

Ms. Bakurmutsa (Rwanda):

At the outset, I express Rwanda's deepest sympathies to Russian Federation for the heinous assassination of Ambassador Andrey Karlov.

Let me thank the Spanish presidency for convening this important debate and welcome the purposeful adoption today of resolution 2331 (2016), which we co-sponsored.

The trafficking in persons in conflict situations is a problem that magnifies the necessity for international peace and security in both conflict and post-conflict situations. Human trafficking is a global security threat that directly affects the vulnerability of displaced people and refugees. It is compounded by conflicts, civil unrest, persecutions and human rights violations. We must not lose sight of its expansive nature and recognize that most countries of destination for trafficked victims are not enduring conflicts. Therefore, it is important to combat this crime in the countries of origin, transit and destination. The victims, especially children and women are targeted by criminals, many of whom belong to transnational organized crime networks, for sexual exploitation, slavery and other forms of exploitation.

Rwanda has developed national legislative and institutional measures and is taking an active role regionally in the East African cooperation framework commissioned to devise mechanisms to prevent human trafficking, protect victims and bring perpetrators to justice. This is a laborious undertaking, for Rwanda is susceptible to human trafficking by being situated in a region experiencing sustained armed conflict. At the international level, Rwanda is a State party to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the Convention. Rwanda co-sponsored General Assembly resolution 71/19, on Cooperation between the United Nations and INTERPOL.

Before concluding, I would like to make two final points.

First, we must do more on at the local, regional and international levels to combat human trafficking by working closely with partners across the spectrum to strengthen legislative and punitive measures that efficiently target the speed and scope of the network of traffickers we are up against. The reality before us is that we cannot afford to stand idle in the face of human trafficking.

Secondly, and I think most importantly, we encourage all Member States, civil institutions and

the private sector to support the fight against human trafficking on all fronts.

