

**Ms. Lodhi** (Pakistan): We thank the Spanish presidency of the Council for convening today's important debate on women and peace and security.

The briefings of the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UN-Women and representatives of civil society have all been instructive and very valuable.

Resolution 1325 (2000) changed the approach to dealing with women in situations of armed conflict. The Security Council's engagement with women and peace and security over the past 15 years has led to the creation of a robust normative framework for the protection and empowerment of women in conflict situations. Subsequent Council resolutions have provided additional safeguards to protect women from sexual violence, guarantee their participation in peace processes and protect their rights.

Despite those commendable achievements, the situation on the ground remains troubling, if not alarming. Raging conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa and violent acts by extremist groups continue to place women and girls in great peril and underline their intense vulnerability in those conflict situations. At a time when the refugee crisis has acquired disturbing dimensions, a large proportion of those fleeing conflict zones happen to be women. Torn from their communities and homes, those refugee women are not only deeply traumatized, but also face serious threats to their physical health and indeed to their personal safety and security.

Pakistan believes that it is the collective responsibility of the United Nations and the entire international community to provide much-needed humanitarian assistance to those refugee women and to ensure their safety and security in camp settings and in transit to safer destinations. Here, I must underline the crucial importance of conflict prevention and conflict resolution to the women and peace and security agenda. The hardships faced by displaced women and girls and the grave crimes committed against them are mostly a direct consequence of conflict situations. The Council, we feel, should adopt a hands-on, strategic approach to conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

Multidimensional peacekeeping missions, such as those provided for in resolution 2086 (2013), play a key role in combating violence against women in conflict and post-conflict situations. As a leading troop contributor, Pakistan will continue to ensure that our troops respond to the special needs of women and girls. We plan to further streamline training on gender sensitization. Pakistani women have served on the front lines as police officers, doctors and nurses in various missions in Asia, Africa and the Balkans. We are proud of the fact that a Pakistani police officer, Shahzadi Gulfam, was the recipient of the International Female Police Peacekeeper Award.

Pakistan's adherence to the ideals of empowering women and protecting their rights stems from our faith, our Constitution and the vision of our founding fathers, Muhammad

Ali Jinnah, who famously said: “No nation can rise to the height of glory unless women are side by side with men”. It was my country that earned the distinction of electing the first female Prime Minister in the entire Muslim world. We therefore support Security Council efforts to pursue its women and peace and security agenda in accordance with its responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.

However, the Council’s focus should be on the prevention of sexual violence in armed conflict and strengthening women’s participation in peace processes. The inclusion of peripheral issues that fall under the purview of other United Nations organs will only serve to weaken the wide consensus around the role of the Council in the women and peace and security domain.