

Mr. Khoshroo (Islamic Republic of Iran):

I would like to begin by thanking the Russian presidency for convening today's open debate. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN-Women for their valuable contributions to our debate on women and peace and security.

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action remind us of the fact that there is a strong and direct relationship between sustainable peace and security and sustainable development, as well as of the fact that women and girls must be at the forefront of programmes designed to help us attain sustainable development, peace and security.

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security also focuses on the specific impact of armed conflict on women; the positive role they can play in conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding; as well as the important roles women can play to keep and strengthen peace and security at local, regional and international levels.

Current crises and situations, especially in the Middle East, have taken new and abhorrent forms and dimensions and constitute unprecedented challenges to the stability of our region. Women are among the main victims of these situations, grappling with the scourge of violent extremism and terrorism. The spread of violent extremism and takfiri ideology, which have no respect for women, threatens in an unprecedented way the life and rights of women and girls in our region. Women and girls have suffered the most and been targeted for systematic sexual exploitation and slavery, rape and other forms of violence by extremists and terrorists groups, such as Da'esh and Boko Haram.

The international community should make clear in every instance that there will never be any leniency for those who subject women and girls to the most inhumane acts of corporal and mental violence. Iran strongly condemns the barbaric acts of terrorist and violent extremists groups, as well as indiscriminate attacks against civilians, including women and children. In this regard, we support the Secretary-General's decision to include women's participation, leadership and empowerment as keys drivers in his Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

The systematic violations of the legitimate human rights of the Palestinian people, including Palestinian women, under the brutal occupation of the Israeli regime and the atrocious illegal blockade on the Gaza Strip constitute a massive deprivation of the rights of Palestinian civilians and women and are certainly the most blatant form of terrorism against a whole nation imposed by a regime. It is also very unfortunate that women and girls have also fallen victim to air strikes in Yemen. As confirmed reports indicate, the unjustified invasion of Yemen by a Saudi-led coalition has led to the death of almost 10,000 people and the injury of more than 17,000 civilians, including at least 1,677 women and 2,260 children.

In closing, let me stress that my delegation believes that organizing debates like today's in the Council should not undermine the work of the most relevant bodies in considering women-related issues in the United Nations system, namely, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.