

Mr. Barros Melet (Chile) (spoke in Spanish):

We thank Uruguay for organizing today's debate and welcome the presence of its Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. José Luis Cancela. Chile takes this opportunity to express its thanks to the briefers for their statements and to Ms. Zainab Bangura, whose mandate as Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict is coming to an end, for her work.

As described in the latest report (S/2017/249) of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence, the depth and breadth of this scourge is of concern to us. The manifestations of this violence are not limited to rape alone, but include other serious crimes, such as forced prostitution, sexual slavery, forced pregnancy and other shameful forms of sexual violence. Of special concern to us is the fact that this violence is a tactic of terrorism, used not only to intimidate and demoralize the population but also as a source of income for financing terrorist tactics.

Greater awareness of the seriousness of this problem is required for there to be sufficient understanding of how to implement measures needed for prevention, protection, rehabilitation and reintegration. In that regard, we have noted with interest initiatives such as that put forward by the United Kingdom on preventing sexual violence in conflict and stigmatization. Similarly, the guidance note of the Secretary-General on reparations for conflict-related sexual violence, of June 2014, offers guidelines and best practices for us to consider. We also believe that we must promote and protect the work of journalists reporting on these crimes. They risk their security in their work of exposing and combating impunity. We also welcome the deployment in United Nations missions of women's protection advisers, who have, inter alia, helped improve access to and the quality of information.

Ensuring that justice is served is essential if victims are to have some level of spiritual and material compensation. That is why the international community must combat impunity. Furthermore, the non-applicability of statutes of limitations for these crimes is a fundamental tool for ensuring just compensation. Trust funds set up for such purposes — for example, the Multi-Partner Trust Fund and the International Criminal Court's Trust Fund for Victims — are a step in the right direction and require sustainable financial support.

We must broaden and intensify our efforts aimed at prevention. Educational programmes at all levels are required, particularly in armed forces, including for contingents participating in peacekeeping operations. The implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and related resolutions, as well as the drafting by countries of national plans, is key for prevention. Chile's second national plan has expanded the training and education it offers to include the gender perspective, sexual violence and the human rights of women in peacekeeping operations, both for police and military components and for civilian staff participating in such operations, or at any stage of conflict-resolution and post-conflict processes. We express our solidarity with the victims of this serious transgression and the subsequent stigmatization from which many of them suffer, which we must eradicate by making every effort to expose those who are responsible, namely, the perpetrators of these crimes and those who incite them to commit such atrocities.

In conclusion, we would like to extend our solidarity to the victims of this serious scourge and express our gratitude to all actors devoted to eradicating it, including civil society and its efforts in this area.