

Mr. Martins (Angola):

Let me too join other colleagues in presenting our most heartfelt condolences to the Russian Federation for the terrible act that ended the life of the Russian Ambassador to Turkey.

Let me welcome and thank the President of the Government of Spain, His Excellency Mr. Mariano Rajoy Brey, for presiding over this very important debate, and the Spanish delegation for selecting this critical issue of contemporary life as a central theme in the programme of work of its presidency in the month of December.

We are grateful to the Secretary-General; the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura; the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Yury Fedotov; and our two briefers and activists for Yazidi women's rights, Ms. Ameena Saeed Hasan and Ms. Nadia Murad Basee Taha, for their poignant testimonies on an issue in which the Council sometimes needs to hear directly from the people involved in order to more clearly seize the importance of taking measures on time and measures that take action and count in combating such practices.

Trafficking in human beings is clearly a gross violation of human rights and an infringement on the dignity and integrity of human beings. This type of crime is on the increase, having become a large source of income for organized crime worldwide, in parallel with drugs and arms trafficking. The basic approach to countering the phenomenon involves the commitment of countries and the international community to improving the socioeconomic conditions of the most vulnerable and guaranteeing the fundamental rights of all of their citizens. A collective effort is crucial in order to upgrade the fight against trafficking in persons by gathering the support of all nations, communities, institutions and individuals as an essential prerequisite to successfully addressing the problem.

Trafficking in human beings in conflict situations leads to sexual slavery, to the trade in women and girls, to forced marriage and to the most appalling human rights violations. Those tactics are used by terrorist groups such as Al-Shabaab in Somalia, Boko Haram in Nigeria, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant in Syria, the Lord's Resistance Army and other armed and terrorist groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Modern slavery is one of the most significant human rights tragedy of modern times, with multiplying effects in conflict situations, particularly in Africa and in the Middle East.

The Security Council, as we are doing today through this debate and the adoption of resolution 2331 (2016), decided to continue sending a strong message concerning that egregious violation of human rights, by qualifying the trafficking and the issue of

enslavement as war crimes and crimes against humanity and broadening the jurisdiction covering that type of crime. In addition, the United Nations system has been mobilizing and coordinating efforts to combat modern day slavery in conflict situations.

Trafficking in persons takes place in countries and regions of Africa and the Middle East, Latin America and the Far East, with people being recruited for a life of exploitation and slavery in Europe, the United States of America and elsewhere. Moreover, criminal networks recruit desperate people, including children, in search of a better life, thereby raising the imperative need to consider the phenomenon as an issue related to international peace and security, as expressed in the fourth preambular paragraph of the statement by the President of the Security Council, adopted 16 December 2015, which notes that “trafficking in persons undermines the rule of law and contributes to other forms of transnational organized crime, which can exacerbate conflict and foster insecurity” (*S/PRST/2015/25*).

Responding to increased awareness of the phenomenon, Angola has adopted legislation related to criminalizing trafficking in human beings by developing specific mechanisms to prevent and combat that type of crime. The aim is to step up the fight against trafficking and ensure assistance, recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration for victims. In addition, justice reform, executive programmes and legislative measures have been adopted to support victims. Legislation has been updated, including the adoption of new penal code provisions to respond to Angola’s current problems in this area.

Effective partnerships among agencies responsible for preventing and combating this scourge are being put into place, while the Minister for Social Reinsertion has created shelters throughout the country for the victims of human trafficking. Angola has acceded to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Additional Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, as well as other relevant international conventions and instruments related to the eradication of child and forced labour and to slavery.

In conclusion, further work is needed in all of our countries. Without a comprehensive regime to combat the trafficking in persons and protection of victims, we need to build on the experience of others who have made the most progress. To this end, Governments must deploy efforts to prevent, punish and eradicate

trafficking in persons as well as to ensure the physical safety of victims, while ensuring that legal systems contain provisions that address the needs and give due compensation of the victims.