

Mr. Grant (Canada) (spoke in French): At the outset, allow me to thank China for organizing this open debate on enhancing African capacities in the area of peace and security.

Despite much progress, armed conflict and insecurity continue to undermine progress toward sustainable development in many parts of Africa. We have committed to partnering with Africans with a view to supporting African-led efforts to address peace and security challenges on the continent and, in this regard, there is much work to be done.

Canada's new feminist international assistance policy emphasizes the importance of working with African Governments to ensure that women are active participants in shaping political solutions to violent conflict; promoting the increased and meaningful participation of women in peace operations; protecting and promoting the rights of women and girls; and to preventing and responding to sexual violence — including sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by peacekeeping personnel. When women and girls play integral and meaningful roles in society, States are more peaceful and resilient. We should support our African partners, who are endeavouring to advance holistic approaches to address drivers of conflict, with a particular focus on empowering women and girls.

(spoke in English)

It is also critical that we do more to strengthen partnerships between the United Nations system, individual Member States, and African regional organizations and their member States. For example, supporting new or expanded innovative training initiatives for African countries, which provide significant numbers of troops and police to peacekeeping missions, would serve to enhance the effectiveness of both African-led and United Nations efforts to promote peace and security on the continent, as could greater sharing of analysis and lessons learned. Recognizing this, as host of the 2017 United Nations Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial, which will take place in November in Vancouver, Canada will be convening countries to discuss ways to strengthen partnerships to enhance the effectiveness of United Nations peace operations. We also commend the new Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security to further our coordination efforts.

Finally, we must focus more on enhancing the financial viability of African Union (AU) peace operations as a cornerstone of African leadership. In that regard, Canada calls on all States to support the efforts of the AU to increase African resource mobilization to fund the operations and programmes of the AU Commission, including in the area of peace and security. For our part, Canada will keep an open mind and looks forward to dialogue on the modalities available to ensure successful AU peace operations.

By collaborating on advancing the women and peace and security agenda, more robust partnerships, and enhancing the financial viability of AU operations, we can help our African partners realize their vision of a more peaceful and prosperous Africa. We look forward to continue working with our African and international partners in this endeavour.