

Ms. Pérez Colman (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank the Kingdom of Spain for its invitation to participate in this important open debate on women and peace and security on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000).

Argentina makes it a priority to incorporate a gender perspective into the design and implementation of its public policies. The implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions on women and peace and security, as well as the prevention and response to sexual violence in armed conflict, is embodied in Argentina's firm commitment to international instruments aimed at protecting women's human rights and to which it has accorded constitutional status, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Argentina's incorporation of woman info peacekeeping processes and its process for implementing resolution 1325 (2000) is its response to a political decision to mainstream a gender perspective into public policies and to defend and promote women's human rights in every area. In that regard, in 2008 we established a national plan for implementing resolution 1325 (2000) in the area of defence, and in 2012 we did the same vis-à-vis security. More recently, on 15 September, the President of Argentina, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, approved a national plan of action for Argentina's implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent related resolutions that consolidates our various policies on the promotion and defence of women's human rights. The plan is aimed at increasing women's presence in peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance missions and their participation in decision-making bodies. We intend to increase women's political participation in peace negotiations and conflict management and in the decision-making processes for those areas. We will incorporate a gender perspective in all activities of peacebuilding and humanitarian missions, notably activities for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. We will also protect the human rights of women and girls in countries in conflict and emerging from conflict, including those in refugee camps and those who are displaced, particularly in dealing with gender-based and sexual violence, and promoting their safety and welfare.

Women in Argentina make up 16 per cent of the military component, and therefore one important recent milestone was the promotion of the first woman in our military to the rank of general. We have also promoted the presence of women in the army's infantry and cavalry, which were closed to women until 2012. The armed forces have created gender desks that work with the various military units and have strengthened gender focal points in order to conduct predeployment training of participants in peacekeeping operations.

Women are victims of various forms of violence in conflicts. Their impact on women and girls is varied, disproportionate, multidimensional and complex,

with devastating effects both physically and on their fundamental rights. Argentina was a sponsor of General Assembly resolution 69/293, which declared 19 June the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, with the intention of raising awareness in order to tackle the use of this scourge as a weapon of war and to help promote a culture of peace that can ensure that we can put an end to this type of cruelty, which is a threat to the dignity of persons and to respect for human rights and international humanitarian law.

We agree with the assessment in the concept note (S/2015/749, annex) prepared by the Kingdom of Spain on the need to ensure that United Nations senior management, both at Headquarters and in the field, acts with greater determination in effectively meeting its responsibilities in the area of women and peace and security, and we believe that we Member States should renew our commitment to integrate them into our national policies and laws.

Argentina has supported all of the resolutions aimed at combating sexual violence in conflict since resolution 1325 (2000) and its specific subsequent resolutions. My country's commitment to access to justice for women and the fight against impunity can be seen through its participation in the Justice Rapid Response mechanism since February 2009. Argentina is now one of the 10 members of the Executive Board of this mechanism and regularly participates in its meetings, providing its experience in investigating human rights violations.

Argentina believes in and supports the work of the international community to achieve zero tolerance for acts of sexual violence in conflicts. Impunity with regard to such acts produces a harmful effect because it exacerbates cycles of conflict. We must make the switch from a culture of impunity to a culture of prevention that promotes justice, responsibility and the rule of law. The role of the United Nations is crucial to support States in that process.

Argentina is committed specifically for 2016 to develop a proposal to establish a quota of 33 per cent for women at all grades and executive functions within the armed forces; to work jointly with the Auditor General of the Armed Forces to establish the post of Gender Auditor to take forward the process of handling disciplinary matters with a full gender perspective; and to go forward with the implementation of the Single Registry of Cases of Violence against Women in the proceedings of cases carried out by the armed forces.

The merit of resolution 1325 (2000) was to acknowledge the important role of women as protagonists in peace processes and in preventive diplomacy and their participation at the peace negotiating table and in the post-conflict reconstruction phase. We reaffirm

Argentina's commitment to join efforts to ensure that this proactive approach is possible. We are convinced that we can achieve sustainable and lasting peace only with women participating at all levels of the peace process.