

Ms. Beckles (Trinidad and Tobago): Trinidad and Tobago is pleased to uphold its tradition of participating in this annual open debate on the important topic of women and peace and security. Trinidad and Tobago recognizes the competence of the Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations in matters related to the maintenance of international peace and security, and wishes to express its satisfaction regarding the fact that the issue of women and peace and security remains prominent on the agenda of the Council.

My delegation also welcomes the comprehensive report of the Secretary-General (S/2017/861) on the subject. We concur with the Secretary-General in his report that the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals requires the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. For my country, the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women remain pivotal to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Seventeen years ago, resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted by the Security Council. Trinidad and Tobago remains steadfast in its view that the seminal character of that resolution cannot be overemphasized, as it was the first resolution to recognize the need for the involvement of both women and men in efforts to attain sustainable peace and security. Similarly, we recognize the distinctive nature of subsequent resolutions on sustaining peace and the importance of women's leadership and meaningful participation in the prevention and resolution of conflict and in peacebuilding, as embodied in subsequent resolutions on sustaining peace. Our support for those resolutions is not only based on our legal obligations under the Charter, but also on our own national laws, which have entrenched the inalienable rights of women into our domestic legal framework.

Trinidad and Tobago subscribes to the rule of law as a fundamental safeguard in the advancement and protection of the rights of women. Therefore, we view as essential our continued adherence to obligations from a number of international instruments that seek to protect the rights of women and girls, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The vulnerability of women and girls in situations of armed conflict and, in my country's specific circumstances, armed violence, continue to engage our attention. Trinidad and Tobago remains a strong proponent of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). We submit that the ATT represents a significant achievement in the global fight to eliminate the diversion of conventional arms to the illicit market. It could contribute to the reduction of, if not an end to, untold suffering, particularly to women and girls.

In the spirit of advancing the dual agenda of the attainment of international peace and security and the empowerment of women, in 2010, Trinidad and Tobago introduced General Assembly resolution 65/69, which was the first General Assembly resolution on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. It is our view that that resolution complements resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions on the matter by focusing on the participation of

women in processes geared towards the advancement of disarmament and international peace and security.

As a current member of the Executive Board of UN-Women, Trinidad and Tobago pledges to continue to work with Member States towards the universal achievement of gender equality. We recognize UNWomen's strategic plan for the period 2018-2021 as an important instrument that could help to achieve that objective.

In conclusion, Trinidad and Tobago would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to the advancement and empowerment of women. We remain committed to working with other Member States and our partners at the regional, hemispheric and global levels to promote the involvement of women as equal partners in matters related to peace and security, including at all levels of the decision-making process.