

**Mr. Fathalla** (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to extend my thanks to our friend, Spain, for presiding over the Security Council for the month of October. I thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this open debate to review and assess the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. It comes at a time when Arab countries are undergoing major transformations in which women have been victimized, which represents a threat to the progress that they had achieved in the Arab region.

I take this opportunity to congratulate Tunisia on the occasion of the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet. I commend the women of Tunisia, who have offered us a shining example of resistance and played an active role in the evolution and democratic transformation of their country.

Having witnessed the exceptional circumstances in the region and based on our concern over the situation and our belief in the importance of eradicating all forms of violence and discrimination against women, the League of Arab States has taken steps to diversify our actions. We have undertaken regional strategies to reinforce community action to eliminate violence directed against women, while conforming to all international resolutions, in particular resolution 1325 (2000), advocating the protection and empowerment of women in peace and war.

In 2011, the League of Arab States launched an Arab strategy for combating violence against women, aimed at enhancing the participation of Arab women at all political levels and their participation in education, public-awareness training and building a culture of peace. The League of Arab States has always sought to enhance the participation of civil society organizations that address the development of women in general in order to promote and support efforts made within the framework of the collective actions of the League of Arab States to raise awareness of issues concerning women.

The League's 144th ministerial meeting, held in September, adopted a regional strategy and executive plan of action to protect Arab women and peace and security. That represents an important step to strengthen the awareness of officials and all other stakeholders with respect to all international and regional resolutions related to the issue of women and peace and security. The strategy and the executive plan of action are based on the participation, protection and empowerment of women. The executive plan of action on the protection of Arab women's security and peace is the fruit of open dialogue between the League's Department of Women, Family and Childhood and the

United Nations Development Fund for Women, which met yesterday. We believe that it is very important to shed light on the repercussions on women and girls in the Arab

countries of war and armed conflict, which also lead to emigration. We therefore need to improve the mechanisms for the exchange of dialogue and experiences in that regard.

The League of Arab States intends to hold a regional conference in December regarding the executive plan of action. I would like, in that context, to refer to the Cairo Declaration concerning the post-2015 Arab women's agenda. On 23 February 2014, the Arab countries reiterated their commitment to participating in the march towards the increased participation of women in political parties, trade unions and all elected councils, as well as in civil society organizations, with opportunities equal to those of men. We also have taken all necessary measures to protect women from violence and to use the media to raise awareness of women's human rights and society's duty to protect them. To that end, the Department of Information and Communications of the League of Arab States cooperated with the regional office of the United Nations Development Programme in holding a high-level meeting at United Nations headquarters on 14 October on the issue of gender and conflict hot spots.

We believe that we must overcome all obstacles facing people living under foreign occupation, in particular marginalized groups. In that regard, I stress the rights of the Palestinian people, who require immediate protection. Arab women in the occupied territories endure many different kinds of suffering — psychological, social, economic, legal and political — as a result of the practices of the Israeli occupation, the violation of their human rights, the deteriorating economic situation, the blockade, the restrictions to their movement and, of course, poverty. Last Sunday, Rahaf Hassan, who was only 4-years old, and her mother were killed by an Israeli aeroplane and their house was destroyed. On Wednesday, a Palestinian girl on her way to prayer was shot in the head by an Israeli soldier.