

**Mr. Aboulatta** (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*):

I would like at the outset to express my heartfelt condolences to the delegation of the Russian Federation for the horrific terrorist act that claimed the life of the Russian ambassador in Ankara.

I would like to congratulate the Spanish delegation on its capable presidency of the Security Council this month, during which it has made valuable contributions to the work of the Council, the latest of which is resolution 2331 (2016), adopted today, on trafficking in persons in conflict situations. I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the briefers on their strong and poignant statements this morning.

Human trafficking is a form of contemporary slavery and constitutes a grave violation of human rights. Countering human trafficking is one of the priorities of the Egyptian Government, owing to the challenges posed by Egypt's strategic location as a transit State. These challenges have been exacerbated by the armed conflicts that are taking place in the region and which constitute an environment conducive to human trafficking and exploitation, especially by terrorist groups. The situation is further exacerbated by the fact that Egypt is one of the countries of the region to receive the largest number of refugees. Egypt was therefore one of the first countries to endorse the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Palermo Protocol, in 2004. Egypt has also acceded to an initiative for the establishment of the Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking.

At the national level, Egypt has established an institutional and legal framework that serves as a mainstay for the country's undertaking of its international obligations. In 2007, Egypt established a national coordinating committee for preventing and countering human trafficking, enacted in 2010 a law designed to counter human trafficking, and this year launched its national strategy to this end.

At the regional level, Egypt hosted in Sharm El- Sheikh the second African Union Regional Conference on Human Trafficking and Smuggling in the Horn of Africa and joined the Arab Guiding Law on Human Trafficking. We would like to commend the constructive cooperation between Egypt and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with regard to capacity-building in relation to preventing and countering of human trafficking.

The adoption by the Security Council today of a resolution on human trafficking in conflict situations is a landmark in the history of the Security Council. We would like to shed light on the following points.

First of all, the resolution should be limited to trafficking in persons related to conflicts,

since the issue of human trafficking falls within the purview of the General Assembly.

Second, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Palermo Protocol should serve as the basis for the implementation of the commitments set forth in the resolution, including the definition of human trafficking and its key element of exploitation.

Third, the international community should redouble its efforts to shut down all sources of financing for terrorist groups, including human trafficking, and use all international mechanisms available.

Fourth, we have to distinguish between the crime of sexual exploitation, which is one of the objectives of human trafficking, and sexual violence.

Fifth, human trafficking crimes, especially in women and girls, are not associated with any religion, nationality or civilization. We have to shed light on the important role that could be played by men of religion and traditional leaders.

Sixth, we must abide by the provisions of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and its Additional Protocol, which is the governing framework for implementing the provisions of the resolution that has been adopted today.

Seventh, UNODC has pivotal role to play in the General Assembly when it comes to human trafficking, given the experience it has accumulated in this area. In the meantime, it is very important to provide it with the financial resources it needs to fulfil its mandate. In addition, we underline the important role played by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees in preventing and fighting human trafficking as well as by the International Organization for Migration.

Eighth, we underscore the important role that should be played by the United Nations and the private sector to break the link between procurement and the consumption of human trafficking.

Egypt reiterates its full support for the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons which is considered to be the governing framework for international cooperation in countering human trafficking. Egypt is providing all forms of support for the success of the second review of the plan that will be undertaken next year.