

Mrs. Nguyen (Viet Nam): My delegation would like to thank the French presidency for convening this open debate on women and peace and security. We also express our appreciation to the Secretary-General and to the Executive Director of UN-Women for their comprehensive reports.

Our discussion today under the theme of “Realizing the promise of the women and peace and security agenda: ensuring its full implementation, including the participation of women”, is very timely, as there are growing threats to peace and security that are both traditional and non-traditional. This event offers us an opportunity to renew our commitments to the women and peace and security agenda in order to enhance the equal participation and involvement of women in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security.

We welcome efforts and progress made in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, which have greatly contributed to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. We are pleased to see that the role and participation of women have been promoted in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction, as well as their growing leadership in peace processes.

Despite those efforts and progress, much remains to be done. Women’s underrepresentation, gender inequality and discrimination still persist. We are concerned about the continuing violence and abuse targeting women and girls. We strongly condemn the heinous acts of forcing or recruiting women and girls to commit terrorist attacks.

Against that backdrop, we call for a strengthened collective response to effectively address these challenges. Representation and decision-making by women in post-conflict structures and peace operation efforts should be broadened to ensure that their needs and interests are reflected and met. The gender perspective should be mainstreamed in a consistent and comprehensive manner in all areas of peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Impunity must be ended to effectively combat and eliminate human rights violations, including conflict-related sexual violence and abuse. In that regard, we welcome the global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and encourage serious consideration of its findings and recommendations.

We would also like to highlight the importance of education in enhancing women’s capacity. Together with women’s economic empowerment, it is crucial to equip women and girls with the knowledge to better protect themselves from conflict-related risks as well as to build their resilience against economic shocks, climate change and natural disasters. At the same time, we need to raise awareness of the women and peace and security agenda through different means of communication and encourage the engagement of all the relevant stakeholders, especially young people, in its implementation.

Throughout the history of Viet Nam, women have proved and played an indispensable role in national defence, construction and development. Today we are proud to see the increased

participation of women in all spheres of life, especially the military and security forces. Women are an essential driving force of our economic and social development, making significant contributions to promoting and maintaining an environment of peace, security and stability.

This year the twelfth National Women's Congress of Viet Nam, under the theme "Solidarity — Renovation — Equality — Integration", set its objectives for the term 2017-2022. These include, inter alia, the promotion of women's potential and creativity, improving their material and spiritual life and status, striving for gender equality and women's advancement and contributing to the cause of national construction and defence.

We are also pleased to announce that we are now working closely with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in preparation for the early deployment of the very first Vietnamese woman officer to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. Another nine women are prepared to work at our level 2 hospital once it is deployed in South Sudan.

It is women who plant the seeds and inspire the love for peace. For the seeds of peace to grow and the love of peace to be nurtured, we must turn our commitments into actions. It is necessary to mobilize greater support for the role of women, increase opportunities for their meaningful participation and tackle all challenges that stand in their way. Viet Nam is committed to working closely with Member States and the relevant United Nations agencies in this endeavour.