

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): Nigeria welcomes you, Mr. President, to the Security Council and thanks the Spanish delegation for organizing this seminal debate. We acknowledge the presence of participating ministers and welcome them to the Security Council.

Our appreciation goes to the Secretary-General for his abiding commitment to the cause of women, to the Executive Director of UN-Women for her powerful exposition, and to Ms. Lusenge, Ms. Murabit and Ms. Mohammed for their courage and soul-searching testimonials.

Nigeria welcomes the opportunity to reflect on the broad progress made in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda 15 years after the adoption of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000). Periodic reviews of this nature could help in galvanizing action and resources to address existing challenges and gaps in advancing the role of women within the context of the global peace and security architecture. We also welcome the positive developments achieved at the strategic and operational levels across the pillars of prevention, participation, protection, relief and recovery in implementing the women and peace and security agenda.

Despite the significant achievements, significant gaps and challenges remain. Those include the leadership and political participation of women in decision-making, women's involvement in peace efforts to prevent and resolve conflict, insufficient resources and funds, lack of disaggregated data, forced displacement exacerbated by persistent armed conflict, and continuing unprecedented levels of sexual violence and assault. Meeting those challenges is critical to making progress in the women and peace and security agenda. It requires a multistakeholder approach involving actors at the global, regional, subregional and national levels. Communities, civil society and individuals also have a pivotal role to play.

At the global level, the Security Council has provided the leadership necessary to give impetus to the women and peace and security agenda. Beginning with resolution 1325 (2000), which set up the scaffold for subsequent Council resolutions that utilized the scaffold to build the women, peace and security agenda, the Security Council has been at the forefront of that evolving approach.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has also played a constructive role in advancing the women and peace and security agenda by promoting the greater involvement of women in peacekeeping. According to United Nations data, 29 per cent of the 6,800 international civilians working in special political missions and peacekeeping missions are women. That is highly significant. Even more significant is the fact that women lead five peace operations as Special Representatives of the Secretary-General.

In addition, three all-female police units are deployed in three United Nations missions around the world. According to DPKO, the participation of women as peacekeepers provides a greater sense of security to women and children, improves access to local women and makes United Nations peacekeepers more approachable to women. In view of the spectacular challenges that women face in post-conflict situations, those are highly significant considerations. We commend DPKO for the importance it attaches to the situation of women in the context of peacekeeping operations.

Other important actors within the United Nations system are UN-Women and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. We take this opportunity to pay special tribute to the Executive Director of UN-Women, Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura, for their astute leadership and untiring efforts to advance the women, peace and security agenda.

At the regional level in Africa, the African Union (AU) has been a valid instrument and platform for the advancement of the women, peace and security agenda. In January 2014, the African Union Commission signed the Framework of Cooperation Concerning the Prevention and Response to Conflict-related Sexual Violence in Africa, with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Its major focus is on preventing and responding to sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations.

The agreement complements the ongoing efforts of the African Union Peace and Security Council, which is working to institute a code of conduct and a zero-tolerance policy that clearly outlines the AU's strong position against sexual violence and exploitation by AU troops. The agreement strengthens the collaboration and common commitment of the African Union and the United Nations to combat impunity and promote accountability, implement capacity-building and training programmes, foster better coordination, national ownership and leadership, facilitate the provision of multisectoral services, and alleviate the stigma and trauma of victims.

The African Union Agenda 2063, which was adopted by African heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa in January, is designed to build a more prosperous and peaceful continent. The Agenda places particular emphasis on the engagement of women and youth in the continent's development.

At the subregional level in West Africa, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has been a major driver of the women, peace and security agenda. In collaboration with the United Nations Office for West Africa, in September 2010 ECOWAS developed a subregional and integrated plan of action for the implementation

of resolution 1325 (2000). The plan of action emphasizes the importance of the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution, mediation and peacebuilding efforts, and in the rebuilding of post-conflict societies.

ECOWAS has put in place very strong mechanisms regarding the role of women in conflict prevention and management, such as the Protocol on Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security and the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. Those mechanisms serve as the basis for the ECOWAS conflict-prevention framework. The women, peace and security component of that framework aims at consolidating women's role, participation and impact at all stages of conflict management, including humanitarian provisions, while reinforcing various national and regional mechanisms for protecting and promoting them.

At the national level, in August 2013 Nigeria launched a national action plan to fully implement the relevant provisions of resolution 1325 (2000). The plan reflects the federal Government's commitment to ensuring the security of women and girls during armed conflict and enhancing their active and direct participation in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. We are also committed to the provisions of resolution 1820 (2008) on ending acts of sexual violence against women in conflict situations.

In concert with our neighbours Chad, Cameroon, the Niger and Benin, we are cooperating within the framework of a multinational task force to fight the Boko Haram insurgency, which is targeting women and girls. We are resolutely determined to defeat the terrorists. Because of the transnational nature of terrorism, we take this opportunity to call on all people and nations of good will to renew their pledge to support the fight against that menace.

We acknowledge the contributions of civil society organizations as partners in peacebuilding, prevention and the management and resolution of disputes. The Nigerian Government will continue to engage them as key stakeholders and partners in the women and peace and security agenda.

Nigeria remains fully and firmly committed to the promotion and protection of the rights of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations. We shall work assiduously to enhance the participation of women in peace and security initiatives. We are determined to reinforce and implement the principles of resolution 1325 (2000) and, within that context, to address the factors that impact negatively on the lives of women and girls.

