

Ms. Bahous (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to thank you and France, Madam, for your efforts during your presidency of the Security Council this month and for organizing this meeting. We wish you every success in your endeavour.

Allow me also to thank Secretary-General Guterres for his report (S/2017/861). We welcome his recommendations. We stress the importance of ensuring the full and genuine participation of women in peace and security efforts and the need to provide regular and necessary financing for the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. We also welcome the Secretary-General's strategy on gender parity.

We meet today to assess our efforts as an international community — not only our ability to solve conflicts, but also our ability to empower women effectively and increase their participation in peace negotiations, conflict prevention efforts and humanitarian relief action, as well as in the prevention of extremist ideologies and terrorism. Jordan attaches great importance to women's empowerment at all levels because they play a major role in promoting sustainable peace.

At the national level, we have achieved progress in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. Indeed, our draft national plan has been submitted to the Cabinet and will be ratified soon, launching the effective implementation of the agenda in cooperation with civil society organizations and all governmental and military entities. We have estimated the cost of the national plan and allocated a quality, flexible and realistic budget to it. We stress the importance of capacity-building and providing financial resources and technical support. That will help provide the necessary financial resources.

Successive Jordanian Governments have attached importance to and prioritized women's rights and empowerment. They have focused on increasing women's participation in economic, social and political life. We recently achieved great progress in introducing legislative reforms and improving administrative and political frameworks to end all forms of discrimination against women and promote gender equality. The participation of women has been improved at all levels over the past decade in Jordan, rising to 15.4 per cent in the Senate and House of Representatives; 18.5 per cent in the judiciary; 35.5 per cent in political parties; 37.8 per cent in municipal councils; 21 per cent in trade unions; and 19.9 per cent in the diplomatic corps.

Despite these achievements we continue to face social and political challenges to women's empowerment and gender equality, and we continue to address these challenges. Building on that, Jordan continuously reviews its legislation to empower women and ensure their access to decision-making posts and increase their political participation in elected councils. We have also enacted rules and legislation to protect them against violence and discrimination. Most importantly, in 2007 we adopted flexible work rules that benefit all female workers and business-owners in the private sector, especially those with family responsibilities. We have also adopted a law against domestic violence to protect and rehabilitate women. Our Parliament has also deleted article 308 of the Penal Code, which granted impunity to rapists by allowing them to marry their victims.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an opportunity to make a quantum leap in the participatory development process to include a gender perspective in all national development agendas. As the context of the Jordan 2025 document and the Executive Development Programme 2016-2019, we adopted a set of policies to empower women in the sectors of health, education, ending poverty, social protection and employment, and on their participation in the labour force and in social and political life. We also promoted women's empowerment during the voluntary national review of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals in July in New York, especially with respect to Goal 5, on gender equality.

Recently, in New York, Jordan and Norway, with the participation of 40 States, also launched the Group of Friends on Countering and Preventing Violent Extremism. The Group focuses on the importance of empowering women and young people to fight violent extremism and promote the ability of local women to prevent conflict, respond to crises and emergencies, and build sustainable peace. It focuses on the need to link education to social and human sciences, communications and media in order to build promising generations that will work for peace. We note the major role played by Jordan in following up on the youth, peace and security agenda during our membership of the Security Council in 2014 and 2015 and the adoption of resolution 2250 (2015), on youth, peace and security.

Jordan is a pioneer at the regional and international levels. We provide international peace and security expertise by taking part in peacekeeping and deploying peacekeepers, and by participating in dialogue and mediation for peace. We also support the policy of zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse. We are also increasing women's participation in police departments. Recently, we sent women police officers to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, and expect to send female peacekeepers to the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. This highlights the great importance we attach to the contribution of women and the promotion of their roles in peacekeeping operations. We stress the need for the United Nations to move from peacekeeping to conflict prevention. We must work together to address the root causes of conflict and to prevent them. In fact, women play a major, important and effective part in that.

We are providing a variety of services to Syrian refugees. We offer basic education and health services to women and men refugees in post-conflict and crisis situations. Some 50 per cent of refugees are women and 53 per cent are young people under 18 years. We have opened schools in refugee camps and facilitated the inclusion of student refugees even when they lacked the necessary documentation. Our public schools have been working double shifts to service these students. We are also providing gender-responsive services, including psychosocial support and legal and medical services. We are facilitating secure access to these services for the most exposed and vulnerable women and girls, especially in refugee camps and host families.

With regard to human trafficking, we have launched the Al-Karama Centre, which protects victims of all nationalities. Our Government is supporting small enterprises, led by women within refugee camps and in Jordanian society. We are facilitating their work in the Jordanian labour market by giving them work permits. The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, which was established after the 2015 high-level review of the women and peace and security agenda, is also providing vital support for Syrian women refugees. It empowers them economically, protects their rights and fights sexual violence.

I would like to the need for the international community to alleviate the suffering of Palestinian women and girls under the yoke of Israeli occupation, especially in Israeli prisons. We must provide them with all their legitimate rights, including the right to live in dignity.

Women play an effective and principal role in building peace. There can be no peace in societies without the serious and genuine participation of women. We cannot achieve the 2030 Agenda or sustainable peace without empowering women and girls, without gender equality, and without ending all forms of violence against them. We will continue to work at the national, regional and international levels to support the women and peace and security agenda to provide a better future for women and girls without delay.