

Ms. Chuard (Switzerland) (spoke in French):

I take the floor on behalf of Switzerland for two reasons — first, because sexual violence primarily, though not exclusively, affects women and girls; and, secondly because, through its Permanent Representative and within the framework of the Gender Champions initiative, Switzerland has committed to increase the participation of women in the deliberations of United Nations organs, including the Security Council.

Switzerland would like to thank the Uruguayan presidency for organizing this timely debate and welcomes the latest report (S/2017/249) of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence and its recommendations. We also thank participants for their briefings.

To start with, I would like to underline the importance of the resolution 2331 (2016), adopted last December. This first Security Council resolution on human trafficking condemns this crime and human rights violation in the strongest terms, and explicitly recognizes trafficking in persons as a matter of peace and security.

Today we are discussing a closely interrelated topic, namely, sexual violence in armed conflict. In that connection, I would mention three considerations.

First of all, although sexual violence affects a cross section of the population, certain factors contribute to greater vulnerability. Forced displacement and migration increase the risk of abuse and exploitation. Reports from refugees and migrants arriving in Europe suggest that many women and girls have been sexually exploited upon their flight from conflict situations. At last year's open debate on conflict-related sexual violence (see S/PV.7704) we referred to the need to protect women and girls when they are forcibly displaced or travelling along migration routes. Sadly, that concern persists. Sexual violence in all its forms is also a driver of displacement and a risk factor for people on migration routes and being displaced. The same holds true for boys and men.

Over the next two years, United Nations States Members will negotiate a new framework for global migration governance. The global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration offers an opportunity to include some of the issues of this debate in the discourse on global migration. The thematic debate on trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants hosted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and to be held in Vienna in September 2017 is one of many platforms for addressing those issues.

Secondly, we welcome the Secretary-General's recommendation to continue including sexual violence as a designation criteria for sanction regimes, in keeping with resolution 1820 (2008). Moreover, we need to take all the necessary measures to prevent organized crime and to block the financing of terrorist groups through human trafficking, forced prostitution and other forms of sexual violence. Those measures logically follow the acknowledgement that sexual violence and human trafficking are elements of the economy of war.

Thirdly, we are pleased that the Secretary General's report makes an important reference to sexual and reproductive health. We have addressed that topic in previous debates, but the

issue is no less pressing today. It is our duty to ensure that women and girls affected by conflict have access to a wide range of quality sexual and reproductive health services, including services to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence.

In that context, among other things, Switzerland currently supports a psychosocial care programme in the Great Lakes region. Its objective is to address sexual and gender-based violence in a comprehensive manner at the individual, local and institutional levels. The programme includes medical, psychological and legal services, and also helps to reintegrate victims into their communities. Between 2011 and 2016, almost 60,000 women enjoyed comprehensive care and support through the programme.

Finally, Switzerland thanks Ms. Zainab Bangura for her devoted service as Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and pledges its full support to Ms. Pramila Patten, her successor to that post.