

Mr. García Moritán (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*):

At the outset, I wish to express my condolences to the Government of Germany and the Government of Russia for the tragic events that took place recently. Unfortunately, terror and madness are just around the corner and can affect us all.

Moving on to today's topic, I would like to thank the Kingdom of Spain for convening this important open debate on trafficking in persons in conflict situations.

Argentina would like to point out that, while the threat of trafficking in persons may in fact increase in conflict situations, it is important to bear in mind that the United Nations has already developed a sophisticated system to fight trafficking, which has been designed through resolutions of the General Assembly, in particular under the agenda items entitled "Crime prevention and criminal justice" and "Advancement of women".

Indeed, the General Assembly has discussed this issue and adopted resolutions on combating trafficking since the forty-ninth session, through annual resolutions that have fed into and promoted the negotiation and adoption of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and in particular its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, to supplement the Convention. Also, in 2010, the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, and since 2014 has observed the World Day against Trafficking in Persons on 30 July.

Those instruments have also provided a clear mandate for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the framework of the fight against trafficking. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has developed extensive experience in implementing appropriate mechanisms and tools to address the issue, including, among other initiatives, the Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons and the provision of technical assistance to States. Argentina values and acknowledges those efforts.

In that context, it is important to note that Goal 8.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) expressly refers to the problem of combating forced labor, modern slavery and trafficking in persons. Moreover, its implementation, review and monitoring is carried out under the framework of the mechanisms established by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Under the coordination of the International Labour Organization, Argentina has played an active role in the development of Alliance 8.7, in order to achieve that Goal. Argentina has long been committed to combating trafficking in persons as one of the worst forms of violence against human beings, which endangers the dignity of all people. Our commitment has always placed priority on preventing this crime and punishing its perpetrators, while improving the Government's ability to assist and protect its victims.

At the national level, we established an executive committee on combating the trafficking and exploitation of persons and protecting and assisting the victims, as well as a federal council on combating trafficking. The executive committee, set up in September 2013, is tasked with implementing a national programme to combat human trafficking and exploitation and protect and assist victims. It includes representatives from the Ministry of Security, the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security. The executive committee develops and implements awareness-raising campaigns and is in charge of training civil servants to address the problem of trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation and related crimes in order to understand the complexity of the crime and its direct links to drug trafficking and organized crime.

For its part, the federal council on combating human trafficking, set up in July, is responsible for designing a federal strategy to combat human trafficking and exploitation and promote the adoption by various jurisdictions of standards of conduct, protocols and intervention networks to ensure effective protection and respect for the rights of victims of trafficking and exploitation. The federal council is made up of national ministries, Government agencies and representatives of civil society.

We therefore believe that it is important that the Security Council, as the principal organ of the United Nations, be sensitive to the problem of trafficking. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that the issue as such falls under the purview of the General Assembly and that the Organization has developed a sophisticated mechanism for addressing the legal framework provided by the Palermo Convention and its Protocol, with the guidance provided by the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons as a fundamental tool for the implementation of national public policies on this issue.