

Mr. Ibrahim (Malaysia):

I wish once again to warmly welcome the President of the Government of Spain to the Security Council and to express to him my

appreciation for his presiding earlier over our meeting today. His presence here today is a clear indication of the importance that Spain attaches to this issue. The focus on the phenomenon of human trafficking in armed conflict, which highlights a disturbing trend that warrants strengthened international action, is indeed commendable and timely.

Allow me to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the other briefers for their respective briefings and steadfast commitment to addressing the issue of human trafficking in their work. I also wish to thank Ms. Ameena Saeed Hasan and Ms. Nadia Murad for their harrowing and powerful testimonies. Their courage and fortitude in the face of unspeakable horrors should compel us to act, and demands to be matched by the strongest resolve from the international community to ensure that the detestable treatment that they and others have experienced is not repeated.

Trafficking in persons is abhorrent in any context; on that there is universal agreement. Human trafficking entails the extrajudicial judgment that certain groups of people, whether on the basis of ethnicity, faith, gender, economic status, age or other random criteria, are inferior lots and can be used as a means to an end. Human traffickers strip people of their dignity and negate the respect inherent to all humankind, thereby debasing their victims as mere chattel for the profit of others. Such twisted concepts and beliefs are especially pernicious in situations of armed conflict, where the vulnerability of civilian communities renders them prime targets for such horrendous acts.

Moreover, we are currently witnessing a nightmare scenario in which non-State armed groups that expose violent and extremist ideologies are actively engaging in human trafficking activities to fulfil their distorted visions of the world. Da'esh and its ilk have shown that they are capable of immense cruelty through the prevalent use of sexual violence and the enslavement and trade of women and girls for recruitment and financial purposes. In that regard, the practices of groups such as Da'esh and Boko Haram in perpetuating sexual violence, including through the trafficking of women and children, demands heightened and greater attention and responses from the Council. Malaysia is therefore pleased to have supported and co-sponsored resolution 2331 (2016), just adopted. That resolution marks an important contribution to reinforcing the existing international framework to combat trafficking in persons, particularly where that is being used to fuel terrorist activities. We wish to highlight three aspects that we believe will make a real difference in tackling the scourge.

First, as with all transnational crime, strengthening cooperation and coordination between

Member States, as well as regional and international organizations, is imperative. In that regard, we call upon Member States that have yet to subscribe to and implement the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its additional protocols, which provide the principal foundation for our concerted action, to do so. We also encourage Member States to prioritize ratifications of other international instruments that complement efforts to eradicate human trafficking in all its forms, such as the relevant protocols of the International Labour Organization, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, among others.

Given the multifaceted dimensions of trafficking in persons, including where it is associated with sexual violence and funding terrorist activities, it is crucial that the international community mobilize complementary legal means, where available, to investigate, disrupt and dismantle trafficking networks. We fully support the efforts of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other bodies, as well as bilateral partners, in providing technical support to Member States to build law enforcement capacities.

Within the South-East Asian region, our Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) neighbours have demonstrated a unified commitment to combating and preventing trafficking in persons in the ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children and its related plan of action, established in November 2015. We appreciate the strong support for such regional-level efforts by East Asia Summit partners, as reflected in the Summit declarations adopted in September.

Secondly, in maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council must better utilize its available tools to monitor trends in human trafficking in armed conflict, identify perpetrators and hold them accountable. Information and evidence of acts of trafficking in persons and sexual violence in conflict should be made available to the Council and channelled to the relevant sanctions committees, including the committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities. We support integrating a focus on trafficking in persons and the use of sexual violence in armed conflict into the work of the 1267 Monitoring Team and Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, where there are clear linkages to terrorist activities.

At the same time, the crucial outreach and advocacy role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict must be better leveraged. The securing of commitments and action plans for parties to the conflict, so as to end and prevent violations and abuses associated with trafficking persons, including sexual violence and recruitment and use of children, should continue to be pursued. We call for

the Council's continued engagement with those envoys, including through the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict and the various sanctions committee.

My final point pertains to the need for victims and survivors of trafficking and sexual violence to be supported in returning to a secure and stable life. Women and children subjected to any violations and abuses, including trafficking and sexual violence at the hands of Da'esh and similar groups, should be considered as victims and given access to funding and assistance. In that respect, community and religious leaders are pivotal in ensuring the reintegration and rehabilitation of survivors and eliminating the stigma that can be associated with the ordeal that they have been through. In that regard, we support a continued partnership with civil society to enable survivors and communities to heal and renew.

I wish to conclude by reaffirming Malaysia's enduring resolve to combat and eradicate trafficking in persons, and of our equally strong commitment to continue working with the international community until we bring an end to those crimes against humanity.