

Mr. Giacomelli da Silva (Brazil) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I should like to thank France for organizing this debate.

I also thank the Secretary-General for his recent report (S/2017/861) on the subject, as well as his Chef de Cabinet, the Executive Director of UN-Women, the Secretary-General of the International Organization of la Francophonie and Ms. Mina-Rojas for their briefings.

Many positive steps have been taken to implement the eight resolutions on women and peace and security. Despite these efforts, however, women remain a minority in peace and security negotiations and in peacekeeping operations. The challenge is to fully implement the resolutions of the Council, including the landmark resolution 1325 (2000).

Protection and independence are inextricable dimensions of the women and peace and security agenda. At the international level, this requires women's participation and respect for their rights in the formulation and implementation of the mandates of peacekeeping operations and special political missions, in peace negotiations, in peacekeeping initiatives and in humanitarian interventions.

Complex humanitarian crises spawned by conflicts shed light on the plight of women and girls who are subject to various forms of sexual violence and forced to flee their homes and communities. They become refugees and displaced persons. In this context, we must pay particular attention to women and girls within the most vulnerable groups.

The importance of increasing the presence of women in peacekeeping operations is indisputable. It would be unthinkable to establish a peacekeeping operation without deploying gender-equality advisers, incorporating a protection of women mandate, or training Blue Helmets in the prevention of and the fight against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. We commend the Secretariat for the measures it has proposed to reach the target of 15 per cent goal for female officers among senior officers and military observers within peacekeeping operations. Brazil also wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his initiatives to promote a new, victim-centred approach to preventing and countering sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by those serving under the United Nations flag or a United Nations mandate.

Brazil had the honour of participating in the second meeting of the National Focal Points Network that addresses issues on women and peace and security, in addition to the recent general debate of the General Assembly. With its first national action plan, which has been in place since March, Brazil now has an important tool to measure its progress on the women and peace and security agenda.

We have already made significant progress. For instance, the Brazilian army has admitted women to its military schools, the skills development programme on women and peace and security has been integrated in the establishment of the Sergio Vieira de Mello Peacekeeping Operations Joint Center and that programme has now been incorporated into the curriculum of

our School of Diplomacy. We are also striving to increase the number of female candidates for posts in Brazilian civilian and military peacekeeping operations and special political missions. We sincerely hope that the national action plan will continue to produce encouraging results and that the women and peace and security agenda will continue to flourish within the United Nations system as a whole.