

Ms. Frankinet (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would first like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this debate and for the opportunity afforded to Belgium to take part. My delegation would also like to thank the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UN-Women and the representatives of civil society for their briefings.

Belgium welcomes the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 2242 (2015), which it was pleased to have sponsored.

I fully align myself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union, and would like to make the following comments in my national capacity.

From its inception, Belgium has strongly supported the women and peace and security agenda. Currently, all the relevant Belgian stakeholders are focusing their efforts on implementing the second national action plan on women and peace and security. That detailed plan, which spans 2013-2016, focuses on six priority goals, including the protection of women and girls against all forms of violence, including sexual violence, and the participation of women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes. The plan includes areas of action and follow-up instruments for each of those six goals.

Given that the Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the three target countries of Belgium's national action plan, my delegation would like to thank Ms. Julienne Lusenge for her briefing on the situation in that country. Belgium actively supports the participation of women in that country and contributes to the implementation of the €2 million UN-Women project there that supports the rights and participation of Congolese women in the framework of resolution 1325 (2000).

A global study demonstrates that genuine participation by women increases the effectiveness of humanitarian aid, the credibility and quality of peacekeeping operations, the speediness of economic recovery in post-conflict situations and the sustainability of peace agreements. It is therefore disappointing to note that the same study reveals that, 15 years later, the participation of women in peace processes and in post-conflict political transitions remains a significant challenge.

The peace and security situation is different today as compared to 15 years ago, as the testimony of Ms. Mohammed this morning illustrated. The persistent cycles of conflicts and of fragile situations, among other things, have been exacerbated by new weapons technologies and new threats, such as the rise in violent extremism, which has spread easily thanks to the new information technologies. Women and girls have a key role to play because they can constitute one of the most effective voices in combating violent extremism — as mothers, sisters and wives, but also in the many other roles they have in the society that they live in. We must support them and provide them with the requisite tools to help them defend the values of tolerance and respect for others.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize the fact that Belgium is committed to continue to implement its national plan and to give political and operational priority to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).