

Ms. Flores Herrera (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*):

First, we wish to congratulate the newly elected non-permanent members of the Security Council and wish them success.

Today we are witnessing various firsts. This is the first open debate of the Security Council in this first month of 2017, with Sweden, a small State with the first declared feminist Government, presiding. Our thanks go to Minister Wallström for her introductory words and for convening this meeting. This is also the first meeting with Secretary-General Guterres, who has been insisting on the importance of preventive diplomacy. It is high time to hear fresh and innovative arguments about what is already a long-standing topic of debate.

When I have the opportunity to show the United Nations to my guests, an obligatory stop is the disarmament section of the displays on the third floor behind the General Assembly, where a bubble chart is displayed, which makes a graphic comparison between the global budget for militarization, the regular budget of the United Nations, the size of official development aid and the budget for disarmament. There is nothing more discouraging for the peace agenda than comparing the sizes of the bubbles, which show that we have our priorities inverted.

The efforts of the international community for peacekeeping operations are mostly directed through military agreements. Instead, resources should be directed largely to actions for conflict prevention. As Secretary-General Guterres said, development is the best antidote to conflict. An increase in preventive diplomacy would ensure linkages between the three pillars of the United Nations and would focus on where they intersect. There is no issue that has a more negative impact on the United Nations reputation vis-à-vis the public than its inability to prevent atrocities. How can we therefore move from an eminently reactive Security Council agenda to a proactive agenda? How can we move from reacting to crises to preventing conflicts?

The Charter of the United Nations promises to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Fortunately, wars among States are becoming increasingly fewer, but we are seeing a critical situation around the world owing to the rise of complex and violent conflicts, which extend beyond borders and trigger massive displacements of people and have led to large-scale human rights violations, with women, children and girls as the main victims.

That situation, which is significantly different from what the Organization faced 70 years ago, requires effective preventive action by the Security Council as the guarantor of peace. Article 33 of the Charter refers to instruments designed to settle conflicts through peaceful means, which, as the Security Council itself acknowledged in resolution 2171

(2014), are not used sufficiently. Among those instruments is the recognition of the role that women play in peacekeeping. That role should be substantially increased.

Similarly, we are at the threshold of new leadership in the person of the Secretary-General. Now is the time, therefore, to lay the groundwork for effective interaction with the Security Council that prioritizes analysis and early warnings, which could lead to preventive political missions. To do that, we must strengthen our relationship with the Human Rights Council and make that tie constant and close. That body, through its reports and resolutions, can facilitate the work of the Security Council by providing early warnings of human rights violations.

For complex problems, there are no linear solutions, but rather multisectoral ones. There is no horizontal or vertical approach, but a matrix-oriented approach. Panama has been insisting on the need for a change in the paradigm so that ethics can provide the main criterion that the Organization uses in order to humanize its agendas, promote solidarity and make the action of all United Nations bodies transparent, in particular the Security Council.

In order to effectively prevent conflicts and move towards lasting peace, the Security Council needs to have a stronger analytical capacity and be proactive with regard to preventing potential risks. The Council should involve the parties to conflicts or parties potentially at risk in the elaboration of comprehensive implementation, monitoring and resource-allotment strategies. Involving parties bolsters trust and ultimately provides stronger guarantees of peace. The Security Council should have a more balanced power structure, so that narrow interests do not prevail, which only makes it more difficult to have an independent analysis in the search for solutions. The Security Council should also work hand in hand with other bodies of the United Nations system.

Today we have an opportunity to establish new standards and to create a vision in which the United Nations maintains leadership in comprehensive strategies to assist the parties to conflict or parties who are potentially at risk, thereby ensuring international peace and security, an essential ingredient for the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with which we are striving to transform the world.