

Mrs. Baumann (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Madam, for convening this important debate on women and peace and security. This is an important opportunity to remind the international community of the reasons why resolution 1325 (2000) and its follow up resolutions matter significantly for international peace and security. And it further shows why Member States need to pursue their efforts to implement the provisions of those resolutions. Resolution 1325 (2000) has become the main reference for addressing women's rights and gender equality in conflict and fragility. Its adoption in 2000 was emblematic of a shift from national to human and people's security.

Human security, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls represent cornerstones of Swiss foreign policy. The Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs recently launched its first comprehensive strategy on gender equality and women's rights, which highlights the agenda on women and peace and security as one of its main pillars. The reasons for that are obvious.

First, gender equality is key for the prevention of conflict and violence, including violent extremism. There is a connection between gender equality and the readiness of a society to take up arms. Secondly, respecting women's equal rights and ensuring their inclusion in peace processes are simply a must. Women and men negotiate equally well, but there are still numerous obstacles that women face in trying to be accepted. And let us remember here that the participation of women in peace processes is not only about a seat at the negotiation table, but also about the ability and power to bring ideas and concerns to the negotiation agenda. In that connection, Switzerland commends the Secretary-General's strategy on gender equality and his call for nominating more women as special envoys, mediators and mediation experts.

Switzerland further commends General Assembly resolution 70/304, on the role of mediation, which calls upon Member States to promote the equal, full and effective participation of women in all forums and at all levels of the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention and resolution. We have learned an important lesson: we need to engage with civil society, build capacities and empower women from early on. We need to work on creating a pool of women who are ready to get on board when time arrives, both as mediators and negotiators. Switzerland therefore insists that women must be included in all mediation training and activities. We also promote local women's networks that are active in peace and security.

Thirdly, the agenda on women and peace and security contributes to better results for sustainable peace, which requires an integrated approach based on coherence between political and security measures, development and human rights agendas. Switzerland therefore promotes the connection between resolution 1325 (2000) and women's rights frameworks, which makes it possible to leverage existing United Nations and treaty bodies and their reporting mechanisms, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the universal periodic review and special mandates. That will strengthen accountability for all actors, including Governments, and prevent the fragmentation of the gender equality and women's rights agenda. In that spirit, Switzerland supports an

initiative that focuses on the implementation of general recommendation No. 30 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which deals with women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations.

To conclude, let me mention two aspects that Switzerland deems crucial for the further implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), namely, the engagement of men and boys in women's economic empowerment. The agenda on women and peace and security should not focus on women alone. The transformation of power relations in societies must be at its heart. Engaging men and boys, who may be allies, victims and potential perpetrators, in all transformative actions is crucial for any conflict and violence prevention strategy and will benefit both women and men. Finally, women's economic empowerment must receive greater attention in post-conflict recovery and State-building. Women's access to resources, income and economic independence are important enabling factors in efforts to enhance women's active participation in matters of peace and security, which ultimately leads to a safer world.