

**Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security
October 2014, Security Council Chamber**

Statement by Mr. Nusseibeh, Permanent Mission of United Arab Emirates to the United Nations

I thank you, Madam President, for convening this open debate on women and peace and security, with a focus on the important topic of displaced women and girls. I also congratulate you on your successful presidency of the Security Council this month.

The United Arab Emirates welcomes the comprehensive presidential statement (S/PRST/2014/21) adopted by Council members by consensus this morning. We join others in thanking the Secretary-General for his recent report (S/2014/693), which provides important information on the progress made thus far and the considerable challenges that remain in the full implementation of the agenda. We would also like to thank Executive Director of UN-Women Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka for her bold call to action. In addition, we would like to thank this morning's briefers for their thoughtful and important presentations.

Today's open debate is focused on displaced women and girls, which is of the utmost importance as new crises and outbreaks of violence increase the levels of forced displacement. Today's 51 million refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) represent the largest number of refugees, asylum-seekers and IDPs since the Second World War; three quarters of the displaced persons are women and children.

Many here present have acknowledged today in their statements that as Member States we must work together to address this issue. We must ensure consistent leadership to strengthen the meaningful participation of and leadership opportunities for women, including in tackling the root causes and impacts of displacement. We need to ensure the consistent and effective implementation of the Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security.

Within the United Nations system, we need to encourage further gender-sensitive conflict analysis and stand by our women and peace and security commitments so that we can best understand the progress that has been made, as well as the challenges that remain in implementation.

Through those actions, we the Member States can do our part to ensure that the women and peace and security agenda remains central to efforts to achieve our shared goal of international peace and security.

It has been 14 years since the historic adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), whereby the international community formally recognizes the vital role played by women in the prevention, mitigation and resolution of conflict, in addition to recognizing the differential burden borne by women and girls during conflict.

Much progress has been made in the field of women and peace and security. Within the United Nations system, the women and peace and security agenda has been increasingly integrated. The data in the Secretary-General's report shows important progress. In terms of prevention, there is more consistent attention to women and peace and security in Security Council deliberations; three

quarters of United Nations resolutions adopted in 2013 contained women and peace and security related references.

Under the protection pillar, there have been improvements in peacekeeping mission mandates and monitoring and training, with clear directives calling for the increased participation of women in the ranks of United Nations police and military.

At the level of relief and recovery, there has also been an increased focus on women's economic empowerment in peacebuilding, with a growing recognition of the importance of post-conflict economic stability in resolution 2122 (2013) and in the declaration adopted in 2013 by the Peacebuilding Commission on women's economic empowerment. The resolutions recognize that women's economic empowerment generates long-term social dividends, as evidence shows that women tend to reinvest up to 90 per cent of their income back into their families. The economic security of women in post-conflict situations is therefore fundamental to ensuring lasting peace and stability.

Yet many challenges remain. Today's statements recognize that unacceptable lags remain in the implementation of widely accepted norms, despite the clear presence of political will. For example, while there has been increased global attention towards sexual violence in conflict, much work remains to ensure that this attention is translated into action, including justice and assistance for the victims.

Widespread violations of international humanitarian law continue worldwide, as do the challenges in ensuring the protection of civilians. The culture of impunity remains widespread. As many Member States have recognized, we are also navigating a shifting security context where the rise of violent extremism has led to increased and targeted violence against women and girls, which is unacceptable to the United Arab Emirates and all responsible Member States.

Although this is a global reality, it is a particularly urgent problem in our region. In Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey, four out of five refugees and displaced persons are women or children. Within Syria, there are 4.25 million internally displaced persons, with 6.8 million in need of humanitarian assistance. We note the important data brought to light by the September report of the International Rescue Committee on the plight of Syrian women and children. The collection of data must remain a priority for the international community to further bolster our arguments and ensure that justice prevails — without exception — for all.

The numbers of the forcibly displaced continue to rise daily and require our urgent attention, with many fleeing today to neighbouring States. Displaced persons comprise one fifth of Lebanon's population. In Jordan, the Zaatari refugee camp is Jordan's third largest city, in terms of sheer numbers. The pressure on host communities is enormous, with ramifications in neighbouring countries as well.

The United Arab Emirates has tried to play its part and has taken measures to address the needs of those forcibly displaced and to prevent and protect women from violence at international and regional levels.

The United Arab Emirates has built the Mrajeeb Al-Fahood refugee camp at the Jordanian border, for Syrian refugees, exclusively for married couples, children and women. The family-focused nature

of the camp has helped to protect women from harassment, extra-marital violence and exploitation and has served to reduce overall levels of violence towards women and children within the camp.

The United Arab Emirates is also committed to advocacy within the United Nations. We have launched a panel series on women and peace and security in partnership with UN-Women and the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security in support of the global study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The series aims to address the challenges associated with the implementation of the resolution and to identify emerging issues and generate opportunities to further the goals of the women and peace and security agenda.

Yesterday our panel discussion explored the many roles that women play both in countering violent extremism and also, sometimes, as protagonists in its spread. The discussion was nuanced, but some clear recommendations and themes emerged. First, women must be included at the conceptual stage in the development of effective strategies to counter violent extremism. Secondly, we must acknowledge that women are not a homogenous group, and our approach should reflect that. Thirdly, we need to create the political spaces for the many voices of women to be heard. That is the space where we may find solutions in local and culturally specific contexts. Fourthly, we must recognize women as the agents of change that they are, and not solely as victims. Fifthly, we must always challenge the dominant narrative that views violent extremism through a strictly security-focused lens.

By linking women's roles in strategies to counter violent extremism with security issues, we run the risk of further marginalizing women and women's organizations. We need to take a more holistic approach to forced displacement, where we look outside of conventional security approaches and focus on the development and everyday needs of the forcibly displaced. By addressing the everyday needs, we can help create an environment that allows for women, their families and communities to fully participate in the prevention of violent extremism in their own societies. Finally, we must continue to call for increasing funding for data collection and reporting to ensure that what is emerging as consensus in the conversation on the women-peace-security nexus is reinforced by hard facts.

The United Nations remains the central forum for addressing the women and peace and security agenda. Much progress has been made through the continual, concerted efforts of UN-Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in addressing the gender-specific needs of internally displaced persons and refugees. The United Arab Emirates stands with our United Nations and international partners in that important endeavour and urges for 2015 to be the year where we move the dial forward in a significant way.