

**Mr. Vieira** (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*):

I wish to begin by thanking Spain for organizing this open debate and by thanking Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict for their briefings.

(*spoke in English*)

We would also like to offer our deepest condolences to the Russian Federation following the assassination of Ambassador Andrey Karlov in Ankara yesterday. Brazil strongly condemns all acts of terrorism, regardless of their motivation.

Human trafficking is among the most despicable crimes known to humankind, as it affects the most vulnerable, such as migrants and internally displaced persons, especially women and girls. When committed in conflict situations, human trafficking might even amount to a war crime. Brazil is particularly appalled by the incidents of human trafficking committed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, Boko Haram and other terrorist organizations, which are frequently associated with sexual enslavement.

Trafficked persons are treated as objects, not as human beings. They are often subject to organ harvesting, sexual exploitation, domestic service and forced marriages. Brazil supports efforts aimed at recovering the dignity of the victims of this heinous crime and ensuring that they have access to justice. In that regard, we welcome the appointment of Ms. Nadia Murad Basee Taha as Goodwill Ambassador for the Dignity of Survivors of Human Trafficking. By courageously speaking out and fighting for those who have endured these unlawful and degrading actions, she serves as an example for other victims and inspiration for us all.

The international community can do much more to combat this scourge. Closer cooperation among States and international agencies can help rescue victims and bring traffickers to justice. We must redouble our efforts to fulfil the Sustainable Development Goals pertaining to the issue. We must equally acknowledge that long-term solutions can arise only from multilateral approaches to peace and security that set dialogue and mediation as priorities and place vulnerable populations at the centre of concern. Insufficient regard and resources for sustaining peace in crisis or post-conflict situations, as well as an ill-conceived bias for military solutions, help fuel rather than mitigate the instability behind the current movements of refugees and migrants.

Although human trafficking occurs in scenarios plagued by armed conflict, there are no intrinsic or automatic linkages between those two phenomena. As stated in the Secretary-General's report (S/2016/949), obviously the interrelationship between them may arise

under specific circumstances, but it should in no way be deemed universal. It is important to acknowledge that human trafficking is also regrettably taking place in situations that do not constitute a threat to international peace and security, such as situations of displacement following natural disasters. The remedies to overcome this scourge outside the context of conflict situations might be different from those to be applied in armed conflicts.

For the United Nations to effectively address human trafficking in all its forms, the Security Council should be mindful of the mandate and technical expertise of the General Assembly and of the Human Rights Council, as well as of the crucial role of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in this realm.

In any case, the international community should exercise the utmost caution not to confuse the criminalization of trafficking in persons with the criminalization of migration itself. Our actions should aim at protecting the rights of, and providing assistance to, those people who are forced to leave their homes and fall prey to human traffickers, so as not to victimize them yet again. In that context, Brazil wishes to recall a fundamental assertion made by the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism in his most recent report, to the effect that

“push-back operations, criminalized irregular migration and abandoned pledges to accept refugees ... contribute to the establishment of chaotic and covert movements of people, including through trafficking, which might ultimately assist those intent on committing acts of terrorism.” (*A/71/384, para. 11*)

The international community has a responsibility to act to find a solution to the refugee crisis. It is incoherent to defend the responsibility to protect and the protection of civilians all the while turning our backs on those fleeing conflict and persecution. Brazil also reiterates that the criminalization of irregular migration is unacceptable, since it ultimately fuels human trafficking and disrespect for the fundamental rights of migrants. As my country's experience in granting humanitarian visas for Haitians since 2012 has shown, one of the most effective means of dismantling criminal human trafficking networks is by providing regular and safe ways of entry for those forced to move.

Let us all work together towards ensuring that human trafficking can be brought to a definitive end and that its victims can resume their lives with dignity and, most of all, hope.