

Ms. Boucher (Canada) (*spoke in French*):

I would like to begin by thanking Sweden for organizing this open debate on conflict prevention and sustaining peace. As we begin the year with a new Secretary-General, today's debate is extremely timely and goes directly to the heart of the Organization's fundamental purpose.

We are confronting a challenging global situation, and we continue to face threats to international peace and security that generate major pressures on the Organization and on Member States. In numbers unprecedented since the Second World War, people around the globe remain displaced by conflict. The duration of protracted refugee situations is also lengthening, which puts sustained pressure on those displaced, on host communities and on the global capacity for humanitarian response. The indiscriminate bombing and targeting of civilians and medical facilities have become the hallmark of too many conflicts. The senseless attacks recently suffered by civilians in Aleppo represent perhaps the lowest point in our collective response in protecting populations at risk.

Clearly, we must do more and do it sooner to prevent conflicts from escalating. We must do more to secure sustainable peace in fragile situations. Over the past year, Canada has sought to reinforce the capacity of the United Nations to support conflict prevention and peacebuilding. As Prime Minister Trudeau signalled to the General Assembly (see A/71/PV.8), pluralism and inclusion represent crucial values in building peaceful societies and sustainable development.

(*spoke in English*)

Various high-level reviews conducted over the past two years — by the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and by the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture, and the global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) — highlighted the importance of prevention. Many of those recommendations were endorsed by Member States in the landmark Security Council and General Assembly resolutions (resolution 2282 (2016) and General Assembly resolution 70/262) on sustaining peace. Not only must that work continue, but we encourage the Secretary-General to articulate an ambitious plan of action to advance those objectives. Let me highlight a few areas where Canada would like to see greater emphasis.

We know that political solutions lie at the heart of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. However, preventing conflict and sustaining peace must become overarching goals of all United Nations activities before, during and after conflict, including for the human rights and development pillars. We also think it is important to strengthen the Secretariat's capacity for joint analysis and joint planning, as well as for conveying timely early-warning information and analysis to Member States. Overall, we believe a better balance

must be struck between the considerable resources spent on peace operations and those supporting conflict prevention and sustaining peace, particularly in the field.

As for the Security Council, we encourage it to make greater and fuller use of its prevention toolbox, including Chapter VI measures, as well as the use of special political missions. We also think the Secretary-General has a central role to play in galvanizing international action for peace.

Finally, we really do need a stronger link between sustaining peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As highlighted in the Stockholm declaration of 2016, peacebuilding and State-building are integral to sustainable development, not separate from it. While that link is recognized in the 2030 Agenda, we believe that it needs to be strengthened with greater urgency. The sustaining peace and sustainable development agendas intersect in multiple ways, but perhaps the most important priorities are gender equality, women's empowerment and the

participation of women and youth in peacebuilding and governance. We urge the Secretary-General and the Council to continue to strengthen the work of the United Nations on gender and youth, particularly in countries experiencing fragility.

We look forward to working closely with our new Secretary-General. We offer our full support to him and to his team, as well as to Council members, as we advance this important agenda.