

Ms. Holguín Cuéllar (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, I thank you for having convened this open debate, almost 17 years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. I should like also to thank the Executive Director of UN-Women, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka; Michaëlle Jean, of the International Organization of la Francophonie; and Charo Mina-Rojas, Colombia's National Coordinator of Advocacy and Outreach for the Black Communities' Process, for their contributions.

This meeting represents an opportunity to share best practices and the challenges encountered in the implementation of this agenda, but above all, in the face of new challenges, to revitalize the discussion and take effective action ensuring the participation and leadership of women in peace and peacekeeping processes.

Our process, which put an end to the conflict, was characterized by an active and major participation of women. During the negotiation phase, we were at the table, I myself as negotiator, and in the negotiating team more broadly. In addition, the work of the sub-commission on gender was a cross-cutting presence throughout the entire final agreement, as recognized in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2017/861), which states that the percentage of signed peace agreements containing gender-specific provisions increased only because the Colombian peace agreement contained more than 100 such provisions.

Close to one year after the signing of the agreement, Columbia remains committed to ensuring the participation of women in the implementation of the peace agenda. We have major challenges and goals in this phase, and the role of women is vital in this respect. To this end, we have created the institutions necessary to implement the agreement, including a specialized gender unit made up of seven women leaders of organizations of rural women, victims of armed conflict and civil-society organizations. They will help us to achieve the transformations to which the agreement is directed so as to offer women, especially rural women, better living conditions, which will translate into their empowerment and economic autonomy, as well as the creation of work spaces in decent conditions, in a framework of equality, so as to break the cycles of violence that violate the rights of women. We are also working to incorporate a gender focus in the framework for the implementation of the agreement.

As important as is the presence of women during negotiations, it will be equally important in the implementation process. The participation in the peacebuilding phase, which will take us several years, is tangible in the composition of the institutions created for the purpose of transitional justice, whose members were elected in September. In the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, 28 of the 51 judges are women, including the President, and eight are Afro-descendants or indigenous people. In addition, a woman was elected Director of the Search Unit for Missing Person.

Colombia recognizes the need to ensure accountability for crimes of sexual violence committed in the framework of conflict. That is why the final agreement provides that such crimes cannot

be subject to amnesty. In addition, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace plans to create an investigation unit with a special team for cases of sexual violence.

I wish also to highlight the fact that the first special political mission agreed by the Security Council was the one with the largest ever number of women — almost 20 per cent of observers. We hope that the second will maintain or even surpass those levels.

We believe that our process, with its advantages and drawbacks, can be one of the references for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), in a way that contributes to achieving tangible results, the realization of projects and the development of joint initiatives, and so that lessons learned can be used to advantage in other contexts. The past years have shown us that committed work brings about significant progress and tangible results that have a positive impact on the realities of women, but they are, of course, not enough.

As Ms. Mina-Rojas said at the beginning of today's debate, the peace process has not only put an end to war and violence, it has also helped us deal together with the roots of the conflict. That is what we aim to do with the Agreement; that is the challenge we face from now on in terms of its implementation. We need the unwavering commitment of States, as well as the effective work of the entire United Nations system, in particular of the Security Council, to ensure genuine participation by women, and thereby contribute to achieving the just and equitable societies that we all desire.