

**Mr. Zagaynov (Russian Federation)** (*spoke in Russian*): We would first like to thank the French presidency for organizing today's meeting. We are grateful to the briefers for their statements and helpful information.

In the time that has passed since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) considerable success has been achieved in enhancing the role of women in preventing and resolving armed conflicts as well as in postconflict rebuilding. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about another, no less important, task, which is ensuring the appropriate protection of women in the course of conflicts. In spite of the many efforts that have been made, women continue to fall victim to various forms of violence, losing their lives or their health during conflicts. We have been shocked by the barbaric acts and atrocities that terrorist groups have committed against women. As we consider the subject of the women and peace and security agenda, we therefore believe it is particularly important to focus specifically on issues directly related to the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security.

With regard to other associated topics — such as ensuring gender equality, expanding rights and opportunities for women and upholding women's human rights — there are specialized organizations and mechanisms in place for dealing with them. As we see it, the way that the topic of women and peace and security is discussed is increasingly straying from its basic framework. We are seeing a similar trend in the approaches used in preparing the thematic report of the Secretary-General. We also want to note once again that it is inappropriate to use the platform of the Security Council to promote controversial concepts and approaches that do not have broad international support.

We firmly believe that there is significant potential for women's participation in various aspects of resolving armed conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction, and that the direct participation of women in preventing armed conflicts and in post-conflict reconstruction is a major requisite for eliminating violence against them. Women have a special role to play in United Nations peacekeeping. As far as Russia's contribution in that area is concerned, we have ensured a 15 per cent female presence in our peacekeeping efforts. We also train women police officers in United Nations certified training centres, and we also plan to do the same for women soldiers by the end of the year.

The Security Council's regular debates on women and peace and security enable us to take stock of the progress made in improving the protection of women in conditions of armed conflict and ensuring their full and effective participation in efforts to prevent and resolve crises. We believe it is important to ensure that our efforts to develop comprehensive approaches in this area do not lead us to ignore the specifics of particular conflict situations, or to the inclusion of gender aspects in the work of the United Nations becoming an end in itself. We should also take this kind of differentiated approach to the mandates given to United Nations departments and structures regarding the incorporation of gender issues into their activities. They have their own clear remits, and for most of them issues related women and peace and security are not a defining priority but just one of a number of factors within the framework of their activities related

to preventing and settling armed conflicts and dealing with post-conflict situations. Let us also not forget that the primary responsibility for protecting women at every stage of an armed conflict rests with Governments and that measures undertaken by United Nations entities and civil society should be aimed at supporting and complementing the efforts of States.

I want to say a few words in connection with the statement made by the delegation of Ukraine. There was no mention in that statement today of Ms. Savchenko. Perhaps not everyone here recalls how for several years, at every Security Council meeting on women's issues, the Ukrainian delegation would sound the alarm about the fate of Nadiya Savchenko, who was presented as a national heroine. It may be that not everyone knows that after her return to Ukraine, Ms. Savchenko soon became an extremely vocal critic of the policies of the Kyiv regime, after which the Ukrainian authorities' attitude to her cooled markedly and she fell into disgrace, partly because she urged for launching negotiations in Donetsk and Luhansk with the aim of restoring peace and tried to promote that. That clearly exemplifies the Ukrainian authorities' approach to the issue of women's participation in resolving conflicts.

That is a clear illustration of the point of the Ukrainian delegation's anti-Russian statements. Today we were told once again about how women have suffered as a result of the conflict in south-eastern Ukraine. That is unfortunately true. And the people responsible for it are the Kyiv authorities, who in 2014 launched military action against their own people. Besides that, the conflict has been accompanied by terrible crimes committed by the Ukrainian armed forces against women. Anyone interested can find the relevant information in the reports of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, for example. The residents of the Donbas region, including the elderly, have suffered greatly from Kyiv's unmerciful economic and financial blockade. In contrast, Russia has been consistently providing the region with humanitarian assistance. We have instituted an open-door policy for Ukrainian refugees, 51 per cent of whom are women and girls. Anyone who ends up on Russian territory after suffering in the armed conflict in Ukraine is offered essential social assistance and access to education and health care, and women and children get special attention because of their particular vulnerability.

In conclusion, we would like to say that our country has a unique history with regard to equality between men and women. Decisions on that topic were taken as long ago as the early years of the twentieth century. Today women's participation in preventing and resolving conflicts and ensuring sustainable peace is becoming ever more important. That item is also high on the Security Council's agenda, and deservedly so. We intend to continue contributing to discussions on various United Nations platforms on ways to ensure meaningful improvements in the protection of women and their rights and ensuring their effective participation in peace processes.