

Ms. Kuret (Slovenia): Let me begin by sincerely thanking France for organizing this open debate and the Secretary-General for his annual report (S/2017/861).

Slovenia aligns itself with the statements delivered by the observer of the European Union and by representative of Panama on behalf of the Human Security Network, and would like to make some additional comments and remarks in its national capacity.

The review of Slovenia's first national action plan showed our contribution to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security at different levels, especially in the international and regional organization, and through the participation in international operations and missions. We have also helped to promote the implementation of the resolution in the region of the Western Balkans. More than 20 projects have been carried out in cooperation with civil society to empower women in Africa, the Middle East and Afghanistan.

Since we believe that it is imperative to eliminate barriers to gender equality and to ensure the meaningful participation of women, we are continuing to support different projects in that regard, including by contributing funds to support the NATO/Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council Policy for the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security. We have, for example, requested that Slovenia's financial contribution in 2017, which amounts to €500,000 for the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces, be used for projects that focus on the advancement of female members in the Afghan forces.

At the national level, important achievements have been made in education and training on the women and peace and security agenda, which were systematically introduced throughout the Slovene armed forces. In 2015, a permanent position of gender adviser within the General Staff of the Slovene armed forces was established, as was a network of gender advisers. We are happy to report that in 2016, almost 10 per cent of military staff and more than 20 per cent of police personnel deployed to international operations and missions were women. Moreover, this spring, Slovenia gladly answered to the United Nations call to appoint women in command positions by contributing the first woman contingent commander to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

But events in the international community also demand activities outside of the action plan. In that regard, Slovenia has gained important experience in integrating the gender perspective into the management of migration movements, and shared its knowledge in the region. Cooperation and partnership with different stakeholders are crucial to the realization of that agenda on the ground. Therefore, we gladly participate in different networks, such as the global Women, Peace and Security National Focal Points Network and the recently established Mediterranean Women Mediators Network.

As we speak of women's equal and meaningful participation and leadership in peace-related activities, let me add that the political participation of women in Slovenia is excellent. Half of the Government is comprised of women, including both the Minister of Defence and the Minister of

the Interior. I am also very pleased that yesterday's first released index on women, peace and security placed Slovenia in fourth place. That is why we believe that the integration of the gender perspective into peace and security is not just a women's issue; it concerns men, too.

Let me conclude by noting that we should also encourage men's participation and leadership in the promotion of gender equality. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the Secretary-General's action in both regards.