

Ms. Pires (Timor-Leste):

My delegation congratulates the Russian Federation for having convened this annual open debate on women and peace and security: implementing the common agenda.

We wish also to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) (S/2016/822), the Executive Director of UN-Women for her comprehensive and informative remarks, and the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security for its contribution.

Important steps have been taken to further implement the women and peace and security agenda since the last debate on this issue (see S/PV.7704), including increased gender provisions in signed peace agreements. While we are encouraged by these good practices, including those that were part of the process leading to the Colombia peace accord, and commend the Secretary-General and the United Nations system on the important steps taken to press for, facilitate and support the inclusion of women in peace negotiations, we cannot be complacent with respect to the progress made but must continue in our resolve towards the full implementation of the agenda.

When we look at the world's trouble spots, we can see that women and children continue to suffer disproportionately in times of conflict and in post-conflict situations. The peace and security challenges have not lessened and in some cases have been exacerbated and have grown in complexity, bringing great suffering to those affected, in particular women and children.

Violence against women and children, including sexual violence, is devastating and has life-long effects. It must be strongly condemned and those responsible held accountable so as to break the continuum of violence. This, of course, includes any cases of sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by some United Nations peacekeepers. Funds are needed to also ensure that survivors can be supported in beginning the difficult task of dealing with their experiences and reconstructing their lives.

Timor-Leste is fully committed to the empowerment and the advancement of women and gender equality. Earlier this year, on 26 April, the Council of Ministers adopted a five-year national action plan on women and peace and security. During its recent launch, our Prime Minister highlighted the need for women to actively participate in decision-making and expressed the hope that the plan would increase the participation of women, working together with men for the development of the country.

Timor-Leste's national action plan is the product of a comprehensive and inclusive process and sets out the actions to be taken with respect to four key pillars, namely, participation, prevention, protection and peacebuilding. The plan promotes and guarantees women's participation in all decision-making positions and processes, including in the defence and security sectors, peacebuilding and development. It proposes concrete actions to review and change laws, policies and programmes aimed at the promotion of women and girls' right to a life in peace and security, and at ensuring their equal and active participation and leadership in peacebuilding, State-building and development.

The implementation of the plan will involve a whole-of-Government approach as well as civil-society organizations, and accountability will be ensured through a

monitoring committee that will be made up of Members of Parliament and non-governmental organizations. We are grateful to UN-Women for all of its support in the process to date.

We are confident that as Timorese women participate in and benefit from such activities, our society will be more inclusive, our people will be empowered to participate in and contribute to development, and Timor-Leste will ultimately become stronger.

We have today, through our national action plans on resolution 1325 (2000); the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and its general recommendation No. 30, on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations; and the recommendations of the three reviews that took place last year, a comprehensive framework on furthering the women and peace and security agenda.

We are confident that with political will, we all can continue to strive to move forward.