

Mr. Schulz (Germany):

Germany aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union.

I would like to thank the United Kingdom for maintaining the momentum created in the previous debate on the topic (see S/PV.7847), held last December at the initiative of Spain.

Armed conflicts, terrorism and humanitarian crises have exposed individuals to increased risks of being trafficked in conflict zones and beyond. Women and children are particularly vulnerable to this risk; they make up, in fact, 79 per cent of all detected trafficking victims. In response to the scourge of trafficking, we must find answers, which will be as multifaceted as the terrible crime itself. At the international level, we need to aim for universal ratification of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols, in particular the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, and ensure that we collect the data needed to fully understand the challenges, for instance by developing a comprehensive data-collection system.

We must follow a comprehensive, multidisciplinary and cross-border approach. We must increase synergies among United Nations agencies and develop a comprehensive joint United Nations response that includes the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and on Children and Armed Conflict. The United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons is one important instrument for such coordination.

We should apprise the Security Council of the link between human trafficking and human rights violations, and support the Council's ability to look into the connections of such trafficking with transnational organized crime and terrorism. Furthermore, we should use the upcoming review process of the Global Plan of Action on Trafficking and its high-level meeting in October to define appropriate responses to current challenges and discuss measures to implement trafficking-related Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, we must go after the proceeds from human trafficking and ensure accountability.

At the national level, Germany has taken additional steps to address the growing challenges resulting from the recent large movements of refugees and migrants. We know that resettlement and relocation programmes can reduce the risk of vulnerable persons falling victim to greedy traffickers. With that in mind, we have adopted new legal measures to provide trafficking victims with residence permits. As one example, I would like to mention our programme through which over 1,000 Yazidi refugees have reached Germany, including Ms. Nadia Murad Basee Taha, the United Nations Goodwill Ambassador for the Dignity of Survivors of Human Trafficking.

We also started an initiative with the United Nations Children's Fund and multiple national partners to protect those staying in refugee accommodations — in particular women and children — from violence, including trafficking. As part of that initiative, minimum standards for protection were published in 2016. Specially trained coordinators will help implement those standards in up to 100 refugee accommodations until the end of 2017.

On a more general note, in 2016, we passed legislation to strengthen the protection of women and children. Among other measures, we adopted new criminal-law provisions.

To conclude my statement, I would like to reiterate how important it is for us all to work together and step up our efforts to address conflict and instability, because they represent the key push factors for migration and human trafficking.

