

Mr. Gunnarsson (Iceland): Allow me first to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this high-level meeting on an issue that is of central importance to the maintenance of peace and security, namely, the central role of women. Allow me also to express my Government's appreciation for the initiative launched by the Secretary-General in the form of the global study and for the work carried out on that study.

Resolution 1325 (2000) recognized that women and girls are affected differently by conflict. At the same time, they have a vital contribution to make to the achievement of sustainable peace. The brutal conflicts that have emerged in recent years have magnified the already considerable challenges faced by women and girls. Indeed, rape and sexual abuse have become ever more common as weapons of choice in war. And denigration or denial of women's rights is not only a by-product of conflict but now a war aim among some non-State actors, such as Boko Haram and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.

Many good proposals have emerged from the global study. We strongly agree with the assessment that it is necessary to move from an ad hoc approach to implementation to establishing more structure. Useful concrete proposals include designating sexual violence as a criterion for sanctions and establishing an informal expert group under the Security Council to ensure that there is information and monitoring. Including gender experts in all sanctions expert groups would strengthen implementation. All United Nations Special Envoy teams should include women in high-level positions.

Financing is of course key. We have heard proposals that at least 15 per cent of peacekeeping funding should be directed towards the objectives of resolution 1325 (2000). From our point of view, 15 per cent should be seen as an absolute floor, not the ceiling. As to Iceland, over 20 per cent of our contributions towards peacebuilding in 2014 had gender equality and women's empowerment as their primary objective. That is a level we intend to maintain over the coming years, along with ensuring that other contributions strengthen gender equality and women's empowerment in a significant way. In that respect, 71 per cent of Iceland's total contributions towards peacebuilding in 2014 had gender equality and women's empowerment as the primary, or at least a significant, objective.

Iceland deploys civilian experts to the field through the Icelandic Crisis Response Unit. In 2011, after several years' effort, we achieved gender balance, where an equal number of experts of each gender were seconded to the field for an equal amount of time. We are on track to maintaining that balance. Before deployment, all seconded personnel receive education on gender equality and the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

In 2008, Iceland adopted its first national action plan on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Following a review in 2012, a second national action plan was adopted. A

third action plan will be ready next year. That shows that implementation is indeed a continuous work-in-progress.

Needless to say, the Security Council must be the centre of the push for effective implementation. It needs to be more active and to show political will in implementing resolution 1325 (2000). I would like to pay tribute to those delegations on the Council that have pushed this issue forward.

Finally, having put the spotlight on the role of the Security Council, it is vital that other organizations involved in peacekeeping and conflict zones also ensure implementation. Examples would be NATO, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the African Union. The full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) will require the efforts of all.