

Mr. Sinirlioğlu (Turkey): As Chair of the MIKTA Group for 2017, Turkey has the honour to deliver the following statement on behalf of the MIKTA countries, namely, Mexico, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Turkey and Australia.

At the outset, we would like to express our appreciation to the French presidency of the Security Council for organizing today's open debate. We also thank the Secretary-General for his recent report (S/2017/861).

The MIKTA countries welcome the continued attention paid to the women and peace and security agenda at the Security Council. We recognize the key role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding. We underscore the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts in the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. We also believe in the need to increase the role of women in decision-making on conflict prevention and resolution.

In that regard, let me note that all MIKTA countries are members of the Group of Friends for Gender Parity. The MIKTA countries believe that achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are critical to conflict prevention, as well as the broader efforts to maintain international peace and security. That is also key for the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We consider resolution 1325 (2000) to be an important milestone for addressing the impact of armed conflict on women and girls. Successive Security Council resolutions have also contributed to the establishment of a sound, normative framework in that regard. We attach importance to ensuring collaboration and coordination through the United Nations system in the implementation of those resolutions and continue to encourage more women to participate in the United Nations peacekeeping process and missions.

Despite the progress achieved so far, we still face daunting challenges. Women and girls continue to be disproportionately affected by the impact of conflicts around the world. In that context, we are alarmed by the targeting of women and girls by gender-based violence, in particular rape and other forms of sexual abuse, in situations of conflict. Such appalling acts deserve to be condemned. The MIKTA countries also attach importance to the efforts to improve the United Nations system-wide approach to preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse.

Massive forced displacements caused by the devastating effects of conflicts continue to be a source of grave concern. Women and girls face severe consequences in humanitarian crisis situations. The MIKTA countries are committed to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. It is imperative to develop gender-responsive humanitarian policies that ensure that women and girls have access to basic services, including health and education. It was encouraging to see that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls emerged as an overarching theme of the commitments made at the first World

Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul last year. It is important to transform such commitments into action. It is also crucial to redouble our efforts to prevent women and girls from becoming victims of human trafficking in conflict and post-conflict situations. We can achieve meaningful progress on that front only through coordinated and consolidated measures.

At a time when the causes and effects of conflicts easily spread across borders, regional and international coordination and cooperation remain important tools in addressing the challenges we face. With that understanding, MIKTA, as a cross-regional group of countries on different continents, underscores its readiness to contribute to international efforts for taking forward the women and peace and security agenda