

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I take this opportunity to congratulate Spain on its initiative to convene this important open debate on women and peace and security, marking the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000).

The Security Council's engagement with the issues of women and peace and security has greatly contributed to our common efforts to improving the lives of women in conflict situations around the world. The resolutions adopted by the Council have created a comprehensive body of norms and stimulated progress on the protection and promotion of women's rights. Resolution 1325 (2000) was the first document of the Security Council that reflected in detail the impact of conflicts on women during armed conflicts and in their aftermath, and in particular on the important issue of ensuring the equal participation of women in peace processes and their protection from the devastating consequences of armed conflicts. In the context of armed conflict, parties must respect their obligations under international, humanitarian and human rights law to protect civilians, especially women and girls. The continued practice of using gender-based violence as a tactic of war is both legally and morally unacceptable.

As we have stated on a number of occasions, wrongs that have been left unpunished or unrecognized may impede progress in achieving long-awaited peace and reconciliation. Such wrongs can also play a key role in the eruption of new conflicts and the commission of new crimes. Our consistent focus on that particular aspect of the problem is based on my country's experience in addressing the tragic humanitarian consequences of the war unleashed against it, including mass atrocities committed by armed enemy forces, forced population displacement in Azerbaijan and the continuing military occupation of its territories.

Azerbaijan reiterates its strong condemnation of all acts of sexual violence committed against women

and girls in situations of armed conflict. There can be no tolerance for such acts, and all necessary measures must be taken to bring the perpetrators to justice and to put an end to impunity. The scourge of sexual violence in armed conflict has rightly been the subject of the Council's attention.

Unfortunately, not all grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, including acts of sexual violence, have received the attention they deserve or a response at the international and regional levels. Measures that are more resolute and targeted are required to end impunity in such situations. Commitments to protection must be free of selectivity and politically motivated approaches and preferences.

While addressing different aspects of the women and peace and security agenda, it is necessary to recognize the role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts,

peace negotiations, peacebuilding, humanitarian responses and post- conflict reconstruction. We are called upon to focus on the importance of furthering the equal rights of women and their right to equal participation in decision-making.

Essential work is being carried out for the reintegration of internally displaced women into society and the promotion of their participation in political, economic and public life in Azerbaijan. Recently Azerbaijan launched a regional project on the theme “Women for conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the South Caucasus”, aimed at strengthening advocacy work for an increased role of Azerbaijani women in decision-making in conflict prevention and resolution at the national, regional and international levels.

Azerbaijan remains committed to the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, and is proud to have made a contribution to the work of the Security Council during its presidency in October 2013, including the adoption of resolution 2122 (2013). In accordance with that resolution, an informative and comprehensive report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/716) has been issued recently. The global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), presented yesterday, is a fundamental piece of research that deserves our high commendation and attention.

We look forward to participating in further deliberations and activities on this extraordinarily important topic in order to advance the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda established by the adoption of the historic resolution 1325 (2000).