

Mr. Imnadze (Georgia): I, too, wish to thank you, Mr. President, for putting this matter before the Council and for being a champion of this issue throughout the year. As a country that co-sponsored resolution 2242 (2015), which was adopted yesterday, we are fully committed to being engaged with the matter.

I also would like to thank the Secretary-General and the other high-level briefers for their briefings of yesterday.

We strongly believe that women's rights and gender equality are not only a human rights topic, but also an important peace and security issue. Although maintaining international peace and security is central to our Organization and especially for the Council, today we face far too often situations when the fundamental norms of international, humanitarian and human rights law, as well as other universally recognized principles, are blatantly abused. Georgia condemns in the strongest terms, all cases of violations of women's rights and discrimination, both in wartime and in peacetime, whether committed by State or non-State actors.

Despite the broad understanding of the nature of the problem and the numerous efforts made at all levels to address them, we have yet to see tangible progress on the ground. Women and girls continue to fall victim to acts of violence, murder, maiming and arbitrary detention committed by parties to conflicts across the globe. Boko Haram's abduction of hundreds of women and girls in Chibok and the kidnappings in Syria and Iraq committed by Daesh and other terrorist groups are glaring examples of the types of gross violations to which women in armed conflict are subjected. The areas controlled by non-State actors and terrorist groups, as well as territories under illegal foreign military occupation, are zones of grave risk for women, with imminent threats to their lives posed by actors that operate in total denial of internationally recognized legal norms.

We need to act adequately and make use of all United Nations tools and mechanisms to respond to the existing challenges. We need to embark on a elaborative, holistic approach, but at the same time remain sensitive to nuance and detail. We need to address women's rights at the international and regional levels but simultaneously remain focused on individual countries.

As we celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of landmark resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, Georgia has its own story to share with the international community. By adopting a national action plan on women and peace and security for the period 2012-2015, Georgia became one of 49 countries to have a separate policy document devoted to this important issue. The Government of Georgia plans to renew the aforementioned action plan in the very near future. Moreover, 2015 has been declared the Year of Women in Georgia, as we remain committed to robust actions to

reform our domestic gender legislation, including by undertaking a number of legislative changes and introducing new laws, which are in line with international standards and fully correspond to our commitments. In that regard, the adoption of an anti-discrimination law was an important, milestone achievement.

In 2013, the Parliament of Georgia adopted a domestic violence action plan for 2013-2015, followed by a national action plan on gender equality for 2014-2016, in compliance with the Council of Europe's gender equality strategy for the same years. The plan is aimed at combating gender stereotypes and violence against women and guaranteeing equal access to justice. In addition, Georgia recently signed the the Council of Europe convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, and we plan to ratify it in the very near future.

As this year marks the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, I would like to reiterate Georgia's strong commitment to the advancement of women. Recently, alongside 87 Member States, Georgia committed to further improving gender equality for the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

As an illustration of our strong commitment to the advancement of women, in collaboration with the United Nations and the European Union, on 9 and 10 November we plan to organize an international high-level conference on meeting gender equality challenges and opportunities in the European Neighbourhood Policy in Tbilisi, Georgia. We believe that the empowerment of women stands at the centre of sustainable development. In that regard, we once again welcome the stand-alone and cross-cutting gender equality Goal 5 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly 70/1), adopted at the Sustainable Development Summit last month.

Unfortunately, the human rights situation, in general, and the situation with regard to women's and children's rights and gender equality in particular, remain a serious challenge in the Georgian territories that are under illegal Russian military occupation. Specifically, women in the occupied regions continue to suffer grave violations of their fundamental rights and freedoms, such as the freedom of movement, the right to education in their native language and other political, economic, civil, social and cultural rights to which they are entitled under the Constitution of Georgia, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and other international mechanisms. The humanitarian situation in the occupied territories requires immediate attention, especially since no international organization has been allowed to monitor the human rights situation there. We therefore call on the Russian Federation once again to abide by the August 2008 ceasefire agreement.

In conclusion, I would like to extend my gratitude to United Nations agencies, especially to UN-Women, for their invaluable assistance in the process of the empowerment of women in my country. Alongside other United Nations Member States, Georgia once again reiterates its commitment to further promoting gender equality and the enjoyment of all human rights and freedoms by all women.