

**Mr. Laassel (Morocco) (spoke in French):**

I wish to thank the Russian Federation for organizing this debate.

The historic adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) 16 years ago represented international recognition of the role played by women in matters of peace and security, not only as victims but also as agents of change and essential players in the restoration, maintenance and building of peace. A number of resolutions followed, enshrining greater political recognition of the question of women and peace and security with precise and clear provisions regarding the need to ensure the fair representation of women and men in peace processes and to improve the physical and legal protection of women and girls.

Despite signs of progress, we are forced to note that the overall result is far from being satisfactory. Evaluations of the achievements of the 15 past years clearly show that the participation of women in negotiation processes has remained low. Between 1992 and 2011, only 9 per cent of negotiators were women. Only 27 per cent of peace agreements signed between 2000 and 2015 referred to women's gender equality and the needs of women. Women make up just 3 per cent of the positions of authority throughout the world. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, today only 2 per cent of foreign funds invested in reviving the economies of post-conflict countries are allocated to promoting the equality of women, their empowerment or the satisfaction of their specific needs for a period of time.

And yet, women constitute half of the world's population. Their involvement in peacebuilding remains not only a right, but also, given the disproportionate impact of conflict on their lives, an obligation. They can make an undeniably valuable contribution to peace negotiations. It is therefore necessary to change the paradigm so as to change the status quo and give women more power so as to shake up the established order. Indeed, the participation of women in negotiating processes increases the chances of a settlement of conflict and the sustainability of peace. That fact was confirmed by a global study undertaken by UN-Women in 2015, which revealed that the presence of women in peace negotiations promoted the sustainability of peace agreements, and that 35 per cent of agreements negotiated by women lasted more than 15 years.

Morocco has adopted a voluntary, proactive policy to entrench the principles of gender equality, which is now enshrined in my country's Constitution. In addition to legislative texts, Morocco has committed itself to significant legal and institutional reforms to promote a culture of gender equality and the gender perspective. It is in that context that in 2012 Morocco launched, in partnership with Spain, an initiative on the promotion of the role women in the mediation process in the Mediterranean. That initiative has enabled us to give mediation training to a number of Mediterranean women so as to ensure that they are available to the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

In addition, on 7 September Morocco organized an international conference on the topic of women and peace and security. The conference contributed to the international debate on the role of women in peace processes and the implementation of national plans of action to promote collective action on implementing resolution 1325 (2000). It was an occasion to reaffirm the international community's consensus on the need to strengthen the participation of women in negotiations and agreements concerning the settlement of conflicts and peacebuilding, as well as to renew the commitment of the United Nations to the question of the inclusion of women and

gender equality in all strategies aimed at restoring peace and preventing conflict. A number of questions were debated at the conference, including the role of women in mediation and conflict-prevention processes, the role of women in deradicalization, lessons learned and best practices in the prevention of sexual violence in conflict.

At the conference, my country announced the creation in Rabat of an independent regional centre dedicated to studying the role of women in peacekeeping operations and their contribution to the achievement of sustainable development. The centre could serve as a space for reflection, a reservoir of ideas and a source of independent thought regarding the role and place of women in peacekeeping operations, as well as peacebuilding in conflict zones. It is in keeping with the priorities of the Security Council. in terms of the promotion and empowerment of women, gender equality, the building of peace and international security, the dissemination of the culture of peace, ensuring access to justice and the protection of civil rights.

An essential element of the women and peace and security programme is conflict prevention. Women's perspectives in dealing with social tensions; their awareness of threats to personal, familial and community threats; their knowledge of the flow and circulation of small arms and light weapons, particularly within their communities; and their interpretation of extremism in local discourse all contribute to the creation of primary mechanisms for rapid response, early warning and intelligence of imminent conflicts that may be rarely understood or heeded by local security authorities.