

Ms. Kamara (Liberia): My delegation commends the Government of Spain for convening this high-level review on women and peace and security, which coincides with the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). We were privileged to have had the presence of the President of Spain yesterday and to hear insightful briefings by the Executive Director of UN-Women and the three women representatives of civil society organizations. We have been enriched by their testimony.

Just 15 years ago, when the Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000), Liberia was embroiled in civil conflict. Our journey to peace bears testimony to the vital contribution of women to peace, security and conflict resolution. The positive impact of the presence of Liberian women at the negotiations in 2003, which led to the comprehensive peace agreement in Liberia, is well documented and requires no further elaboration. Suffice it to say, the Government of Liberia continues to provide opportunities for women to participate in ongoing processes of peacebuilding and peace consolidation.

Based on our national experience, we embraced resolution 1325 (2000) and set out to apply it within our domestic context. In 2009, Liberia was the first country in Africa to complete the formulation of its five-year national action plan to give meaning to the resolution. The plan was developed as the framework to drive the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) at the national level. It rests upon four pillars, namely, protection, prevention, participation and empowerment and promotion.

Working in collaboration with UN-Women and other United Nations agencies, as well as bilateral partners and civil society organizations, significant progress has been made in the implementation of the resolution in Liberia. Such progress includes the creation of a civil society observatory on resolution 1325 (2000) and the establishment of the Angie Brooks International Centre for training women in leadership, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. A Special Criminal Court E was established in Monrovia in 2008 for the adjudication of cases of sexual and gender-based violence. Under a joint programme of the Government of Liberia and the United Nations, psychosocial, medical and economic support is being provided for survivors of rape and sexual and gender-based violence offenses.

The economic empowerment of women and adolescent girls continues to be supported through microcredit, agricultural schemes and training in business and life skills. To complement the active participation of women at the national level, the Government has integrated a gender perspective into the decentralization process, which will open up opportunities for women to serve in leadership positions at subnational and local levels. Clearly, much has been achieved, but so much more needs to be done. Many challenges persist, and are impediments to the resolution's successful implementation in Liberia.

Foremost among them are inadequate financial resources, lack of capacity, a weak justice system and poor coordination among the relevant stakeholders.

As we move towards achieving inclusive development, through which we hope that women will enjoy full participation across every sector, the Government of Liberia will undertake the following measures before the end of the current Administration.

First, in order to strengthen women's protection, the Government will ensure the passage into law of the draft domestic violence act, which was endorsed by the Liberian Cabinet on 15 June and which is currently under consideration by the Liberia National Legislature.

Secondly, the Government commits to ensuring that the outcome of the ongoing constitutional review process will guarantee and institutionalize women's full and equal participation in governance and national affairs.

Thirdly, to improve women's access to justice throughout the country, the Government commits to working with the judiciary to initiate the decentralization of Criminal Court E to all counties of the country, so that rural-based sexual and gender-based violence survivors may have recourse.

Fourthly, the Government commits to implement its decision to establish gender units within each ministry and agency of the Government.

The Government of Liberia resolves to increase its allocation in the national budget to support the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) across the country, with the aim of reinforcing economic empowerment programmes and expanding their coverage for the benefit of women and girls in rural areas. That is critical for the achievement of the objectives of our national agenda for transformation.

Finally, the Government, through the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and in collaboration with partners, is conducting a review of the national action plan to develop a bridging strategy to address gaps in implementation. The Government has also embarked upon the revitalization of the resolution 1325 (2000) secretariat through the recruitment, retention and training of staff and the provision of funding.

As this is a critical time in Liberia's recovery process from the Ebola health crisis, we count on the continuing support of international partners to translate those commitments into reality. We express special recognition and gratitude to UN-Women for the steadfast and consistent support it has provided to our gender equality initiatives. We believe that resolution 2242 (2015), adopted yesterday and which we were privileged to co-sponsor, offers a new framework as well as new opportunities for global collaboration to achieve

the goals of the women and peace and security agenda. Liberia commits to remain engaged.