

Mr. Tenya Hasegawa (Peru) (spoke in Spanish):

At the outset I would like to thank the Uruguayan presidency of the Security Council for convening this open debate on sexual violence in conflict as a tactic of war and terrorism, thereby highlighting one of the greatest atrocities committed against human beings in the context of conflict.

Sexual violence used as a tactic of war as part of a widespread or systematic attack on civilian populations is capable of exacerbating and significantly prolonging armed conflict. We can see that terrorist groups commit acts of sexual and gender-based violence as part of their strategic objectives, thereby dealing a harsh blow to entire communities and directly affecting the human rights of women and girls, as well as their health, education and participation in public life. That is why Peru believes that conflict-resolution strategies and the fight against terrorism must necessarily include efforts to protect and empower women and girls and to combat conflict-related sexual violence.

Despite the efforts of the international community, many documented cases of sexual violence in conflict still exist. In that context, the Organization's work on the ground has been critical in collecting information and facilitating dialogue to obtain protection commitments from parties in conflict.

We cannot ignore cultural stigma and victims' fear of suffering reprisals or intimidation by their abusers, including against their families or witnesses, which cause most of them not to report the violence. That goes hand in hand with the lack of trust and credibility in national institutions, particularly when sexual violence is perpetrated by the very forces responsible for providing necessary protection.

With regard to the relevant measures undertaken by Peru on the issue, the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations established a registry of displaced persons, which led to the adoption of measures to protect the rights of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations. Similarly, a law adopted in 2005 established a comprehensive reparations programme for victims of the violence that occurred between 1980 and 2000, including those who suffered human rights violations such as rape. Furthermore, among measures to prevent violence against women, Peru adopted a law on equal opportunity between men and women, the national programme on gender equality and the national programme against violence against women, which includes the issue of sexual violence in armed conflict.

Peru welcomes the trend of systematically incorporating the gender perspective in the mandates of peacekeeping operations and the inclusion of women as participants in conflict prevention and resolution. That is why Peru has been increasing female personnel in each of the six peacekeeping missions in which it participates, currently representing about 15 per cent of the personnel on the ground.

Peru considers the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women to be fundamental in addressing the root causes of conflict-related sexual violence by transforming harmful sociocultural norms and combating violent extremism. In that sense, our country has

been working towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 5, aimed at achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

Similarly, Peru supports the inclusion of a gender perspective in United Nations peacekeeping operations. Based on that awareness, the uniformed personnel provided by Peru to peacekeeping operations receive specialized predeployment training on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations.

In conclusion, I would like to say that Peru is committed to working with other States in tackling the related outstanding issues in order to achieve a peaceful environment in which all women, without exception, can enjoy their lives to the fullest, free of mistreatment. That is why it is essential to deal comprehensively with sexual violence related to conflict.

