First, we must strengthen conflict prevention and settlement. At present, more than 600 million women are suffering as a result of conflict. In Gaza, where fighting persists, more than 1 million Palestinian women and girls find themselves in a living hell and an appalling humanitarian catastrophe. In Haiti, West Africa and the Sahel, rampant gang violence and terrorism severely threaten the lives and safety of women

and girls. We call on the international community to act with greater urgency to promote the political settlement of hotspot issues and create a peaceful and tranquil living environment for women. The Security Council should enhance unity and collaboration to fulfil its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, effectively promote ceasefires, advance political and diplomatic dialogue and create more conditions to guarantee the safety of women.

Secondly, we must support women's empowerment and development. Globally, nearly 10 per cent of women are mired in extreme poverty. Countries should invest greater resources, provide women and girls with quality education, leverage digital technologies to improve women's competencies, improve the level of social security for women and help women to achieve the transformation from dependence to independence. The international community is widely calling on the Afghan Government to ensure equal rights for women in education, employment and participation in public affairs. It is believed that this would be conducive to Afghanistan's peace, stability and development. The Security Council and the international community should translate into reality the concept of development for peace and create more opportunities for women to enhance their capabilities and better participate in economic development so as to resolve the root causes of conflict.

Thirdly, we must promote exchanges and cooperation regarding women. The development of the cause of women remains unbalanced among countries, with the annual funding gap for achieving gender equality in developing countries reaching as high as \$420 billion. Developed countries should strengthen financial and technical support for developing countries. We support deepening South-South cooperation and the exchange of experience in women's development. We call on the international community to actively help with the reconstruction of conflict areas and make greater investments in health care, education and training, among others, to jointly improve the situation of women. UN-Women and the United Nations Development Programme, among others, must play a greater role in helping to resolve issues confronting women, such as poverty, backwardness, discrimination, prejudice and the development gap, to leave no woman or girl behind.

As the host of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, in supporting the development of the global women's cause, China is both an advocate and a doer. China has sent a total of more than 1,200 women peacekeepers and more than 100 women peacekeeping police officers to United Nations peacekeeping operations and supports the training programme for senior women talents at the United Nations through the China-United Nations Peace and Development Fund. By implementing health programmes and campus projects and exchanging training, we support the development of women's livelihood in developing countries. China supports United Nations entities such as UN-Women in helping enhance women's economic empowerment in developing countries and in particular in conflict areas. China will soon host another meeting of global leaders on women, in Beijing, to build broad consensus on unity and cooperation, forge strong synergies to respond to challenges and inject new impetus into the development of the global women's cause. We stand ready to work with the international community to make greater contributions towards the realization of a better future for every woman.

Ms. Saleem (Pakistan): We thank the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UN-Women and the civil society briefers, Ms. Noura and Ms. Olga, for their insightful briefings.

The Secretary-General's report (S/2025/556) is a sobering reminder that 25 years after resolution 1325 (2000), the women and peace and security agenda stands at a crossroads. Gains hard-won over decades are under threat; progress has stalled; and,

in too many conflicts, women remain the first and major casualties of violence and the last to be heard in peace processes.

Conflict-related sexual violence has risen by nearly 90 per cent in only two years, while the number of women and children killed quadrupled between 2023 and 2024. These are not only statistics but shattered lives and silenced voices. Women made up only 7 per cent of negotiators and 14 per cent of mediators last year. The promise of resolution 1325 (2000) remains far from realized.

The plight of Palestinian women is one of the gravest tragedies of our times. Seven out of 10 women killed in conflicts around the world in 2024 were in Gaza. Homes, schools and maternity wards were bombed. Pregnant women gave birth under fire without anaesthetics or water. Tens of thousands were displaced. Hundreds of thousands now face famine. These are not collateral tragedies but deliberate crimes that demand accountability.

Across Africa, in the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Sahel, women face horrific violence. Nevertheless, they are the ones who sustain families and hold communities together amid conflict. Despite these vital contributions, they continue to be sidelined from formal mediation processes, underresourced and deliberately targeted by armed groups.

It is deeply regrettable that, once again, the Secretary-General's report makes no reference to the plight of Kashmiri women, who for decades of occupation have endured sexual violence deployed as a weapon of war. United Nations human rights mechanisms, including the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and special procedures mechanisms, along with organizations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and Médecins Sans Frontières, have documented these violations, including structural impunity, harassment of women human rights defenders and journalists, reprisals against female family members of disappeared persons, torture and arbitrary detentions and widespread trauma of sexual abuse and violence. To exclude Kashmiri women from the women and peace and security agenda erases its legitimacy and undermines its universality. The Jammu and Kashmir dispute is on the Council's agenda and, therefore, future reports must reflect their plight accordingly.

Pakistan is actively engaged in implementing the women and peace and security agenda. Our women peacekeepers have served with courage and resilience in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Bosnia and beyond. They have built trust, provided medical care and supported survivors where justice was denied. They have shown that women in peacekeeping are both symbols of progress and enablers of peace itself. Pakistan remains committed to the United Nations uniformed gender parity strategy 2018–2028 and to expanding women's roles in our contingents.

Research is clear. Peace agreements with women's participation are more durable. Binding thresholds for women's representation must apply to all United Nations-mediation processes. Women's protection under international law must be guaranteed, and accountability must be ensured wherever and whenever sexual violence is deployed as a deliberate tactic of war. Resources must also match commitments. Women's organizations in conflict zones, often the first to respond and the last to leave, must receive sustainable and predictable funding. The gender data revolution called for by the Secretary-General is equally vital.

The Pact for the Future reaffirmed our collective commitment to the women and peace and security agenda. Now is the time to act to mandate women's participation, guarantee their protection, promote their leadership and strengthen accountability.

As we mark this milestone year, let us remember that the road to peace must be built by women and men together. Sustainable peace demands that women be at the heart of decision-making, as mediators, peacekeepers and leaders. Pakistan will continue to work with the Council to ensure that the promise of resolution 1325 (2000) is not delayed, diminished or denied, but delivered to women and girls across the world.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

We thank the United Nations Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN-Women for their assessments of how the women and peace and security agenda has been implemented over the 25 years of its consideration by the Security Council.

We thank Ms. Noura Erakat for her sobering account of the catastrophic plight of Palestinian women. We also thank Ms. Olga Uskova, who embodies the role of women in the development of new technologies, for highlighting the emerging threats and challenges linked to the domain of artificial intelligence, a field not yet fully studied, but which is already affecting armed conflicts and, by extension, women.

On 31 October 2000, under the presidency of Namibia, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, which opened a new direction in the work of the Council. The primary objectives of the resolution are the advancement of women affected by war, ensuring equality between men and women during armed conflicts and securing women's participation in peacekeeping processes, on an equal footing with men.

The Russian Federation remains committed to these noble goals. Over the past 25 years, much has been achieved towards their implementation. In the contemporary world, women are not just a vulnerable group, they are active participants in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes. Russia continues to make a significant contribution to training women peacekeepers at the United Nations-certified Peacekeeping Training Centre of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia.

Women directly affected by conflict help to forge more resilient and trust-based ties in post-conflict societies and to prevent violations against other women, elderly persons, persons with disabilities and children. Their participation strengthens follow-up measures for the rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of armed conflict and, ultimately, helps to prevent a relapse into violence.

However, the tasks set forth in the resolution cannot be fully implemented in a vacuum. The advancement of women and the expansion of their participation in decision-making cannot be achieved by merely imposing artificial quotas on countries affected by conflict or by involving women from developed countries or non-governmental organizations financed by those countries for the sake of appearances. This objective requires practical measures for the economic advancement of women and their access to education and skilled work. The role of the United Nations here is purely subsidiary. It must be geared towards supporting national efforts. Ignoring local conditions and traditions that shape how the Council's mandates are implemented is not a viable option. As is well known, one-size-fits-all approaches are not constructive.

In this regard, we note that the Secretary-General's report (S/2025/556), prepared for this meeting, places considerable emphasis on such concepts as quota, representation, leadership and parity, which are used to describe quantitative participation, with 63 such mentions. At the same time, qualitative characteristics such as job, education, labour and work are relegated to the background, and mentioned only 12 times, while essential concepts such as skills, effective participation and competencies are not mentioned at all. Furthermore, the report

does not examine factors obstructing the advancement of women, such as unilateral economic coercive measures or policies of colonialism and neocolonialism, which have been implemented for centuries.

It therefore appears that while women should be granted access to conflict-resolution processes, the crucial task of their qualitative professional training is left for each person to handle independently. Who, then, are we being asked to involve? The proposal is to bring to the negotiating table the very women's enterprises and civil society organizations mentioned more than 40 times in the report, which are often sponsored from abroad. This situation requires careful consideration. The empowerment of women is, in some cases, a slow and painstaking process that cannot be replaced by "high-profile reports" or "loud condemnations". Neither produces the desired effect.

The advancement of women is a comprehensive objective for the United Nations, involving a number of its bodies, each with its own mandate. The division of labour within the system must be respected. The Security Council deals only with aspects related to armed conflicts, peace and security. Today, as the Organization faces a financial crisis, we must consider how to make the best use of available resources. In this regard, we do not support the creation of additional bureaucratic Secretariat structures for women and peace and security. We believe that this will not help to meaningfully improve the situation of women on the ground.

Undeniably, the modern world is permeated with cynicism, whereby under the banner of protecting the most vulnerable population groups — women and children — discreditation campaigns are being carried out and political agendas are being advanced. The United Nations and its system entities must be cautious not to become a part of someone else's information campaigns.

The women and peace and security agenda is about the protection of women and equality between men and women in the context of armed conflict; it is not about gender or other neoliberal concepts that permeate the Secretariat's documents. Imposing neoliberal concepts not only undermines the achievement of the women and peace and security goals but also discredits and torpedoes the relevant efforts.

Dividing the world into "gender champions" and "opponents of gender equality" is by no means a constructive approach. When the word "gender" is mentioned 200 times in the report for our meeting, while "sex" or "men and women" are mentioned only five times, this is no longer about women and peace and security, but rather about promoting the political agenda of a specific group of countries.

Russia, as a State at the forefront of the struggle for women's rights, will always prioritize the advancement of women, equality between men and women, and the genuine protection of women from the consequences of armed conflicts.

I resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

Before giving the floor to those representatives invited in accordance with rule 37 and rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, 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 give the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

Mr. Hoehne (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). This historic resolution marked a turning point and remains the result of the sustained commitment of civil society, in particular women's organizations, which have been at the forefront of peacebuilding and the defence of human rights.

Twenty-five years after its adoption, genuine progress has been achieved. However, the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda still requires our collective and determined commitment. The most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2025/556) is clear: since 2020, we have witnessed stagnation and even regression as a result of increasing polarization. In several contexts — from Afghanistan to the Sudan, from Haiti to Palestine — women are victims of countless violations, an unacceptable reality.

I would like to address three points.

First, women's participation in peace processes remains insufficient. Too often, they are excluded from negotiations and decision-making. Only half of national action plans contain concrete commitments in this regard. Studies confirm that when women participate fully, peace processes become more inclusive, equitable and durable. This is the spirit of the Common Pledge to Increase Women's Full, Equal and Meaningful Participation in Peace Processes, which Switzerland supports and invites all States to join. Women should not be present merely for appearance's sake, but as genuine actors and decision-makers. It is not women's expertise that is lacking, as Switzerland demonstrated by inviting 20 representatives of civil society during its presidencies of the Council, but rather political will and resources.

Secondly, in situations of conflict, women's rights are too often violated. Protecting them is not only an obligation under international humanitarian law and international human rights law, but also an essential precondition for their participation in political, economic and social life, in times of both war and peace. The Secretary-General's report indicates that only 0.4 per cent of development assistance in fragile contexts reaches women's organizations, even though they are vital drivers of resilience and peace. Without reliable and sustainable funding, these key actors risk disappearing. There is an urgent need to provide robust financing for national action plans and to strengthen accountability for perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence, at both national and international levels.

Thirdly, violence against women and girls is growing alarmingly in the digital sphere, where they are exposed to coordinated campaigns of harassment and disinformation, amplified by new technologies and artificial intelligence. Yet, these same technologies also offer powerful tools to advance the women and peace and security agenda, including through improved collection and dissemination of gender-disaggregated data in real time. Despite the important work of non-governmental organizations in data collection, significant gaps remain, particularly with regard to sexual and gender-based violence and forced displacement. Closing these gaps is essential to inform policies that are both effective and respectful of human rights.

The normative framework exists, but it will have an impact only if it is implemented. We must move from words to action. Switzerland will continue to work to ensure the full participation of women in peace processes and calls on all Member States to act with the same determination by supporting women's organizations and civil society in accordance with resolution 1325 (2000).

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Prabowo (Indonesia): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate. I also thank the Secretary-General and the briefers for their important insights.

This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. Despite major improvements in many respects, the Secretary-General's report (S/2025/556) also shows that women remain significantly underrepresented in peace processes, without any progress having been made in the past five years.

In contrast, the proportion of women and children killed in armed conflicts has quadrupled globally, with a devastating 70 per cent of all conflict-related female deaths worldwide occurring in Gaza. Conflict-related sexual violence has also surged by 87 per cent over the past two years. These figures demand urgent action.

Allow me to highlight two points.

First, we must move beyond tokenism by creating conditions conducive to women's full, equal and meaningful participation in all stages of the peace process. This includes establishing all the necessary legal and institutional frameworks to enable stronger participation of women throughout the peace spectrum. This also includes investing in strengthening and empowering women's capacities. For our part, as the fifth largest troop-contributing country, Indonesia currently deploys no fewer than 214 women peacekeepers. Our tenure as a non-permanent member of the Security Council also led to the adoption of resolution 2538 (2020) on women in peacekeeping. In our region, Indonesia has initiated the establishment of the Southeast Asian Women Peace Mediators Network.

Secondly, we must strengthen partnerships towards better policy-making, prevention and service delivery. Having reliable, timely and ethical data is critical for this. Yet, the Secretary-General's report emphasizes the scarcity of disaggregated data, particularly in conflict settings. This perpetuates the invisibility of women's needs while at the same time limiting accountability. These data gaps can be addressed by strengthening international and multi-stakeholder partnership, including with civil society, research institutions and the private sector, to leverage innovation, technology and citizen-generated data.

This year, we commemorate not only the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), but also the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This should serve as momentum for strengthening our collective efforts on the women and peace and security agenda, to ensure that women are present at the centre of peace efforts. For when women make peace, peace lasts.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan): I would like to express my gratitude to the Russian presidency for convening this debate on women and peace and security. We appreciate the insightful perspectives from Secretary-General Guterres, Executive Director Bahous and our civil society briefers.

This year's discussion is especially significant, as it marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) and the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. These milestones are a moment to celebrate progress, but also to confront the alarming gap between our commitments and the reality that women face in conflict. The Secretary-General's report (S/2025/556) illustrates a critical juncture. Rising armed conflicts, military spending and conflict-related sexual violence threaten to reverse gains in women's equality. In this environment, the full, equal and meaningful participation of women is not just a right; it is a strategic necessity for sustainable peace. Kazakhstan is concerned about the sharp reductions in funding for women's civil society organizations, which are often first responders and effective agents of change. We should provide them with direct, flexible and predictable funding.

Gender equality is a key pillar of our domestic reforms as we translate international commitments into national action. As our first national action plan on resolution 1325 (2000) concludes this year, we are evaluating its success in increasing women's representation in decision-making, enhancing appropriate training for our security forces and preparing more women for United Nations peace operations.

Regionally, Kazakhstan remains a proactive advocate for the women and peace and security agenda. As a founder of the Central Asian Women Leaders' Caucus, we promote women's roles in peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Our contributions to the United Nations-European Union (EU) Spotlight Initiative underscore our firm stance on violence against women. Firmly believing that education and economic empowerment are essential preconditions for peace, we continue our programme with the EU and the United Nations Development Programme to provide university education for Afghan women. We urge the international community to expand such initiatives, which represent a vital investment in the future resilience and stability of conflict-affected nations.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) must be a catalyst for action, not just rhetoric. We must demand measurable results, setting ambitious targets for women's participation in peace talks, ensuring accountability for perpetrators of violence against women and dismantling structural barriers to women's security. Kazakhstan reaffirms its unwavering dedication to the women and peace and security agenda as it works to empower women as central actors in building and sustaining peace.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. França Danese (Brazil): I thank Russia for convening today's meeting. This is not merely a mandated meeting, but an occasion to recognize the women and men who contributed to the women and peace and security agenda in the past quarter century.

On this twenty-fifth anniversary of the inclusion of women and peace and security on the agenda of the Council, we witness two concerning interrelated trends. On the one hand are the rising military expenditures, militarized narratives and disregard for international law, leading to a growing number of armed conflicts, including the ongoing genocide in Gaza. On the other hand are the vile political attacks on gender equality and the universal human rights of women, at both the domestic and the international levels.

As the founders of the women and peace and security agenda have known all along, raising women's voices in favour of the peaceful resolution of conflicts and against militarization stands up to male-dominated security and defence institutions. It challenges deeply rooted gender stereotypes that have no place in present-day societies. In order for us to forestall attempts to roll back hard-earned achievements, we must work towards building just, democratic and inclusive institutions, grounded in gender equality and strengthened by the active participation of women in all spheres of decision-making.

Inspired by the vision of Bertha Lutz, one of only six women plenipotentiary delegates at the San Francisco Conference, Brazil is determined to continue to advocate for women's full, equal, meaningful and safe participation in all matters related to international peace and security, giving them a fair chance at making things different.

For Brazil, women and peace and security are inseparable from peacebuilding. Lasting peace requires sustainable development, institution-building and efficient justice for all, to which women can contribute their expertise in areas not limited to gender issues. As Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) last year, Brazil made women and peace and security a priority. Guided by the PBC gender strategy and action plan, Brazil made a point of mainstreaming a gender perspective across the Commission's work, including by inviting women briefers and emphasizing the need for adequate financing for women-led initiatives and women peacebuilders. We are proud participants in the Secretary-General's Common Pledge to Increase Women's

Full, Equal and Meaningful Participation in Peace Processes, convinced that women are at the centre of conflict prevention, mediation and post-conflict recovery.

Women are indispensable to peace and security, and their rights and dignity are non-negotiable. In today's deeply fragmented geopolitical landscape, we must challenge the prevailing destructive narratives that conflict is inevitable and that excessive militarization is the only path forward. Both assumptions are flawed and self-defeating. Instead, we need to embrace frameworks that centre peace as not only achievable, but necessary. Brazil remains firmly committed to promoting the contribution of women, in all their diversity, to shaping peace and security for our time.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Luxembourg.

Mr. Maes (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): Luxembourg aligns itself with the statements to be delivered on behalf of the European Union and the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security.

As many speakers have mentioned, this year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. However, this is not a time for celebration. Indeed, the majority of decision-making posts, including in the context of negotiations and peace processes, are occupied by men. All too often, decision-making spaces operate without accountability for the impact that their choices will have on women and girls.

As noted in the Secretary-General's report (S/2025/556), the number of women and children killed in armed conflict between 2023 and 2024 quadrupled compared to previous years. Seven out of 10 women killed in conflict worldwide died in Gaza, while in Ukraine, women and girls account for 31 per cent of civilian victims. We are witnessing an unacceptable erosion of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, with women paying the highest price. The Secretary-General's report also highlights the increase in sexual and reproductive violence that women are subjected to, in flagrant violation of the Geneva Conventions and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Luxembourg calls upon all Member States to renew their commitment to international law and to end impunity.

For its part, Luxembourg is fully committed to doing so. In March, we adopted a second national action plan on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), covering the period from 2025 to 2030. That plan is grounded in our firm belief that integrating a gender perspective into processes linked to international peace and security is conducive not only to promoting gender equality and sustainable development for our societies as a whole, but also to strengthening the effectiveness of the measures that are taken, including at the military level. At the initiative of our Minister of Defence — the first woman to hold that post in Luxembourg — the entire defence and armed forces leadership underwent training in gender equality. Moreover, a few weeks ago, the Minister of Defence also set out guidelines aimed at promoting gender equality in the defence sector. When it comes to multilateral cooperation, Luxembourg, in partnership with UN-Women, is proud to be supporting Ethiopia in developing its national action plan.

In closing, I pay tribute to the pivotal role of civil society and especially that of women in civil society, in implementing resolution 1325 (2000). They are at the heart of this agenda. It is crucial to heed women, who bear the brunt of conflict, while ensuring that they can bear witness and work without fear of retaliation.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Portugal.

Mr. Vinhas (Portugal): Portugal aligns itself with the statements to be delivered, respectively, on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security and on behalf of the European Union.

This year's celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) should be seen as an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment and increase our efforts to further integrate women into the peace continuum. As fundamental drivers of change, women must be included in mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution. As we also celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, we must re-engage in our efforts to address gender inequality, the role of women in peace processes and the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence. Portugal believes that the women and peace and security agenda is an indispensable tool for sustainable peace, justice and human rights and that it requires the following steps.

First, we must ensure the safe and meaningful participation of women in all peace processes, mediation efforts and post-conflict reconstruction in order to ensure inclusive and durable political solutions. Women's participation must be protected in all spaces, including on digital platforms.

Secondly, accountability is necessary. Perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence in conflicts must be brought to justice at both the national and international levels.

Thirdly, collective action is pivotal to promoting concrete steps for women's full, equal and meaningful participation in all peace processes. In that spirit, Portugal committed to the Common Pledge to Increase Women's Full, Equal and Meaningful Participation in Peace Processes, launched by the Secretary-General one year ago. In 2021, within the community of Portuguese-speaking countries, we adopted an action plan to operationalize resolution 1325 (2000) across our shared linguistic and historic space.

Through its national action plan, Portugal is fostering the integration of inclusive perspectives across our foreign policy, humanitarian action, development cooperation and predeployment training of our contingents to United Nations and European Union peace operations. Furthermore, Portugal is a key supporter of the senior women talent pipeline — a flagship initiative for promoting women to senior United Nations positions. We will host a leadership course under this programme in Lisbon in December, bringing together senior women, particularly from the global South, to strengthen their preparation for roles in international peace and security.

Lastly, Portugal welcomes the Secretary-General's proposals to reinforce the United Nations architecture on women, peace and security, including through the establishment of a centre of excellence to enhance coherence in supporting missions and country teams, in close partnership with UN-Women. In the end, the true test of our commitment lies in our results. As a candidate for an elected seat in the Council for the 2027–2028 term, Portugal will continue to work in partnership with Member States, the United Nations and civil society to turn the promises of the women and peace and security agenda into reality.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Qatar.

Ms. Al-Thani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): First, we would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month and commend you for convening this important open debate. We would also like to express our gratitude to the Secretary-General for his briefing and comprehensive report (S/2025/556) and to all the briefers for their valuable input.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000), on women, peace and security, marks a valuable opportunity to reflect on achievements, review the remaining challenges and redouble our efforts to accelerate the achievement of the transformative goals of the plan and thereby empower women to play their full role in peacebuilding. The unprecedented levels of crisis and conflicts that we are witnessing today have profound repercussions on women and girls, who are paying the heaviest price of war and conflicts. The occupied Palestinian territory, and the Gaza Strip in particular, are a clear case in point, with Palestinian women continuing to bear the brunt and suffer extreme hardship as a result of Israel's grave violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

The State of Qatar underscores the pivotal role of women in preventing and addressing conflicts, in recovery and reconstruction efforts and in peacebuilding and peacekeeping. Women are indispensable actors for sustainable peace. The State of Qatar is steadfast in its commitment to the women and peace and security agenda. Last year, it joined the Secretary-General's campaign — the Common Pledge to Increase Women's Full, Equal and Meaningful Participation in Peace Processes. Qatar is also an active member of the Arab Women Mediators Network. In this connection, Qatar attaches great importance to strengthening the role of women in mediation and conflict resolution efforts, on the basis of its firm conviction that the active participation of women contributes to fostering a more inclusive and sustainable peace. Through its initiatives and endeavours in a number of regional and international mediation cases, Qatar has been keen to provide greater space for women to participate in dialogue and decision-making processes and to support the building of their capacities in the areas of peace, security and mediation. The State of Qatar believes that the involvement of women in these efforts is not only a moral and a legal obligation but also an essential factor in the success and sustainability of peace processes.

In conclusion, the State of Qatar renews its firm commitment to continue supporting efforts aimed at enhancing the role of women in peace and security, to advancing the women and peace agenda and to transforming it into a tangible reality.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I wish to congratulate the Russian Federation on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October, which it is inaugurating with this public debate of the utmost importance, dedicated to a topic of crucial significance and relevance. Likewise, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for presenting his report on women, peace and security (S/2025/556). Our gratitude also extends to the Executive Director of UN-Women for the pertinence of the information included in her briefing and to the two other briefers.

This month, three decades on from the Beijing Declaration and Programme of Action, we are celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) — a historic milestone in the acknowledgment of the crucial role of women in building peace and international security and in development. That visionary resolution marked a watershed by dispelling the perception of women as passive victims of conflict and affirming them to be key agents in the prevention and resolution of conflict and the rebuilding of societies.

Nonetheless, now is not only a time for commemoration but also one for renewed commitment since, despite the gains, impediments remain: the underrepresentation of women in peace negotiations, the persistence of conflict-related sexual violence, humanitarian crises and the destabilizing impact of climate change, which particularly affect women and girls. Those challenges signal to us that the women and peace and

security agenda is unfinished; it must become more ambitious, even more inclusive and more cross-cutting.

The Kingdom of Morocco has proven itself to be proactive and inclusive in its approach by launching, in 2021, its inaugural national action plan, which initially covered the 2021–2024 period and was extended to 2026 at a high-level meeting held at the United Nations on 25 September. This extension reflects a focus on sustainability and impact, in line with the reform process initiated by His Majesty the King. The plan is based on coordination among governmental institutions, civil society actors, national human rights institutions and bilateral and international partners.

The plan does not take a narrow view of women's engagement as limited to peacekeeping but opens up a wide range of areas in which women as peacebuilders can intervene at multiple levels, including prevention, mediation and conflict resolution. In that regard, the significant contribution of Moroccan women to peace and security is multidimensional. It includes both a notable presence in military contingents deployed in various peacekeeping operations, with 120 women among military personnel and experts, and active participation in key roles ranging from training and mediation to decision-making, as well as strengthening their voice in the religious sphere to make a major contribution to a culture of peace and to preventing extremism.

In terms of sharing expertise, Morocco's national action plan has also placed particular emphasis on South-South cooperation, notably with brotherly African countries, in line with His Majesty the King's vision of continental solidarity. My country thus reaffirms its role as a committed partner in implementing the women and peace and security agenda in Africa, combining national action with regional cooperation in the service of inclusive and lasting peace.

Finally, as recalled by my country's Minister for Foreign Affairs during the previously mentioned high-level event:

“Equality is not a concern unique to the North, and no one holds a monopoly over it. It is a shared responsibility that the South must claim and shape in its own way. Gender equality is a fundamental principle that can be upheld by all peoples in the light of their own values. It draws strength from diverse traditions and lived realities. Imposing it from outside would strip it of its substance.”

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Austria.

Mr. Kössler (Austria): Austria aligns itself with the statements to be made on behalf of the European Union and the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security.

As we mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), we must not falter in working for its full implementation. Yes, a lot of progress has been made over the past 25 years, but the promise of this agenda remains unfulfilled for millions, a failure measured in devastating facts. We are witnessing the highest number of State-based conflicts since 1946. In 2024, 676 million women lived within 50 kilometres of a deadly conflict, the highest number recorded since the 1990s. In addition, the number of documented conflict-related cases of sexual violence against women increased by 87 per cent in just two years. Therefore, we need to act.

First, we must defend the normative framework we have built. We cannot afford to be bystanders to the erosion of universal values and international law.

Secondly, we must recommit to the core principle of the women and peace and security agenda. Lasting peace is inextricably linked to the full, equal and meaningful participation of women. Thus, we call on the Security Council to ensure that this

debate always takes place in the most inclusive manner for women's movements and organizations, both in terms of its timing and format.

Thirdly, Austria is moving beyond rhetoric with the following concrete actions backed by quite significant resources. As of last month, we have supported 179 gender-related projects worldwide with a total of €317.3 million. Only last week, we invited the Syrian Women's Advisory Board to Vienna as part of a mediation facility project on peacekeeping, peaceful transformation and the participation of women in political processes.

Looking ahead, next February, Austria's Foreign Minister, Ms. Beate Meinl-Reisinger, will convene a high-level symposium to address the women and peace and security agenda across a number of conflict-affected regions in Africa. The event will gather politicians, senior leaders and experts from the region to forge partnerships and identify concrete actions for building sustainable peace.

As members know, Austria will stand for election to the Security Council next June. Diplomacy through dialogue, partnership and trust must remain our tool of choice. We are committed to ensuring that women have a place at the negotiation table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Mr. Massari (Italy): Italy aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security and that to be delivered on behalf of the European Union and wishes to add the following remarks in its national capacity.

Italy is honoured to participate in this open debate on women and peace and security and reaffirms its constant commitment to advancing the women and peace and security agenda 25 years after the landmark adoption of resolution 1325 (2000).

We acknowledge the Secretary-General's comprehensive report (S/2025/556) and underline the essential role played by United Nations personnel working directly in the field to promote women's leadership and protect their civic space.

Over the years, Italy has consistently emphasized the critical role women play in peace and security as agents of change, peacebuilders and leaders. We continue to pursue a comprehensive approach that supports all four pillars of the agenda: prevention, protection, participation and relief and recovery.

Italy supports the ongoing prioritization of women and peace and security and is proud to have recently adopted its fifth national action plan on women and peace and security for the years 2025–2029, which confirms my country's selfless commitment to the full implementation of the agenda. Italy's new plan will focus on empowering women at the community level and on providing support to those affected by conflict.

We welcome the proposal to establish a dedicated centre of excellence on women and peace and security under the United Nations reform that seeks to enhance coordination and knowledge-sharing. Equally important is sustained support for women's organizations and networks, key actors in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

In addition to the multiple threats that women and girls continue to face in the physical space, the shift towards digital spaces as a key platform for women's participation brings new risks, including online harassment and misinformation campaigns.

Italy emphasizes the importance of collecting gender-specific data on digital access and fostering regional partnerships to protect and amplify women's voices in these environments. Addressing global challenges such as climate change,

displacement and technological developments through a gender-responsive approach remains essential. The women and peace and security agenda remains a powerful tool to prevent violence, foster lasting peace and secure justice for survivors.

Italy stands ready to continue working with the United Nations and all partners to transform commitments into meaningful outcomes. It is with this goal in mind that Italy has joined the Secretary-General's Common Pledge for Women's Full, Equal and Meaningful Participation in Peace Processes.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Beutin (Germany): Germany aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union and that to be delivered on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security.

On this anniversary, many of us would have liked to be in a more celebratory mood. Alas, we must face the sobering reality of "stagnation and even regression across many of the goals of the women and peace and security agenda", as the Secretary-General put it. More and more people are being directly affected by armed conflict, especially women and girls. The participation of women in peace and security processes remains far too low, and conflict-related sexual violence is on the rise.

However, the picture is not entirely bleak: we have succeeded in putting gender equality and women's empowerment in decision-making on the agenda of the Security Council. It has become common knowledge that women's legal status and respect for their human rights directly correlates with peace, security and human development.

But we need to move beyond affirming these findings and beyond rhetorical commitments towards concrete action. Women peacebuilders need reliable, flexible and sufficient funding. Germany has been a steadfast partner and the largest donor to the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, providing long-term, unbureaucratic core-funding to women-led organizations in conflict zones. We plan to remain a contributor and to further contribute to the Fund substantially.

Germany has joined the Secretary-General's timely Common Pledge to Increase Women's Full, Equal and Meaningful Participation in Peace Processes and calls on others to do the same.

Without accountability there can be no sustainable peace. Every survivor of conflict-related sexual violence must be granted access to justice and to essential services. Germany is committed to continuing its support and funding for the essential work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict in that regard.

We have to defend and strengthen multilateralism, international law and the United Nations system, which are increasingly under stress and being undermined. They have been and continue to be a key catalyst for gender equality. UN-Women, in particular, has played an essential role in promoting the women and peace and security agenda.

Since taking over as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in January 2025, Germany has aimed to ensure that the women and peace and security agenda remains a cross-cutting topic on the PBC's agenda. With this objective in mind, the PBC will hold a high-level meeting on women and peace and security on 27 October.

Domestically, Germany will also continue its strong commitment to the women and peace and security agenda. We are currently developing our next national action plan to underscore this commitment because we firmly believe that implementing

and strengthening the women and peace and security agenda is the right thing to do — and that it is in our common interest.

We must finally harness the enormous contributions of women and girls. With resources in short supply, on the one hand, and the record number of conflicts worldwide, on the other, the world urgently needs the potential, ideas and solutions that women can contribute.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Latvia.

Ms. Pavļuta-Deslandes (Latvia): Let me start by extending my sincere gratitude to Secretary-General Guterres for the comprehensive report (S/2025/556). I also wish to thank Ms. Sima Bahous, Executive Director of UN-Women, for her inspiring leadership and the informative briefing she delivered.

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

Twenty-five years ago, the Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000), acknowledging a truth that women had always known: peace without women is not peace at all, but a fragile pause before the next storm. If we exclude half of the population, any peace efforts risk being short-lived and will lack the societal resilience needed to withstand future relapse into conflict.

And yet, as underlined by the Secretary-General, in 2024, 676 million women lived in proximity to a deadly conflict event — the highest number and share since the 1990s. It means that millions of women are giving birth and raising children amid gunfire, girls are passing checkpoints to reach school and families are rebuilding homes that may not stand tomorrow — proof that, even after 25 years, the world is still failing those whose leadership is vital to peace.

There are two important points I wish to emphasize in that regard.

First, the Secretary-General's recommendations in the annual report are not only timely but essential. They reflect the ambition needed to realize the women and peace and security agenda in full. The call for accountability, in particular, is a cornerstone, urging justice for survivors of gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, in accordance with international law. There are stark examples of violence against women and girls used as a brutal weapon of war — by Russia in its war of aggression against Ukraine, by warring parties in the Middle East, the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other conflicts worldwide. There must be no impunity for such crimes.

Secondly, it remains concerning that even after many years, the women and peace and security agenda often continues to be regarded as peripheral to international peace and security. Latvia believes that the women and peace and security agenda is central to the Council's mandate. Integrating it into the Council's work, including through resolutions and peace operation mandates, is essential as conflict and insecurity are driven by underlying social and political inequalities.

With that in mind, Latvia has decided to join the women and peace and security shared commitments initiative as we join the Security Council next year. We look forward to working closely with the signatories to the commitments and other delegations in order to advance the women and peace and security agenda together.

Our vision for the future is that the next 25 years will not be defined by statistics of women surviving in the shadows of war, but by the countless women who rise to lead us towards peace. As Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai has said, "we cannot succeed when half of us are held back".

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Chile.

Mrs. Narváez Ojeda (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the Russian Federation for convening this important open debate and wish you success, Mr. President, during your presidency in October. We also thank Ms. Sima Bahous, Ms. Olga Uskova and Ms. Noura Erakat for their participation.

Chile associates itself with the intervention to be delivered by the representative of Canada on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security, and we highlight the following in our national capacity.

We note the Secretary-General's report on women and peace and security (S/2025/556), which offers a balance of progress and setbacks since 2000. We recognize the achievements made, but we also warn about trends that threaten this agenda: the rise of authoritarianism and militarization, the multiplication of conflicts, the weakening of international law, the increase in sexual violence in conflicts and the regression in the agreed language on gender.

In that regard, Chile expresses its concern, particularly about the situation of women in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Ukraine, Myanmar, the Sudan and the occupied Palestinian territory and calls for a "gender data revolution" to close gaps and overcome the paralysis in the implementation of this agenda.

Today we commemorate resolution 1325 (2000), the first resolution to recognize that international peace and security cannot be achieved without the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in all their diversity. This agenda transformed the way we understand conflict: women are not only victims but indispensable actors in building and consolidating peace.

Despite this, reality shows us that the challenges not only persist but are becoming more acute. Women and girls continue to disproportionately bear the consequences of armed conflict, facing gender-based and sexual violence used as a weapon of war, as well as hunger, forced displacement, child marriage and early pregnancy and the systematic denial of essential services and reproductive health. This directly threatens women's human rights, which reminds us that we must redouble our collective efforts.

For Chile, true and sustainable peace requires the full and decisive participation of women at all levels of decision-making. It is not enough to recognize their role: it is essential to guarantee the means to exercise it. With this conviction, on 2 September we presented our third national action plan. This plan is a landmark as it incorporates gender, human rights, intersectional, intercultural and territorial approaches. It was developed through territorial dialogues with women's organizations, includes a citizen observatory for accountability and expands its scope to address emerging issues, such as the triple environmental crisis, socioenvironmental conflicts, human trafficking, the protection of female defenders of the environment and post-coronavirus disease effects.

Lastly, this anniversary cannot be limited to a symbolic act. It is a call to strengthen multilateralism, preserve robust language on gender in the decisions of the Council and guarantee resources and real support to allow women to be protagonists of peace. Chile reaffirms that multilateralism will only be legitimate if it is feminist, inclusive and transformative and will continue to work to ensure that resolution 1325 (2000) is an instrument capable of responding to the challenges of our time and ensuring that peace is not merely the absence of violence.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Mahmoud (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, we congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council, and we thank you for organizing this open debate on the topic of women and peace and security, which is a priority on the agenda of the United Nations and the international community as a whole, with the increasing frequency of conflicts and violence in the world. I also thank the briefers for their valuable statements.

Empowering women is not only discussing a development goal but a fundamental pillar for sustainable peace. From this standpoint, Egypt adopts a comprehensive national vision aimed at supporting the role of women in decision-making, mediation and peacekeeping internationally and in its regional surroundings, and Egypt is preparing to launch its first national plan on women and peace and security, which aims to enhance women's participation in the efforts for conflict prevention, peacekeeping, the protection of women in conflicts, response to humanitarian needs and reconstruction efforts, in a manner that asserts the institutional role of women in maintaining international peace and security.

Based on Egypt's political weight and its prominent participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations, we are proud of the participation of Egyptian women in the police forces in United Nations missions, which have demonstrated high professionalism. I would like to mention the experience of the Egyptian team working on defusing explosive devices in Mali, which included Egyptian women — they showed courage and ingenuity in carrying out a very dangerous mission, and we have received international praise for their achievements. To complement these efforts, President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi has joined the circle of leaders launched by the Secretary-General to combat sexual exploitation and abuse, which is embedded in the peacekeeping system, where Egypt adopts a policy of zero tolerance for any abuses within the United Nations system and will continue its leading role in drafting the draft General Assembly resolution on this important subject.

Despite the progress made, the percentage of women participating in mediation, conflict resolution and peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes remains below the hoped-for level, which is why we must redouble our efforts to raise this percentage and enhance the quality of women's participation in order to ensure wider representation of women in all stages of peace. As one of the co-founders of the 2025 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, Egypt wishes to strengthen the wording on women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict-prevention activities and to develop the gender strategy of the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, thereby establishing more substantive participation of women in all of the Commission's work. In this debate, we cannot help but express Egypt's deep concern about the tragic situation of Palestinian women under occupation, especially with the violation of all the rights of women and girls in the Gaza Strip. Egypt condemns all forms of violence against women and girls in conflict situations, in particular the sexual violence endured by women and girls in the Sudan at the hands of armed groups. Egypt continues its efforts to reach a ceasefire to end these conflicts and pave the way for building sustainable peace.

In conclusion, we reaffirm our commitment to implementing the women and peace and security agenda and working with international partners to enhance women's presence in the process of building a more just, peaceful and stable world.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Mrs. Gregoire-van Haaren (Kingdom of the Netherlands): The Kingdom of the Netherlands fully aligns itself with the statements to be delivered on behalf of the European Union and the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security.

This year marks 25 years since resolution 1325 (2000) — a crucial moment to take stock, celebrate progress and acknowledge the challenges ahead. We celebrate the leadership of women peacebuilders, front-line service providers and peacekeepers worldwide. Yet conflicts have intensified, impeding progress against the global goals and the women and peace and security agenda.

Today I would like to focus on three priorities: first, the crucial role of civil society; secondly, women's leadership in peace processes; and thirdly, accountability for conflict-related violence.

First, on the crucial role of civil society, civil society and women organizations in particular form the backbone of the women and peace and security agenda. They operate on the front line, service the most marginalized and are the last to leave a crisis. Yet they face enormous challenges in funding and support. The Netherlands will commit new funding to ensure that local women and peace and security initiatives can continue their crucial efforts.

Secondly, on the leadership of women in peace processes, the evidence is there — peace agreements that include women are much more likely to last. Here lies a rule for the Security Council as well — women must be at the table, fully, equally and meaningfully, shaping policies and driving the decisions. The Netherlands invests in training women mediators and peacebuilders in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Niger, Afghanistan and beyond and in women's leadership in peacekeeping, for example through the Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations.

Thirdly, on accountability for conflict-related sexual violence, with a historic number of 61 armed conflicts in 2024, conflict-related sexual violence has surged. We must put an end to this. Accountability is not only about justice after the fact — it is an essential tool for prevention. The Kingdom of the Netherlands continues to support the Office of Special Representative Patten and the work of the independent international fact-finding mission for the Sudan. Twenty-five years ago, we made a commitment on women and peace and security, and today we must redouble our efforts. The Kingdom of the Netherlands stands ready to do just that, and we count on the Council to do the same.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. Given the lateness of the hour, I intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.10 p.m.