

Ms. Andot (Philippines): At the outset, allow me to report to the Security Council that Marawi City, in the southern part of the Philippines, has just been liberated from terrorist forces inspired and aided by the Islamic State terror network, having been captive for the past five months. However, the liberation is no cause for celebration. Marawi City was destroyed by the fighting and 700,000 people have been displaced by the conflict — more than 50 per cent of whom are women and children.

There have been casualties on both sides, as well as within the civilian population. The damage and losses as a result of the conflict are still being assessed, but conservative estimates are between \$1 billion and \$2 billion. Cognizant of that, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte has declared that the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Marawi City is a Government priority. In fact, as early as June, the President issued Administrative Order No.3, creating the Task Force Bangon Marawi, an inter-agency mechanism that is spearheading the recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction of Marawi City and affected localities.

I am happy to share that our agency, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, which also serves as the focal point on women and peace and security, sits as one of the members of that Task Force. We are in the process of coming up with a comprehensive rehabilitation plan, informed by a rigorous post-conflict needs assessment and a rapid recovery and peacebuilding assessment, with the help of various stakeholders ranging from community members to national and international partners, such as the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank.

Throughout the process, the Government has been keen to observe conflict-sensitive and peace-promoting approaches, with a particular focus on mainstreaming gender and observing cultural sensitivities in its various interventions. After almost two decades of Government interventions to implement the resolution 1325 (2000) — and its related resolutions — the Philippines is most proud of the three national action plans on women and peace and security that it has delivered. Now in its third cycle for the 2017-2022 implementation period, allow me to briefly share the salient features of our new national action plan on women and peace and security.

At its crafting, the Philippine national action plan on women and peace and security, which incorporates the lessons learned from the previous cycles of implementation, adopts a broader framework to address the situation of women in armed conflict and recognize their contributions to conflict transformation. It primarily aims to embed the language and precepts of gender equality, as provided for in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and, in particular, CEDAW General Recommendation No. 30I with regard to ensuring women's human rights before, during and after various conflict contexts. It also takes into account the context of non-international armed conflicts, such as ethnic and communal violence, states of emergency and internal displacement, and the war against terrorism and organized crime — some of which are situations of concern in the Philippines at

present, as exemplified by the Marawi crisis and continuing the pursuit of a final political solution to the Bangsamoro conflict in southern Philippines.

In pursuit of the peace process with rebel groups, significant actions are continuously being taken to ensure the meaningful participation of women, especially Moro and indigenous women, and that their rights are protected in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Filipino women have played a crucial role in responding to the Marawi crisis. For the first time amidst the fighting, the armed forces of the Philippines and the Philippine national police formed and deployed, on 29 August, a composite all-female civil relations company to Marawi to assist in the implementation of rehabilitation and recovery programmes for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the battle-stricken city. The company was organized, trained and developed with a mission to build a culture of peace and to make every child and young person a peacebuilder. The company is composed of 55 enlisted personnel from the army and 40 non-commissioned police officers. Of its members, 36 are Muslim with 22 from the Maranao tribe. The company is led by four female officers from the army. Their mission is to assist the survivors of the siege, who are currently in evacuation centres and communities and require significant humanitarian and recovery support.

Women-led civil society organizations and local agencies have also channelled their resources in providing psychosocial support for healing the trauma suffered by displaced women and children. We have been training women in the IDP camps on community organizing for livelihood generation, as well as actively engaging them in women and peace conversations.

In a nutshell, the national action plan on women and peace and security serves as the blueprint of the Government and civil society efforts to protect women, prevent violation of their rights and empower them so that they play a decisive role in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Our Department of National Defense and its allied forces, as well as the national police, are part of formulating and implementing that plan and are required to regularly monitor, evaluate and report their commitments and roles within the plan. Those plans will guide the rehabilitation of Marawi. Our Government is committed to protecting the affected population — especially women and children, who are particularly vulnerable, including to trafficking in persons.

Over the past years, the implementation of the national action plan on women and peace and security has seen women helping other women; women leading peace processes and signing and implementing the peace agreements; women being deployed as soldiers at the battlefield defending the civilians from terrorism; and women working as peacekeepers, both here and across borders, to help women and children victims of the conflict.

A training kit on mainstreaming women and peace and security in development planning processes was recently developed and launched by the Philippines with the support of UN-Women. This is an important tool in further localizing the national action plan on women and

peace and security and recognizing the role of local Government units in the partnership to protect all women who may be affected by conflicts at the grassroots level.

Peace throughout the land, as well as the rehabilitation of Marawi City, remains a priority for the Philippine Government. This objective enjoys the full support of leaders at the highest level of Government. Sustainable peace and development are the building blocks of AmBisyon Natin 2040, the long-term vision of the Philippines.

While some Filipino women have become victims in the areas affected by conflict, there are also Filipino women who, in one way or another, are continuously inspired by their fellow Filipinas to champion the implementation of gender-sensitive and peace-promoting policies and programmes. Filipino women sit among the high echelons of our Government, including peace panels that are negotiating for and implementing signed agreements. They sit in two Government panels for the implementation of peace agreements with the Moro National Liberation Front and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, respectively.

I would say that Filipinos are demonstrating their resilience now more than ever. As the armed conflict in Marawi draws to a close, we know that our journey to its rehabilitation and recovery has just begun. There is a long way ahead as we build the extrinsic aspect of the city but also, more important, as we mend the torn fabric of Maranaw society. It is in this process that Filipino women — within each basic unit of the Maranaw family as a child, sister, mother and sometimes a father — will play a critical role in the rebuilding of relationships in their respective communities and eventually in Marawi as a whole. In turn, the Philippine Government remains committed to preventing violent extremism and ensuring that such crises will not happen again.

In conclusion, allow me to extend our gratitude to the United Nations, its agencies and Member States for their support in the humanitarian response and peace-based rehabilitation initiatives for Marawi.