

**Mr. Zehnder (Switzerland) (spoke in French):**

We thank the Russian Federation for having convened this debate, and the Secretary-General and the two briefers for their unflinching commitment to this issue.

When it comes to peacebuilding, the international community's record this past year is uninspiring. Not since 1945 have there been so many displaced persons, many of whom are women and young girls. Armed conflicts in Syria, Yemen and Iraq are ongoing, causing immense suffering to their civilian populations. In these challenging times, it is essential to promote partnerships with civil society, and in particular with women's networks. Colombia is a perfect example of the role that civil society women's networks can play in peace and peacebuilding efforts. In that regard, I thank the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security and all affiliated organizations for their tireless efforts to promote the women and peace and security agenda here in New York.

Switzerland's national action plan is a Government instrument that contemplates a participative mechanism designed specifically for civil society. This year will see the third review of that plan. In that regard, civil society organizations have drafted an alternative implementation report. Switzerland will consider its conclusions when it updates the national action plan in 2017. Reports on the implementation of the national action plan are regularly submitted for parliamentary oversight. As for the fulfilment of the commitments undertaken last year, we would like to highlight three points.

First of all, in order to support political dialogue in Libya and the process of drafting the constitution, Switzerland has facilitated women's discussion groups. Thirty-eight women's groups of different backgrounds negotiated and drew up a peace programme, which they launched at a high-level meeting in Geneva in November 2015.

Secondly, non-State armed groups must be considered in the implementation of the agenda on women and peace and security. Switzerland continues its efforts to facilitate direct dialogue with those groups, which must recognize the principles of international humanitarian law and commit to respecting existing rules, including those regarding sexual and gender-based violence. In that connection, Switzerland supports the Women's Initiative for Gender Justice, a non-governmental organization that aims to rehabilitate and reintegrate former child soldiers of the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda and victims of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by providing psychosocial support and access to medical assistance. The project also contributes to holding perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence accountable under national and international law. For example, the documentation of sexual and gender-based violence that was made possible through this project was used against two Congolese rebel leaders at the International Criminal Court.

Thirdly, sexual and gender-based violence is a major, pressing issue. Accordingly, Switzerland will make sexual and gender-based violence a priority in its humanitarian commitments. That will include fostering access for victims to various services, mainstreaming the topic in the various areas of humanitarian aid and supporting partner humanitarian organizations in their work in the area of sexual and gender-based violence.

Switzerland continues to be one of the major donors to UN-Women and has increased its contribution to CHF48 million Swiss for the period from 2015 to 2017. Earlier this month, we also inaugurated the new UN- Women Liaison Office at Geneva. As the Secretary- General stated, Member States continue to shoulder the primary

responsibility for implementing the agenda for women and peace and security. Switzerland is ready to embrace that role and renews its commitment to the women and peace and security agenda.