



# Security Council

Distr.: General  
1 November 2021

Original: English

---

## Letter dated 25 October 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the 8886th meeting of the Security Council, convened on 21 October 2021 under the agenda item entitled “Women and peace and security”. The interventions of the briefers, Council members, as well as Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bulgaria, Canada, Costa Rica, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, the European Union, Guatemala, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Slovenia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Arab Emirates will be published as an official record of the Security Council (S/PV.8886).

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members for the 8886th meeting, the following delegations and entities submitted written statements, copies of which are enclosed: Albania, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, the Commonwealth Secretariat, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Peru, Senegal, South Africa (on behalf of the Group of Friends of the African Women Leaders Network), Spain, Thailand, Ukraine, the United Kingdom (on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women in Afghanistan) and Uruguay. These statements will be issued as a document of the Security Council in accordance with the procedure set out in the letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council (S/2020/372), which was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, and reference to the document will be made in S/PV.8886.

(Signed) Martin **Kimani**  
President of the Security Council



## Annex 1

### Statement by the Permanent Mission of Albania to the United Nations

We would like to thank the Kenyan presidency for organizing this open debate, as well as the Secretary-General for his thorough report on women and peace and security (S/2021/827).

Despite progress made to date regarding the normative framework in the field of women and peace and security, there is still a clear gap between what we have done on paper and what has been achieved in reality. There are still many areas in the world where women and girls are denied their basic rights, excluded and subjected to violence and abuse. In various conflicts around the world, rape and sexual violence continue to be used as a weapon to terrorize civilians. This is unacceptable; it is intolerable.

Despite improvements, women continue to be poorly represented in formal peacemaking and peacebuilding activities, and they suffer disproportionately from the indirect effects of conflict. Nowhere is the gender gap more evident than in the field missions, and particularly in the United Nations peace operations where women still remain underrepresented. We need to work more on bringing the work of women at the grass-roots level, including in conflict zones and in peace processes, to the women and peace and security agenda. Their experience and know-how are crucial to better understand what should be improved to make progress at the most basic grass-roots level.

United Nations country teams, United Nations mediation teams, special envoys and special representatives and other relevant stakeholders should play a more proactive role in facilitating and ensuring the meaningful participation of women at the grass-roots level in a way that gives them an opportunity to influence the outcome of peace processes. In that context, Albania strongly supports the call to action of the Secretary-General urging peacekeeping partners to invest in the grass-roots women's network and support women's mobilization for peace.

Advancing gender equity and gender equality is not just a moral imperative; it should not just remain a principle in search for justice and fairness. It must be translated into a concrete and palpable reality. We are convinced that no country will be able to progress and deal successfully with today's challenges if half of its human energy and power is left behind.

In that respect, Albania is happy to report on some real, bold and significant achievements in the meaningful participation of women in important decision-making processes. Albania currently ranks among the top five gender-balanced Governments in the world, with 75 per cent women ministers. Some of the highest key public positions in Albania — including independent institutions, agencies and departments in key areas of the State — are successfully held by women. Women constitute 18 per cent of the total armed forces personnel and, in October 2020, Albania sent a second contingent, comprised of two women peacekeepers, to serve in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan.

The women and peace and security agenda was integrated as one of the priorities of Albania's chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2020, injecting new momentum into the OSCE's work in promoting the role of women in conflict resolution and in peace processes.

The Security Council has a key role to play in supporting women's meaningful participation in peace processes and in holding the entire United Nations system and the host States of the peacekeeping operations accountable for ensuring the direct participation of women in peace processes.

As an incoming member of the Security Council, Albania will champion the women and peace and security agenda across the full breadth of the Security Council's work. We strongly believe that women have unique skills and perspectives to offer in peace processes. As agents of positive change, they must be active participants in all peace and security efforts. We will work to give civil society, including women human rights defenders, a voice that is heard in the Security Council.

In conclusion, Albania strongly believes that the meaningful participation of women will boost our common efforts for a more inclusive, transparent and effective approach towards peace and security worldwide.

**Annex 2****Statement by the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, Rabab Fatima**

I thank Kenya for organizing this important debate during the women and peace and security month. I also thank the Secretary-General and the other briefers for their valuable and insightful remarks.

Twenty-one years ago, landmark resolution 1325 (2000) recognized women as active agents for peace and security. Since then, numerous resolutions have been adopted on women and peace and security calling for the enhanced participation of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. The role of women in addressing both traditional and non-traditional drivers of conflict is now well-established, making the agenda a cross-cutting one.

While the scope of the agenda has widened in many dimensions, its effective implementation continues to face challenges. In some cases, the agenda has even taken a reverse course, revealing the flaws in the peace process. In many situations, even after peace was established, it could not be sustained, as it did not include women. As we enter the third decade since the agenda was adopted in 2000, we need to refocus on the women and peace and security agenda and invest in tapping its full potential in building and sustaining peace.

Women's increased participation in peacekeeping and peacebuilding has proven to be an effective means for implementing the women and peace and security agenda across sectors in conflict-affected countries. Women peacekeepers help create an enabling environment for local women to participate in peacebuilding. To reap the benefits of women and peace and security, there is no alternative to investing in women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

Allow me to share some thoughts in that regard.

First, according to the Secretary-General's report (S/2021/827), in 2020 women represented only 23 per cent of delegates in peace processes led or co-led by the United Nations. That should be increased. Any peace process initiated or supported by the United Nations must ensure the equal participation of women. That should be applicable for the United Nations engagement in peacebuilding as well. In that regard, all United Nations entities and other development and peacebuilding partners should work in a coordinated manner and help create an enabling environment for ensuring women's equal participation in peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

Secondly, the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda needs to be localized to ensure lasting peace in conflict-affected countries. The increased involvement of women in peacekeeping operations enables a higher level of collaboration among local women peacebuilders. Women peacekeepers also play a crucial role in the prevention of and protection from sexual violence in conflict.

In this regard, provision should be made to increase the number of female engagement teams in peacekeeping operations and to ensure corresponding resources for their effective engagement with the community. At the same time, adequate numbers of gender advisers and gender focal points should be appointed, including from the local community, to ensure that peacekeeping operations are held accountable for implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

Increasing the number of women in peacekeeping missions will not achieve the desired result if women are not adequately represented at the leadership level. The increased participation of women at the decision-making level could bring

---

transformative changes to the mindset of society and help break gender stereotypes on the role of women.

Thirdly, peace cannot be sustained if the root causes of conflict are not adequately addressed. In this regard, Bangladesh particularly stresses the importance of providing long-term development support to the affected countries with a view to creating economic opportunities for local women.

Supporting local women entrepreneurs can contribute to the overall socioeconomic status of women. In this process, women ex-combatants can be reintegrated into the mainstream of society. Development partners and the international financial institutions have a particular role to play in this regard, especially in nurturing local peacebuilding and entrepreneurial initiatives.

Finally, as a member of the Security Council in 2000, Bangladesh was closely involved in the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). Since then, we have been a strong advocate of the women and peace and security agenda. At the national level, we have developed a national action plan for its implementation.

We believe that national action plan can be an important tool for ensuring women's full, equal and meaningful participation in peacekeeping, peacebuilding, climate action and preventing other contemporary threats to peace, and Bangladesh would like to see that emerge as a recommendation from today's important meeting.

**Annex 3****Statement by the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, Philippe Kridelka**

[Original: French]

Belgium thanks the Republic of Kenya for organizing this essential debate and its commitment to women's rights. It is essential to invest more in the participation of local women in the consolidation and maintenance of peace, and we hope that today's discussion will help identify concrete ways to achieve that goal.

Above all, Belgium fully supports the declaration of the European Union as well as the joint declaration of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security.

The meaningful participation of women in political processes is essential. More than 20 years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), it is clear that progress is insufficient. We must step up our actions. And in doing so, let us be careful not to subject the participation of women to more rigorous demands than those required of men.

Developing women's capacities is useful without being a panacea; we must strive for it while working to remove institutional barriers.

Belgium is in favour of the inclusive representation of women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes. We must be attentive to the diversity of representatives and include, for example, young women, women from different regions, migrant and refugee women, and women with disabilities.

Finally, Belgium welcomes the inclusion in this event of the Photoville traveling exhibition entitled "In Their Hands: Women Taking Ownership of Peace", which highlights the importance of partnerships with stakeholders in all their diversity. Our country is striving in particular to recognize the work and achievements of civil society organizations, women human rights defenders, women journalists and women's networks. They play an essential role in building lasting peace and deserve our support and protection. That is why Belgium is proud to support the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund and calls on all States to contribute to it.

The women and peace and security agenda is a priority for our country. Like some 98 other States, Belgium is implementing a national action plan, one of the six pillars of which is aimed at promoting the equal participation of women in processes related to conflict, peace and security. Belgium is also actively participating in the development and implementation of the European Union action plan. We therefore call on States that have not yet done so to adopt a national action plan on women, peace and security in order to ensure the concrete implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and to monitor its progress.

**Annex 4****Statement by the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations, Ronaldo Costa Filho**

As Brazil prepares for its eleventh term as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, we commend Kenya, Ireland and Mexico for the initiative of promoting the women and peace and security agenda as a shared priority of their respective presidencies and look forward to the outcome recommendations emerging from this exercise.

Brazil has also included the agenda as one of the priorities of its next term as a member of the Council. Building on the legacy of Dr. Bertha Lutz, one of only five women plenipotentiary delegates in San Francisco in 1945, Brazil's participation in the United Nations is intertwined with its historic defence of women's participation in decision-making, including that related to international peace and security.

In our previous term serving on the Council, Brazil was already a staunch supporter of the women and peace and security agenda. In 2010, we co-sponsored resolution 1960 (2010) and supported presidential statements on the topic. In 2011, Brazil chaired the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo when it received the first briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. As a result, the Committee included rape and sexual violence in its listing criteria. More recently, Brazil joined the co-sponsors of resolution 2538 (2020), the first stand-alone resolution of women in peacekeeping operations.

In fact, Brazil's decision to launch a national action plan in 2017 arose from our traditional role as a police- and troop-contributing country. The plan, renewed in 2019 for another four years, has guided us in the challenge, shared by many a police- and troop-contributing country, to increase the participation of female officers in peacekeeping missions in order to meet the targets established in the 2018-2028 Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy.

Reflecting on prevention and gender-sensitive community violence reduction — as proposed by the Kenyan presidency — we see it fitting to emphasize that women peacekeepers are in many cases the only ones with access to the local female population. Their enhanced participation is therefore fundamental to the United Nations ability to, among other tasks, protect civilians more efficiently.

Brazil proudly holds two consecutive United Nations Military Gender Advocate of the Year Awards. In 2019, Commander Marcia Braga received the Award for her work in the Central African Republic. In 2020, Commander Carla Araujo shared the Award with India's Major Suman Gawani, renewing our pride in the excellence of our contribution to United Nations peacekeeping.

Brazil's national action plan includes a women and peace and security perspective in our cooperation in post-conflict contexts. That guideline helps frame our engagement, for instance, in the Peacebuilding Commission's country-specific configuration for Guinea-Bissau. Brazil therefore values the integration of the women and peace and security agenda into United Nations peacebuilding efforts in the field, as the Commission's Gender Strategy puts forth. We welcome the incorporation of a gender perspective in programmes financed by the Peacebuilding Fund. The collaboration between the Fund and the Department of Peace Operations with regard to resources for gender-responsive security sector reform strikes us a promising way forward.

In the 21 years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), women across the globe have helped wage peace, when given a fair chance. There are important

lessons to be learned from their engagement in peace processes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Guinea-Bissau and Colombia, where gender-responsive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration is a reality. However, recent examples of the dire consequences of negotiating processes that exclude women are a humbling reminder of just how much is left for the Council to do.

All Member States, including those that first supported the women and peace and security agenda in the year 2000, must bridge the gap between rhetoric and action when it comes to women's full, equal and meaningful participation in peace processes they lead or promote. Afghan, Haitian, Yemeni women and others rightfully demand to be heard in matters related to their fundamental rights.

In 2022 and 2023, Brazil hopes to contribute to the advancement of the women and peace and security agenda in civil life — before, during and after conflicts. The inclusion of women in the whole of the peace continuum — conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding — is consistent with Brazil's staunch support for peaceful settlements, as well as with our long-standing position that development and security are intrinsically linked. In our upcoming mandate, we look forward to working with like-minded countries to promote the political participation of women as an integral part of the women and peace and security agenda.



## Annex 5

### Statement by the Permanent Mission of Chile to the United Nations

First, Chile would like to commend Kenya for convening this debate and for its efforts to return to the format that once characterized open debates prior to the coronavirus disease pandemic, particularly as the pandemic has demonstrated the need to ensure the leadership and full, equal and meaningful participation of women in United Nations-led peace and political processes.

Secondly, we would like to thank the Secretary-General for his most recent report on women and peace and security (S/2021/827), which informs our next steps and highlights progress in the implementation of this critical agenda. In that regard, we note with concern that in 2020 women represented only 23 per cent of participants in peace processes led or co-led by the United Nations.

Additionally, it remains hard to envision a future where women and girls are equally and meaningfully contributing to the task of building back better, especially in conflict situations, when in 2020 only 5.2 per cent of military troops in peace operations were women. Similarly, peacebuilding and conflict resolution processes are much less conducive to ensuring long-lasting peace and addressing the root causes of conflicts if women are not involved in decision-making processes or do not meaningfully participate in public life after the conflict. We must therefore continue to empower women to hold more than merely 18.9 per cent of parliamentary seats in conflict and post-conflict countries.

The women and peace and security agenda is a key normative and political framework for the protection of women's rights in the face of gender-based violence and sexual abuse in crisis and conflict situations and for understanding the many ways that women are affected.

The agenda provides us with important lessons regarding the relevance of women's full equal and meaningful participation and the incorporation of a gender approach at all stages and levels of emergency situations. That implies going beyond number quotas and ensuring that more women occupy leadership positions in security and defence institutions and in peace operations and political missions and that they are at the centre of decision-making on peace and security matters at the local, State, regional and international levels.

The full, equal and meaningful participation of women in decision-making processes is a priority for Chile, to the extent that, after the launch of the constitutional process in July 2021, our country will have the first constitution in the world drafted by a paritarian assembly.

In that regard, Chile has also taken decisive action for the development and implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) through two successful national action plans that respond to our emerging opportunities and challenges. From 2004 to 2017, 248 women were deployed in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. Those women developed operational activities related to the civic-military arena, machinery and transport and more.

In that connection, I would like to highlight Chile's role, together with Argentina, in the Regional Network of Women Mediators of the Southern Cone, which is the first regional network of women mediators and peacebuilders, whose main objective is to increase the participation of women in all stages of peace processes, negotiations and mediation, as well as to promote their decision-making role in those processes.

That is why it is especially important that we take steps today to tackle the challenges ahead, address the causes of gender inequality and support the work that women carry out in their communities to strengthen the social fabric and that we empower them to have a say in all processes that address the root causes of conflicts. That must be done so by promoting women's full, equal and meaningful participation in decision-making processes at all levels and ensuring they have a say in all decisions that affect them. Only then can we come close to truly promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, which, as we know, also bring sustainable development and growth.

## Annex 6

### Statement by the Commonwealth Secretariat

The Commonwealth is home to 1.2 billion of the world's women. Our charter stresses that gender equality is essential to the process of building peace, security and stability and is a fundamental component of human development and basic human rights.

The Security Council's ministerial open debate on women and peace and security is timely and welcome. The Commonwealth Secretariat reiterates its firm commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals and encourages the ministerial panel to deliberate on the urgent work required for the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Our Secretariat calls for unified multilateral action, which is needed in order to strengthen gender parity in peace agreements and peace operations and to bolster efforts to monitor disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. Our Secretariat encourages the ministerial panel to reflect on the concrete actions needed to accelerate political will for the implementation of national action plans on women and peace and security.

Commonwealth peace programmes are firmly built on the pillars of inclusivity and gender sensitivity. Acting on the mandates of Heads of State and Government, the Commonwealth Secretariat advances women's voices and promotes their agency in conflict prevention ecosystems and in the security architectures of member States. In partnership with our member States and organizations, such as the Women Mediators across the Commonwealth, our Secretariat is building a critical mass of women mediators, conciliators and peacebuilders in local, national and global spaces.

The Commonwealth Secretariat encourages the ministerial panel to reflect on the multifaceted peace and security vulnerabilities faced by women and girls, which increasingly include climate-related security risks. The Secretariat notes that climate change is the defining crisis of our time. Climate related events disproportionately impact women, and approximately four in five people displaced by climate change globally are women.

The Commonwealth Secretariat encourages the ministerial panel to deliberate on the inclusive governance frameworks needed to expand access to justice and accountability for women impacted by crime and violence. Acting on the mandate of Heads of Government, the Secretariat is strengthening frameworks for the delivery of community justice and reconciliation programmes, which are instrumental in preventing crime and gender-based violence in member States. In member countries where pioneering progress is being made, we are seeing encouraging outcomes in community-based restorative justice and reconciliation. During the coronavirus disease pandemic, the Secretariat worked to develop and deploy women-led early-warning and violence prevention initiatives in member countries where elections were held. That approach of enabling women-led organizations reportedly led to a 50 per cent reduction in the incidence of violence in elections.

The Commonwealth Secretariat encourages the ministerial panel to condemn the ongoing scourge of violence against women and girls — a gross human rights violation with devastating immediate and long-term consequences for physical, sexual and mental health. During the pandemic, we saw how the silent pandemic of violence in homes, communities and virtual convening spaces soared to 500 per cent in some jurisdictions, with a devastating impact on women.

The Commonwealth Secretariat highlights the Commonwealth Says NO MORE initiative to the high-level ministerial panel, which equips member States to tackle this crisis and helps to support victims, survivors and those at risk. Acting

on that mandate of Heads of Government and working in partnership with member States, the Secretariat is currently calculating the economic costs of violence against women and girls.

The Commonwealth Secretariat welcomes the positive impact that advances in digital technology have had on women's access to education, freedom of expression, civic cohesion and democratic participation. The 2018 Commonwealth Cyber Declaration underscores the positive impact of cyberspace, digital connectivity and citizenship as a powerful tool for State-building and peacebuilding. Yet we recognize the downsides of cyberspace, which can contribute to gender-based violence.

Our member States reaffirmed their commitment to a bold, practical, multilateral approach to tackling cyber-enabled violence against women and girls. The Secretariat calls for an effective framework for the protection of the integrity of cyberspace as a strong, free, healthy and democratic space devoid of cyber-enabled violence. Our cybersecurity and countering violent extremism programmes work to bridge digital divides and build the cyberresilience of women and other vulnerable populations.

---

**Annex 7****Statement by the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations, Kaha Innadze**

At the outset, I would like to express appreciation to the presidency of the Republic of Kenya for convening this important high-level open debate.

A year ago, in his report on women and peace and security (S/2020/946), the Secretary-General proposed goals for this decade. Among other things, the report calls for a radical shift and tangible results in women's meaningful participation in peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts.

Let me also recall that just a month ago the Security Council unanimously adopted the first-ever stand-alone resolution on United Nations peacekeeping mission transitions, co-sponsored by Georgia, which includes engagement with the local community and civil society, "with the full, equal and meaningful participation of women" (*resolution 2594 (2021), fifth preambular paragraph*).

Despite some achievements, the most recent Secretary-General's report (S/2021/827) points out persisting gaps in women's participation in political leadership, decision-making and peace processes, which, inter alia, indicate the need to accelerate efforts by Member States at the national level. With that in mind, I would like to share some of Georgia's latest activities with regard to the women and peace and security agenda.

Georgia attaches importance to the implementation of the Security Council resolutions concerning the women and peace and security agenda. Under Georgia's new human rights strategy for 2021-2030, the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda is given priority, and specific objectives are set to fulfil the pledges that the Government undertook in April 2019. The new — fourth — action plan on women and peace and security for the period 2022-2024 is also being developed.

In its process to implement the national action plan on women and peace and security by promoting women's participation, protection and violence prevention, the Georgian Defence Ministry has been designated as one of the leading agencies. In 2020, the Ministry developed a new gender equality strategy, as well as establishing a gender equality monitoring group and gender advisers.

The Government of Georgia also promotes the women and peace and security agenda in the process of peaceful conflict resolution. A number of initiatives were implemented to uphold inclusive and gender-sensitive peace processes, facilitate women's engagement and ensure inclusion of the needs of conflict-affected women in negotiation processes. There is a regular dialogue among the Georgian team to the Geneva international discussions, conflict-affected women and women's rights civil society organizations.

Moreover, with the support of UN-Women, a pilot course on inclusive peace processes with a focus on women's meaningful participation was launched at the Georgian Foreign Ministry's Training Centre for officials involved in peaceful conflict resolution processes. We are determined to conduct this course on a regular basis.

Regrettably, despite Georgia's efforts to empower conflict-affected women, Russia's ongoing occupation of the two Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali compromises our peace initiatives and impedes the extension of the human rights protection framework to the women residing on the other side of the illegally erected razor-wire fences. The grave security, humanitarian and human rights situation in

the occupied territories, which is further exacerbated by the coronavirus disease, severely affects the local population, including girls and women.

Continuous ethnic discrimination, banning education in the native language, restrictions on freedom of movement and limited access to health care are among the challenges that women and girls face in the occupied territories. Moreover, hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons and refugees, including girls and women, are still deprived of their fundamental right to the safe and dignified return to their homes despite numerous Security Council and General Assembly resolutions recognizing their fundamental right to return.

In conclusion, let me reaffirm Georgia's commitment both to implementing the women and peace and security agenda at the national level and to efforts to promote its implementation globally.

---

**Annex 8****Statement by the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations**

Germany would like to thank Kenya for the very fitting theme of the open debate on women and peace and security this year, namely, “Investing in women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding”. It is a politically promising and sound approach to invest in women in peacekeeping and in peacebuilding. That was first laid out in resolution 1325 (2000) and affirmed in various aspects in all follow-up resolutions on the topic, which together form the women and peace and security agenda. Including women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding has simply proved to yield better results, such as more durable peace agreements, for example. In order to bring about the desired inclusion of women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, investments of all kinds and at many levels are necessary.

Germany invested in the women and peace and security agenda politically when we strongly advocated for mainstreaming it in the Security Council’s work, including in the mandates of peace operations, during our tenure on the Council from 2019 to 2020. We also sought to advance a participative, human rights-based and survivor-centred approach regarding conflict-related sexual violence, notably by putting forward resolution 2467 (2019).

Germany also continuously invests in women in peacekeeping and in peacebuilding at home. Numerous measures aim at achieving better female representation in those fields nationally. Germany is committed to meeting the targets of the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy. In order to understand persisting barriers for women in peace operations, the German Armed Forces have undertaken a barrier assessment. Germany encourages other United Nations Member States to also undertake a barrier assessment to gain a deeper understanding of hurdles and opportunities for women in peacekeeping.

Today, however, we wish to focus on the ways in which Germany invests in women in peacekeeping and in peacebuilding internationally, as well as on where we believe international investment is necessary.

First, we support women peacebuilders in the field, as well as women human rights defenders and women-led organizations. In collaboration with UN-Women, Germany remains a fervent supporter of the African Women Leaders Network, which it has backed from the very beginning in 2018. The African Women Leaders Network offers the potential to contribute to the full inclusion of women in Africa’s transformation in the multilateral, regional and national arena. Germany also supports the women’s network Unidas, created in 2019 under the patronage of Foreign Minister Maas, which connects civil society gender activists from Latin America, the Caribbean and Germany, as well as numerous other initiatives.

Secondly, financial support for initiatives and measures aimed at implementing the women and peace and security agenda is crucially needed. The Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund is a unique instrument to strengthen women’s organizations and female leadership through concrete projects. Germany has supported the Fund with more than €11.6 million since 2019. In addition, this year, we have just pledged €3 million to a special Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund rapid response window dedicated to supporting Afghan women peacebuilders and women human rights defenders. We encourage other Member States to pledge their support to the rapid response window and to the Fund more broadly.

With Germany’s support, the United Nations Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions is moreover developing the first-ever global report on gender

equality and the status of women in the defence sector, including good practices in increasing women's representation in the armed forces. In addition to data collection, the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions will also facilitate a number of dialogues among Member States and women in leadership with a view to enhancing collaboration, networking and political commitment at the global level on the promotion of gender equality in the defence sector.

In that regard, we welcome the fact that women in peacekeeping will be an integral part of the upcoming United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference in Seoul in December 2021. We hope that the pledges announced by Member States can contribute to further strengthening the role of women in United Nations peace operations.

Thirdly, in order to improve the environment in which women peacebuilders and women human rights defenders work, we need to oppose the pushback against human rights and women's rights in particular. Misogyny is on the rise and women are being prevented from participating in political, social and economic life by harmful practices, laws, violence and reprisals. The takeover by the Taliban in Afghanistan has shown how quickly hard-won achievements in terms of the rights of women and girls can be reverted in contexts of crisis and conflict.

Advocating for human rights and a rules-based international order, Germany believes in our shared responsibility to oppose that pushback. Active involvement in the Generation Equality Forum, initiated by UN-Women together with France and Mexico, in order to continue the work of the Beijing Platform for Action is also part of that effort, as is the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We are convinced that a transformative gender approach is needed in order to overcome discriminatory power structures and to foster social transformation and changes in attitudes.

Last, but not least, we need to ensure the consequent mainstreaming of women and peace and security in peace and security politics, development cooperation and humanitarian assistance in a cross-sectional manner. For our part, we will continue to cooperate strongly with German civil society organizations, as well as local women peacebuilders. We remain engaged in further strengthening the role of women in peace operations.

Germany adopted its third national action plan on women and peace and security in February 2021, with two guiding principles: to address the root causes of gender inequality and to mainstream the women and peace and security agenda. To strengthen local implementation and mainstream women and peace and security in Germany's endeavours abroad, we have created women and peace and security focal point positions at selected German embassies in contexts of crisis and multilateral collaboration. As part of the action plan, Germany has also committed itself to improve understanding of women and peace and security and gender sensitivity among soldiers, police and civilian personnel serving in peacekeeping missions. With regard to peace operations, Germany also supports the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) and A4P Plus agendas.

Strengthening an inclusive approach to peacebuilding and peacekeeping remains a shared endeavour. Germany will continue to stand alongside women human rights defenders, women peacebuilders, peacekeepers, civil society and activists who work every day — and often even risk their lives — to make the full, effective and meaningful participation of women, their full empowerment and the promotion of women's rights a reality.



---

**Annex 9****Statement by the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations, Maria Theofili**

Greece thanks the Kenyan presidency of the Security Council for convening the open debate on investing in women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

While fully aligning with the statement delivered by the European Union (see S/PV.8886), Greece submits this written statement in its national capacity.

Undoubtedly, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are essential for the advancement of sustainable peace, security and social justice. In that regard, the recently adopted resolution 2594 (2021) recognizes the need to ensure a strategic, coherent and gender-responsive approach to peacebuilding and peacekeeping.

In order to achieve that, systematic intersectional gender mainstreaming at all stages of planning, implementation and reporting is of the utmost importance. At the same time, comprehensive gender analysis and technical gender expertise are practical tools that enable peace processes to address *in concreto* the root causes of conflict, as well as the actual needs of populations in specific operational contexts.

As the Secretary-General points out in his most recent report on women and peace and security (S/2021/827), investment in women's participation and leadership is crucial for gender-responsive peacebuilding. Grassroots women's networks and women human rights defenders can be powerful agents of peaceful change if they are given a voice and the chance for meaningful representation and engagement in political transition. Therefore, strategic and innovative partnerships with local women and community-based youth organizations should be prioritized in peace processes.

It goes without saying that women's empowerment and leadership require adequate prevention of conflict and conflict-related violence, as well as protection, relief and recovery for survivors. In that vein, a survivor-centred approach should guide international peace efforts, focusing on ending impunity for conflict-related, gender-based and sexual violence, bringing the perpetrators to justice and providing just reparations.

Greece fully supports the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative and commits to actively participating in the effective implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. In that respect, Greece reiterates its principled position on enhancing the substantive and meaningful inclusion of women in peace and political processes as the only way to achieve long-lasting and sustainable peace and security.

**Annex 10****Statement by the Chargé d'affaires of Indonesia to the United Nations,  
Mohammad K. Koba**

Let me begin by thanking Kenya for convening this open debate on the highly important topic of the role of women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

We also align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Australia on behalf of the MIKTA group of countries — Mexico, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Turkey and Australia (see S/PV.8886).

In my national capacity, allow me to share the following points.

First, we must focus on enhancing the role of women peacekeepers. Indonesia fully supports the full, effective, and meaningful participation of women in peacekeeping operations. Women peacekeepers can play diverse roles and tasks, including in community engagement and the protection of civilians.

We are committed to increasing the participation of women in peacekeeping operations through the implementation of resolution 2538 (2020). Indonesia is proud to have shepherded that resolution, which was adopted unanimously in 2020. The resolution represents an important milestone as the first stand-alone resolution on the subject of women in peacekeeping operations. It reflects the high priority that the international community has accorded to the indispensable role of women in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

We call upon the Council and the Secretariat to progress implementation to promote the full, effective and meaningful participation of uniformed and civilian women in peacekeeping operations at all levels and in all positions, including in senior leadership positions. In order to achieve that goal, it is important for the members of the Council to ensure that the resolution is included in all relevant Council resolutions, including in mandate renewals of peacekeeping operations.

Secondly, it is necessary to improve training and capacity-building. Our joint endeavour to increase the number of women in peacekeeping operations must go hand in hand with our effort to improve the overall performance of peacekeepers in their duties. To that end, partnerships in training and capacity-building remain essential.

We call for all stakeholders to strengthen partnerships to support targeted training and capacity-building for uniformed women personnel and the establishment of networks among women peacekeepers. Moreover, Member States and the Secretariat need to ensure a safe, enabling and gender-sensitive working environment for women in peacekeeping, including by providing adequate and appropriate infrastructure and facilities for them. Certainly, those require sufficient financial support from all stakeholders.

Thirdly, we must promote women as mediators and negotiators. Women's active leadership is an integral part of sustaining peace in the community. However, peace processes remain dominated by men. Indonesia therefore initiated the launch of the Southeast Asian Network of Women Peace Negotiators and Mediators in 2020. That is part of our efforts to fully implement resolution 2538 (2020), advancing the inclusion and effective participation of women as mediators and negotiators in peace process. Its establishment is also a strong regional effort to complement the Global Alliance of Regional Women Mediator Networks.

Recently, in June 2021, the Southeast Asian Network of Women Peace Negotiators and Mediators organized the Regional Forum of Women Peace Negotiators and Mediators. The Forum was aimed at encouraging the meaningful participation of women in all phases of conflict resolution. Women need to participate fully,

effectively and meaningfully in society, not merely as a token of gender equality within peace processes.

Looking to the future, Indonesia envisions the women and peace and security agenda as a transformative force to lead us into more effective peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We need to strengthen the role of women to sustain peace.

To conclude, Indonesia would like to reiterate our strong commitment to being a part of the collective effort to enhance the role of women in all aspects, including peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts.

**Annex 11****Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations, Zahra Ershadi**

The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to the role that women in different parts of the world can play in preventing and resolving conflicts, as well as peace processes and peacebuilding.

Women and girls are among the most vulnerable people who suffer from conflict situations as they are subject to violence, including sexual exploitation. Therefore, every effort should be made to ensure the security of women in armed conflicts.

Women can play an important role in conflict prevention and resolution. They can also make significant contributions to peace and security. In that context, their role needs to be promoted and strengthened. Nevertheless, the Security Council should address the subject of women and peace, and security insofar as it falls within its mandate under the Charter of the United Nations, namely the maintenance of international peace and security.

Accordingly, those issues that are essentially not related to international peace and security must be addressed by the relevant organs of the United Nations, namely, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women.

In promoting and enhancing the role of women in peace and security, specific national conditions and historical and cultural differences must be fully recognized and respected. As such, it is essential that the national ownership of the concerned Government and people are respected in conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction.

Having been subjected to aggressions and illegal unilateral coercive measures that have violated the basic human rights of women and girls, the Islamic Republic of Iran is determined to continue to do what is necessary for the empowerment of women and girls in order to provide the grounds for them to play their important role in the society and fully utilize their potential and abilities, including in the area of peace and security.

## Annex 12

### Statement by the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations

Italy thanks the Republic of Kenya for convening this important open debate under the theme of investing in women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

We align ourselves with the statements delivered by the observer of the European Union (see S/PV.8886) and the Group of Friends of Women in Afghanistan and would like to add some remarks in our national capacity.

Italy has a long-standing tradition of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. We have strongly supported resolution 1325 (2000) since its adoption and we devote significant efforts and resources to promoting women's participation in peace and international mediation processes.

Women have proven to be extremely successful in protecting civilians, accessing communities and creating relationships of trust with local populations, in particular with the most vulnerable categories.

We are fully committed to the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda and strongly support the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, as well as the incentives and measures planned under the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy launched by the Secretariat.

Italy firmly believes in the benefits provided by the presence of well-integrated female personnel in peacekeeping operations and aims to increase the number of civil and military female peacekeepers within its contingents.

Peacebuilding and peacekeeping also involve mediation, a sector in which women have proven to be very effective. It has been demonstrated that a peace agreement is 20 per cent more likely to last at least two years and 35 per cent more likely to last 15 years when women are included in the peace process.

Therefore, Italy is proud of the success of the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network, which was launched in October 2017 to promote gender equality and foster women's inclusion in peace processes, mediation efforts and peacebuilding in the Mediterranean region. The membership of the Network has widened and the first three local antennae — in Cyprus, Turkey and Kosovo — have been established, leading the way for new ones to be opened soon. Moreover, the Network offers training, capacity-building and networking opportunities and led to the establishment of the Global Alliance of Regional Women Mediators Networks in September 2019.

Italy is committed to the promotion and protection of all women and girls. We are particularly concerned about the situation of women in Afghanistan. In order to raise awareness about the vulnerability of Afghan women and girls in the aftermath of the Taliban's return and to promote coherent international action in support of their rights, Italy, together with a cross-regional group of countries, UN-Women, UNICEF and UNESCO, organized a high-level event on the margins of the high-level week of the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly. The event was specifically focused on the need to ensure Afghan women and girls' continued access to education as a key requisite for creating resilient, inclusive and peaceful communities.

Furthermore, Italy's presidency of the Group of 20 (G-20) recently hosted an extraordinary meeting of the G-20 Foreign Ministers and an extraordinary meeting of the G-20 leaders focusing on the situation in Afghanistan. On both occasions, particular attention was devoted to the need to support Afghan women and girls in their immediate needs and to enable them to contribute to durable peace and inclusive development for the benefit of all Afghans.

Together with another 50 countries, Italy also advocated for the creation of an independent international mechanism to monitor human rights violations and abuses in Afghanistan and to promote accountability. That initiative prompted the recent establishment of a United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, whose mandate now needs to be fully supported.

Empowering women and including them in peace processes should be a shared priority in pursuing international peace and security. Italy remains committed to that goal in the context of its broader support for the reinforcement of the global peacekeeping and peacebuilding architecture.

## Annex 13

### Statement by the Permanent Mission of Jordan to the United Nations

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on Kenya's presidency of the Security Council for the month of October and to thank you for convening this timely meeting to discuss the women and peace and security agenda. I would also like to thank the briefers for their invaluable contributions to the debate.

Jordan aligns itself with the statement by the representative of Canada on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women and Peace and Security (see S/PV.8886).

The changing nature of security requires that we consider the new perspectives and the evolving role of peacekeeping missions to ensure the proper implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). An inclusive approach in preparing, implementing and monitoring the national action plans is essential. In that regard, in September 2021, the Jordanian Armed Forces, in partnership with UN-Women, launched its first gender mainstreaming strategy, covering the period from 2021 to 2024, with the objective of increasing women's representation in senior leadership roles, their retention in service and their participation in peacekeeping operations, both locally and overseas.

Throughout the years, Jordan has supported reform initiatives related to peacekeeping at the United Nations that are aimed at achieving better performance and safety within United Nations peacekeeping missions. Jordan was among the first countries to endorse the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative, and we welcomed the A4P Plus initiative, presented by the Secretary-General in 2021.

Jordan is also committed to increasing and encouraging the representation of women via their participation in peacekeeping operations, where there are currently 25 women police in various United Nations missions. Overall, approximately 154 women police officers have participated in United Nations missions in past years.

National action plans are a critical tool in advancing national responses. Through our national action plan for 2018-2021 and our national strategy on women for 2020-2025, we reaffirm our commitment to achieving the meaningful participation of women in the security sector and peacekeeping operations, in preventing radicalization and violent extremism and in national and regional peacebuilding efforts. Meanwhile, we are undertaking to ensure the availability of gender-sensitive humanitarian services, including psychological, social, legal and medical services. In addition, such plans call for fostering a community culture that recognizes gender needs, the importance of gender equality and the role of women and young women in peace and security.

Supporting civil society organizations, especially women's organizations operating in conflict regions, is pivotal, due to their extensive knowledge and expertise in processes of building sustainable peace. They can play a central role in conflict prevention, including in early warning and peace processes.

The pandemic has further interrupted the work of young women and men peacebuilders and human rights defenders. It is imperative to maintain the focus on increasing the participation of women and youth in national and local policies and in peace endeavours. It is also crucial to ensure the safety of peacekeepers, in particular women peacekeepers, especially while they are providing their services.

It is also crucial to ensure and sustain an uninterrupted flow of funding.

**Annex 14****Statement by the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations, Amal Mudallali**

Allow me, at the outset, to congratulate Kenya on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October and thank it for organizing this important annual debate on women and peace and security under the theme of “Investing in women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding”. I also would like to thank the briefers for their insightful interventions.

This year’s annual debate comes at a critical time for women in general and women peacebuilders in particular. The backsliding on commitments to gender equality and the backlash against women’s rights are on the rise everywhere. In many parts of the world, we are going back to an era where women are silenced again. In Afghanistan, women who have fought for change for over 20 years are at risk of losing their voices again.

In my country, Lebanon, women and peacebuilding go hand in hand. As Ms. Najat Rochdi, Deputy Special Coordinator, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, recently reaffirmed, women in Lebanon are at the forefront of all current peacemaking initiatives. Across Lebanon, female politicians, female front-line responders, and female peacebuilders are working to find common ground, looking for areas of compromise and building platforms for dialogue.

Those women deserve the explicit support of the international community and of the Council at this critical juncture in Lebanon’s history to persevere and continue on their vocational path towards peace and stability.

Lebanon thanks the Secretary-General for his call in his 2021 report on women and peace and security (S/2021/827) to take positive steps to amplify the voices of women, including young women, women’s rights activists and leaders of peaceful protests in Lebanon.

That call aligns with our national action plan on resolution 1325 (2000), which reflects Lebanon’s commitment to achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment and to consolidate the equal, full, meaningful and effective participation of women in building sustainable peace, preventing conflicts and promoting national stability.

As Lebanon prepares to hold parliamentary elections in March 2022, six proposals to amend the electoral law have been presented for discussion by the members of Parliament, which would allow the adoption of a women’s quota for both candidacies and seats. Some of the proposed amendments are the fruit of close collaboration among United Nations agencies, civil society and official institutions — yet another testament to the efficacy of women’s grass-roots movements in Lebanon in designing and affecting change.

Despite all the challenges, Lebanon is moving forward with the implementation of its national action plan on resolution 1325 (2000). As mentioned in the Secretary-General’s 2021 report on women and peace and security, the Lebanese national action plan mandates the relevant authorities to double the number of women in the security sector annually from 2019 to 2023, and female representation reached 43 per cent in the most recent class of recruits to the military academy.

In peacekeeping operations, women have proven themselves to be equal to men peacekeepers, performing the same duties and taking on the same responsibilities. However, we are still far from achieving gender equality in peacekeeping operations. While it is true that we have witnessed some progress in the participation and roles



of women in peacekeeping operations, the numbers are still discouraging. In the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), in 2021, only 7 per cent of UNIFIL uniformed personnel and 31 per cent of its civilian staff were women.

Increasing women's full, equal, inclusive and meaningful participation in United Nations peacekeeping is essential for the success of United Nations peacekeeping efforts and for sustaining peace.

My country fully supports the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative and believes that the women and peace and security agenda is instrumental in enhancing the performance of peacekeeping operations at all levels. In that regard, we commend UNIFIL for incorporating a gender perspective in its mission and for ensuring that women are deployed in all areas of operations.

We thank UNIFIL troop-contributing countries for expanding the participation of women in their contingents, and we call on them to support the expansion of the role and number of women in UNIFIL at all levels and in key positions.

I seize this opportunity to salute women peacekeepers serving under UNIFIL's flag and to thank them for their efforts and their important contributions. Lebanon is grateful for their valuable and brave service.

Twenty-one years later, the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda is still stalling. Despite all the commitments, both verbal and on paper, the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda still has long strides to make in the real world. Now is the time to act and make sure that women are present in all places and at every table where peace is served. We are already late, but today we can choose to do the right thing.

**Annex 15****Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations**

The Kingdom of the Netherlands congratulates the Republic of Kenya for assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October and appreciates the organization of this important open debate on the role of women in United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands fully aligns itself with the statements delivered by the observer of the European Union and on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women and Peace and Security (see S/PV.8886).

Twenty-one years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the Kingdom of the Netherlands continues to wholeheartedly support the women and peace and security agenda. This open debate presents an opportunity to highlight some key aspects related to the participation of women in in general, including in United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

First, ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and related peace processes and political transitions is not only a moral imperative — it is the smart thing to do. It is evident that the increased participation of women is essential to achieve equality and, ultimately, to achieve and maintain sustainable peace. Diversity brought about by the increased participation of women is critical for the skillsets of missions and teams and for making a tangible impact on the ground. Therefore, the women and peace and security agenda is rightly featured in the Secretary General's Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) and subsequent A4P Plus agendas for United Nations peacekeeping.

Against that background, it is concerning that this year's report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2021/827) concluded that fewer women from civil society were invited to speak in the Security Council and that this forum adopted a smaller percentage of resolutions that included references to women and peace and security. That requires our collective action. We must do better.

As a member of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Kingdom of the Netherlands calls for the inclusion, support and financing of local women peacebuilders and women peacebuilding organizations. That is mirrored in the Kingdom of the Netherlands' funding of women and peace and security programmes as a means to strengthen the role of civil society.

Secondly, we must focus on protection. We see that, in most conflict-affected settings, women are disproportionately affected by conflict, and thereby significantly more vulnerable than men. This year's report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security outlines the ambition to turn the unconditional defence of women's rights into one of the most visible markers of the work of the United Nations on peace and security. That should include the protection of women, including women human rights defenders. In that regard, special attention should be paid to the concerning situations in Afghanistan and Myanmar, where women human rights defenders, activists and peacebuilders face grave difficulties and threats to their safety.

We must also mention the ongoing protection work being implemented by peacekeeping missions and the necessity for clear protection mandates within those missions, including adequate gender-responsive predeployment training on protection, as well as for adequate budgets to support protection mandates.

---

Thirdly, I wish to highlight mainstreaming and implementation. In order to achieve tangible, sustainable results, we must continue to focus on the institutional adoption of the women and peace and security agenda, inter alia, in the peacebuilding architecture of the United Nations and at the national level.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands welcomes the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy of the Department of Peace Operations and the Gender Strategy Action Plan developed by the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). The Kingdom of the Netherlands strongly supports those tangible efforts to ensure that the uniformed component of United Nations peacekeeping is diverse and inclusive of women, to strengthen the integration of gender analysis, to institutionalize the follow-up and promotion of gender aspects in peacebuilding and to expand the breadth and diversity of women peacebuilders engaging with the PBC.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands considers the adoption of national action plans to be a valuable tool to ensure the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda by all actors involved, from Governments to civil society organizations and other relevant multilateral organizations and institutions. For national action plans to be effective, they must be sufficiently embedded in national budgets and have clear accountability mechanisms. Those are lines of work that the Kingdom of the Netherlands is actively strengthening at a national level, as laid out in our fourth national action plan, which was published in December 2020.

## Annex 16

### Statement by the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations

I would like to thank you, Sir, for giving me the opportunity to speak during this annual debate.

Resolution 1325 (2000) redefined the relationship between women and peace. For the first time, women were recognized not just as victims of war but also as active agents of peace and stability. The subsequent 11 resolutions of the Security Council on women and peace and security established a robust normative framework to promote the vital role of women in conflict situations. Its impact is visible on the ground. The number of women serving as special representatives and special envoys has increased; the representation of women peacekeepers has improved; and the participation of female civil society representatives in peacebuilding has been enhanced.

Gender equality should, of course, be accompanied by continued adherence to the equitable geographical representation of women from developing countries in leadership positions. The principle of the equal geographical representation of women must be ensured at all levels, including when it comes to recruitment, promotion and selection for senior level positions at the Secretariat.

Pakistan remains strongly committed to advancing the gender perspective in United Nations peace operations. We were the first country to endorse the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping Declaration of Shared Commitments on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, which identified women and peace and security as a central priority to strengthen United Nations peacekeeping. The political commitment was matched with practical steps in the field. For example, in 2019 we dispatched our first all-female community engagement team to Africa, which undertook several successful initiatives including vocational trainings for local students, teachers and women. In recent years, an increasing number of Pakistani women peacekeepers have served as doctors, nurses and police officers in some of the most challenging environments. We also achieved 50 per cent female participation across our community engagement platoons serving in various United Nations peacekeeping missions. This year, a female officer from the Police Service of Pakistan was appointed as Police Commissioner of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan.

The effective implementation of the women and peace and security agenda requires technical expertise. Member States must be supported, especially within a culturally sensitive framework, in shaping their judicial, legislative and administrative sectors for the empowerment of women. Respect for national ownership must be ensured.

A critical element of our future investments should be to strengthen the capacities of peacekeeping training centres dedicated to the women and peace and security agenda. Such investments could be multidisciplinary. They may seek to increase the training opportunities for women peacekeepers, improve training curricula and extend training-of-trainers courses for female uniformed personnel. That is critical to building self-sustaining national capacities. Our peacekeeping training institute, the Centre for International Peace and Stability, is already working to that end. It offers gender-responsive training programmes and has expanded partnerships with international training institutes and United Nations entities, notably UN-Women.

Prevention, protection, relief and recovery are the four key pillars of the women and peace and security agenda. Our success will depend on adopting a

---

balanced approach that invests across those pillars. In that regard, the women and peace and security agenda must facilitate the Security Council in addressing the root causes of conflict and in creating an enabling environment for women to rise to their fullest potential to contribute to peace. That could be achieved by protecting women against all types of violence.

We urge the Security Council to implement that holistic approach, especially in situations of conflict and foreign occupation. Women and girls in such situations are extremely vulnerable to sexual violence, including the use of rape as a weapon of war. There is documented evidence that Indian occupation forces in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir use rape as a means of targeting Kashmiri women, whom they often accuse of being sympathizers of freedom fighters. In perpetrating rape and sexual violence, the Indian occupation forces aim to inflict punishment and humiliation on the entire community. That is corroborated by two reports of the Office of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in 2018 and 2019, the international media and human rights organizations.

**Annex 17****Statement by the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

I would like to particularly thank Kenya for having convened this important open debate in its capacity as President of the Security Council for this month. This open debate is of great interest to us given that we believe that women have a crucial role to play in processes of transition from conflict to peacebuilding and in sustainable development.

Peru prioritizes the issue of gender equality and women's empowerment as a key element of its Government's policy. We have therefore made great efforts in recent years to promote the enjoyment and exercise of the rights of women, young people and girls in our country.

In that context, we are committed to the women and peace and security agenda, including women's empowerment and gender equality, in order to achieve, among other things, their full and effective participation in the various decision-making bodies and processes at all levels within our society, as well as issues related to peace, international security and transition processes towards sustainable development in previously conflict-affected areas.

In particular, Peru reaffirms its ongoing commitment to complying with the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000), of October 2000, which was a key milestone, since it recognizes women as relevant actors in building international peace and security. That is a clear reinforcement of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which is a core instrument for the rights of women and girls, recognizing their essential role in society and their necessary empowerment, alongside gender equality, enabling them to fully exercise their freedoms and rights without exclusion or discrimination of any kind.

For Peru, it is essential to include women and gender-based approaches in processes and decisions that seek to achieve peace, resolve conflicts and build tolerant, inclusive societies based on social cohesion and peace. We must redouble our efforts to ensure women's effective, full, equal and meaningful participation in such processes, taking into account women's dual role as active agents of peace, on the one hand, and as beneficiaries of peace, on the other hand.

In that context, it has become evident that peacekeeping operations are an effective instrument for advancing the full integration of women in the armed forces, resolving conflict hotspots and restoring the social and political structures that peacebuilding entails, as well as contributing to the national goal of more actively participating in such operations as tangible proof of the importance that we attach to multilateralism and the peaceful settlement of disputes under the principle of collective security.

The Government of Peru supports the actions being developed by the Department of Peace Operations, in line with the Action for Peacekeeping initiative and the women and peace and security agenda, to implement the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028 in all operations. The specific actions and measures contained in the Strategy, if well implemented, should facilitate progress towards the parity objective.

In that regard, the Peruvian Government developed the action plan From Acceptance to Inclusion in order to promote the role of women in the areas of security and defence. The plan is a tool that will allow all the relevant bodies to coordinate priority actions to implement the United Nations women and peace and

---

security agenda. The plan seeks to increase the number of women in the Peruvian armed forces, including in United Nations peacekeeping operations, and to provide specialized training for all personnel on the role of women in peacekeeping, particularly regarding the protection of civilians and human rights.

With regard to military contingents in peacekeeping operations, Peru has reached 10.29 per cent, which is above the United Nations target of 8 per cent, with 32 women deployed out of a total of 235 Peruvian military personnel. Likewise, in order to increase the participation of female military and/or police personnel, we are working on specific projects to gradually increase the number of women in Peruvian contingents. We will continue working to maintain that percentage in a sustained manner.

**Annex 18****Statement by the Permanent Mission of Senegal to the United Nations**

[Original: French]

I would like to begin by congratulating Kenya on its presidency of the Security Council and on its excellent leadership of the organ during this uncertain time of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Let me also thank the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, the Executive Director of UN-Women, Ms. Sima Sami Bahous, and the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Women, Peace and Security, Ms. Bineta Diop, for their insightful briefings.

By adopting resolution 1325 (2000), the Security Council recognized not only the distinct, disproportionate and multidimensional effects of conflicts on women and girls, but also, in particular, the importance of women's active participation in peace and security processes. More than 20 years later, the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and its related resolutions has significantly increased women's involvement in negotiation, mediation, peacebuilding and reconstruction processes. However, as the Secretary-General's most recent report (S/2021/827) again highlights, progress remains far from the stated goals. For example, as of 31 December 2020, only 5.2 per cent of military personnel involved in peace operations were women, which is below the United Nations target of 6.5 per cent for 2020. As of 31 August, out of 75,609 military and police personnel, only 5,435 were women.

In addition, in conflict areas, as well as being seen as weapons of war, women and girls continue to be victims of all kinds of abuse, particularly sexual and gender-based, by armed groups, as well as by regular armed forces. That situation is exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The State of Senegal has adopted important legal and institutional instruments that show that respect for human rights in general, and the specific rights and needs of women and girls in peace, security and national reconciliation processes in particular, are key concerns. As part of implementing its gender policy, including to ensure the effectiveness of its women and peace and security agenda, Senegal therefore adopted the following important legislative and regulatory measures: Law No. 2010-11 of 28 May 2010, establishing complete gender parity in all fully or partially elected bodies; the second National Strategy for Gender Equality and Equity for the period from 2016 to 2026; Decree 2017-313 of 15 February 2017, establishing gender units in the secretariats of ministries; and Law No. 2020-05, which criminalizes rape and paedophilia.

Similarly, in 2011, a committee to monitor the implementation of the national action plan on resolution 1325 (2000) was set up within the Ministry of Women, Family and Gender and, in 2017, an interministerial committee on women and peace and security was established, coordinated by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad, with long-term frameworks for guiding, harmonizing and monitoring actions.

The introduction of the first National Strategy for Gender Equality and Equity in the defence and security forces resulted in 2006 in the widespread integration of women throughout the defence and security forces and, in 2012, in the development of the 2012-2022 Gender Sector Strategy for the Armed Forces of Senegal, with the main objective of achieving 10 per cent of women in the Armed Forces by the deadline. The Strategy has created favourable conditions for the integration, advancement and professional development of women. It has also led to the introduction of a gender curriculum in schools and training centres for military and police personnel.



By endorsing the statement of the members of the Circle of Leadership on the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse, my country is also fully in line with the zero-tolerance policy in that area. We remain convinced that an increased presence of women in peace operations is of paramount importance in assisting victims.

For all the reasons mentioned above, Senegal has committed to deploying six fully gender-balanced formed police units over the next three years, in line with United Nations operational requirements, thereby increasing the deployment of its female personnel to 30 per cent of its strength by 2023.

Senegal also collaboratively developed other regulatory frameworks, policies and programmes in a participatory manner with civil society to ensure a greater engagement of women's organizations in mechanisms for conflict management and prevention and the protection of women and girls, including refugees, returnees and those displaced in pre-electoral, post-electoral, recovery and reconstruction phases, from the community to the national level.

In addition, Senegal, like many Member States, developed a second national action plan on resolution 1325 (2000) for the period from 2020 to 2024, based on resolution 2122 (2013), which requests Member States to assess the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and identify strengths and weaknesses with a view to new and enhanced perspectives.

In addition to addressing the ongoing socioeconomic challenges to peace and security, the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda requires us to take due account of women in dealing with emerging challenges linked to the management of natural resources, the effective care of conflict victims, the fight against radicalism and violent extremism and combating arms proliferation. We must also strengthen the sharing of experiences and the funding of socioeconomic programmes for women, including women survivors, with the provision of reports in line with international commitments and standards in that area as admissibility and funding criteria.

My delegation also believes that, due to the close connection between the women and peace and security agenda and initiatives for children and young people in conflict areas, we should emphasize, among other things, the protection of children in school settings, the expansion of education and vocational training for young adults and women and youth employment.

Finally, a regular dialogue must be established between the United Nations and troop-contributing countries whose gender policies have shown varying degrees of progress. That approach will have the benefit of allowing the Organization to support those countries, while setting realistic and achievable goals for promoting women's participation in peacekeeping.

## Annex 19

### **Statement by the Group of Friends of the African Women Leaders Network**

On behalf of the Group of Friends of the African Women Leaders Network (AWLN), the co-Chairs of the AWLN New York Group of Friends — South Africa and Germany — congratulate Kenya on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October, and thank the President of the Council for convening this annual open debate on women and peace and security under the theme “Investing in women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding”. The theme of the open debate is timely given the context of the Secretary-General’s report (S/2021/827) on women and peace and security for 2021, which pays special attention to the goal of reversing the rise in global military spending and greater investment in human security. We also thank the briefers for their insightful remarks.

As we commemorate the twenty-first anniversary of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000), which was adopted under the leadership of Namibia, we reiterate that women and peace and security remains a relevant tool for women to actively immerse themselves in peace processes, particularly in the prevention of conflict, peacemaking and peacebuilding through advocacy, capacity-building, peer learning, partnership and cooperation. Those activities represent the cornerstone of the AWLN’s role, work on the ground and purpose.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic poses significant threats and challenges to women peacebuilders in Africa and worldwide in carrying out their work. The pandemic disrupted the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. It has even reversed some of the gains and progress made in peacebuilding, mediation, women’s representation, access to health care, women empowerment in entrepreneurship and leadership and inclusion.

The pandemic has exacerbated pre-existing challenges, such as armed conflict, domestic violence and sexual and gender-based violence. The pandemic has also once again confirmed that women lead in response to the needs of communities in the face of crises and shocks, as exemplified by the work of the AWLN national chapters in the COVID-19 response. The international community must therefore deepen its efforts to address the persisting gaps and challenges in the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

Some of those gaps include structural barriers to women’s political participation, peace processes and transitions, such as the lack of political will, the lack of funding for women’s organizations, enduring gender stereotypes and the restriction of women’s roles in various areas of public and private life. However, those challenges also present new opportunities for achieving the objectives of the women and peace and security agenda.

Since the launch of the AWLN in 2017, the Network has established 25 national chapters. Although there is still much progress to be made, creating those networks of women from across the continent has enabled the AWLN to galvanize grass-roots movements. In that regard, since the establishment of the Group of Friends of the AWLN in New York in 2018, we have also been able to learn from their experiences and share best practices on the most pressing challenges disproportionately affecting women, including responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The sharing of insights has also contributed to the advancement of women’s participation in the response to the pandemic. In addition to that, the networks have been critical in nourishing the related discussions at the United Nations, including the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission.

In that regard, taking into consideration the experience and contributions made by the AWLN since its inception, as well as its partnerships with the African Union and the Security Council, the Group of Friends recommends that in its work the Council deepen its efforts towards the full implementation of all global commitments on women and peace and security and support local ownership of peacebuilding efforts, as well as national action plans, frameworks and mechanisms already in place. Furthermore, the women and peace and security agenda and the advancement of women's participation in general also require strong partnerships between the Security Council and regional and subregional organizations, including their regional financial institutions that support women's organizations and peacebuilding initiatives.

We believe that the women and peace and security agenda is the responsibility of the entire international community. Partnerships such as the joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security and the United Nations-African Union memorandum of understanding on peacebuilding support are examples of how we can strengthen the inclusion of women peacebuilders in peacebuilding processes in post-conflict areas. We are also encouraged by the Peacebuilding Commission's adoption of its gender strategy implementation plan. That will play a significant role as we redouble our efforts to fully implement the commitments of the women and peace and security agenda by amplifying the voices of women in peacebuilding when supporting and engaging with the United Nations on the ground.

The full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda also means protecting those on the ground. Resolution 2493 (2019), in paragraph 6,

“[s]trongly encourages Member States to create safe and enabling environments for civil society, including formal and informal community women leaders, women peacebuilders, political actors, and those who protect and promote human rights, to carry out their work independently and without undue interference, including in situations of armed conflict, and to address threats, harassment, violence and hate speech against them.”

In that regard, we urge all stakeholders to work together with peacebuilders, including women peacebuilding organizations, who often operate in conflict and post-conflict situations to implement the women and peace and security agenda.

As highlighted in the Secretary-General's report, we take this opportunity to commend the work of the Security Council's Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security and its first high-level meeting to explore the impact of the pandemic on women and peace and security. We also recognize the work of global networks, such as the Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network, that continue to support the women and peace and security agenda by convening, galvanizing support for and amplifying the involvement of women in peacebuilding.

The Group commends the leadership of, and reaffirms its full support for, the United Nations and the African Union. They have innovatively operationalized resolution 1325 (2000) by working locally and regionally, focusing on local-level initiatives through the national chapters of the AWLN, conducting high-level fact-finding missions and echoing the voices of women and girls silenced by the consequences of conflicts. For example, in 2020 and 2021, the Network undertook virtual solidarity missions to Mali and Mozambique, highlighting and responding to challenges presented to women and girls in transitions and by violent extremism, respectively.

The Group of Friends of the AWLN would like to conclude by reiterating the crucial role of women in global peace and security, as the Secretary-General underscores in his report in saying:

“Championing positive measures to increase women’s participation in peace processes and political transitions is critical to ensuring de facto equality.” (S/2021/827, para. 17)

We must strive to prevent conflicts and build lasting peace by promoting inclusive governance and advancing sustainable economic growth. We must adopt a gender-sensitive approach to implementing all our peacebuilding strategies and, ultimately, always ensure that women are brought to the negotiation and decision-making tables.

**Annex 20****Statement by the Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

Women and peace and security is a key element in Spain's feminist foreign policy. It is also one of the crucial cross-cutting themes in the work of the Security Council.

Open debates are always an interesting formal invitation to deliberation. Because of its nature and subject matter, women and peace and security is one of the key open debates for Spain. We are therefore very grateful to Kenya for convening this meeting and for the effort made to broaden the format and scope of the meeting.

The viability of the women and peace and security dimension depends, to a large extent, on our ability to develop appropriate approaches and clear commitments. Our approach is well known. There will be no solution to any conflict without women being involved in the peace negotiations. There will be no lasting peace if women's rights are not included in the political framework. Those principles are reflected in the Commitment 2025 initiative that Spain and Finland launched here at Headquarters in September 2019. In that political declaration, we proposed increasing women's participation in all peace processes. By 2020, 23 per cent of the members of delegations that played a role in United Nations-facilitated peace processes were women.

In March 2020, the Secretary-General called for a global ceasefire. Twenty-nine per cent of peace agreements signed that year included gender provisions. Just three years earlier, in 2017, that percentage hovered around 10 per cent. We cannot think that we have achieved all the goals, but the trend is gradually bringing us closer to the proposed objectives.

The women and peace and security dimension continues to draw our attention from outside and within the Security Council. Spain values in particular the close coordination in this area among three elected members from three continents: Ireland, Mexico and your own country, Kenya. This joint commitment will give greater visibility to the women and peace and security dimension and strengthen the global dimension of the Security Council.

I will conclude by briefly reviewing our actions and commitments at the national level. Spain continues to work to promote the growing participation of women in peace operations, while adopting new measures to achieve a work-life balance for the more than 15,000 women who currently serve in our armed forces.

At the international level, Spain continues to strengthen its leadership at the global and regional levels. The second national action plan on resolution 1325 (2000) has developed training programmes for civilian and military personnel on the comprehensive approach to gender and on the role of the gender adviser in peacekeeping operations.

Within the framework of the European Union, Spain continues to act as the European Union's military training discipline leader for missions and participates very actively in the Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

At the bilateral level, Spain continues to work closely with the Netherlands, the United States Africa Command, the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations in project management offices and the European Security and Defence College in the development of new training and outreach programmes. Cooperation focused specifically on education and girls is also an essential element in the stabilization of

countries in conflict. In this context, Spain organized a seminar on safe schools in Madrid earlier this year. Many of those initiatives provide areas of complementarity and opportunities for synergy with the work of the United Nations. In all of them, the gender dimension is important, not as an ancillary issue, but as an essential requirement for the effective fulfilment of the objectives we are pursuing.

## Annex 21

### **Statement by the Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations**

At the outset, Thailand wishes to express its appreciation to Kenya for convening this annual open debate to push forward the women and peace and security agenda. As we celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the women and peace and security agenda last year, much progress has been made, yet much remains to be achieved.

The focus of this year's open debate on women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding is indeed timely. While the international community recognizes that women are effective agents of change in society and can contribute significantly towards sustaining peace, their representation at all levels in United Nations peace operations and peace processes worldwide remains low.

In that regard, Thailand wishes to highlight the following points, which we believe can help bridge the gender gap and promote women's meaningful participation.

First, we should promote the women and peace and security agenda, which cuts across the whole conflict cycle. Women and peace and security could promote the culture of prevention and the sustaining peace agenda. At the same time, we must protect and promote human rights and support the empowerment of women and girls. Human rights protection and gender equality are key elements in conflict prevention and sustaining peace.

Secondly, we must identify and address all barriers — social, cultural, political and technical — in order to facilitate the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. For Thailand's part, to increase the participation of women in peace and security, the first batch of 11 women military officers completed, between 2019 and 2020, the Joint Chief of Staff course, which will allow Thai female military officers to qualify for senior United Nations peacekeeping positions. The training was the first of its kind and it qualifies women officers to command higher military ranks. As a result, in 2020, a woman officer was successfully deployed to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan as a Senior Military Liaison Officer.

Thirdly, capacity-building programmes are key to promoting the full and equal participation of women. In this regard, Thai women officers are encouraged to participate in capacity-building programmes to enhance necessary skills required for active participation in peace processes at all levels. As a result, Thai women personnel continue to increase and contribute positively to our peacekeeping missions. Their ability in terms of access to communities and building trust reflects their valuable skill set. We are pleased to have reached a high ratio of female peacekeepers to male peacekeepers and will continue our work to further promote women's participation at higher levels.

Thailand reiterates its commitment to achieving sustainable peace through an integrated and inclusive approach, incorporating development and human rights for all, including women. We join the international community in working towards achieving the women and peace and security agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**Annex 22****Statement by the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations**

Ukraine commends the Kenyan presidency for convening this important debate of the Security Council to consider further steps towards accelerating the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda and ensuring gender equality in United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

Before delivering a statement in my national capacity, I would like to say that Ukraine aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Canada on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security and the statement made by the European Union Ambassador for Gender and Diversity on behalf of the European Union (see S/PV.8886).

As the concept note (S/2021/875, annex) rightly points out, the past 20 years since the adoption of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000) have seen greater attention being given to women's roles and representation in United Nations peace operations and the proportion of women in military and police components has begun to increase at a faster rate in recent years.

This is particularly the case for my country. Ukraine continues to work on ensuring gender equality in all spheres and guaranteeing proper conditions for all women serving in security and defence sectors. The active integration of gender equality into the activities of the armed forces of Ukraine fostered changes to the list of military specialties and positions open to women. As a result, the number of women serving in the Ukrainian Army has increased from 1,800 in 2008 to nearly 57,000 in 2021.

For Ukraine, commitments to promoting the women and peace and security agenda have gained new importance since the beginning of the Russian aggression.

The thematic report issued by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine in September on the gender dimension of monitoring shows how the security, socioeconomic and humanitarian impacts of the conflict are varied and gendered.

At the same time, during the seven years of the Russian aggression, women have proved to be an indispensable part of the solution. The aforementioned report also highlights the resilience showcased by women and some of the many ways in which they contribute to peace and security, for instance, by engaging in dialogue initiatives and by providing assistance to the conflict-affected population and acting as agents of change.

Women non-governmental organizations and women activists who participate in dialogue initiatives often have first-hand experience of the reality and consequences of armed conflict. In the Donetsk region, the Coalition on Women, Peace and Security united more than 40 women non-governmental organizations. Many of the women involved became active and started creative, multidisciplinary initiatives and projects to alleviate the suffering of the affected people and to rebuild communities. This also meant that many women engaged in dialogue initiatives approached topics from a rather pragmatic perspective, proposing small but concrete steps to improve the situation.

It is a matter of alarm in this regard that the occupied territories have become home for discriminatory cultural practices, cherishing gender inequality. Oppressive policies against Crimean Tatar women, in particular activists, lawyers and those whose relatives have been illegally detained, constitute another dire consequence of the Russian aggression against Ukraine. Under these circumstances, the possibilities



for local women from the occupied territories to engage in peace processes and initiatives are severely limited and women activists face harassment and intimidation by the occupying authorities.

Ukrainian women valuably contribute to defending the country, negotiating a peaceful resolution and the release of illegally detained persons. That is the reason why provisions on the gender dimension have been included in a draft law on the State policy for the transition period, aimed at the reintegration of the currently occupied territories. The draft has already been submitted by the Government of Ukraine for the consideration of Parliament.

Ukraine fully supports the need for the United Nations to increase women's participation and leadership in peace and political processes it leads or co-leads, as well as in processes it supports. This includes the need to ensure meaningful investment in local women in peacebuilding and peacekeeping settings.

For its part, Ukraine has initiated a number of steps at the national level within the framework of the second national action plan on resolution 1325 (2000) until 2025. The plan aims at creating conditions for the equal participation of women and men in decision-making and conflict resolution, peacebuilding, reconstruction and security challenges, as well as for a systemic response to gender-based and conflict-related violence. Along with launching new trainings and exercises for women peacekeepers, it includes enhanced participation of gender policy experts in the selection process of Ukrainian personnel for United Nations peace operations.

In conclusion, let me reiterate our strong belief that achieving the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peace processes is an important part of our efforts to ensure respect for women's human rights and gender equality.

**Annex 23****Statement by the Group of Friends of Women in Afghanistan**

We are submitting this statement on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women in Afghanistan, an informal group comprised of permanent representatives to the United Nations, senior United Nations officials and key partners. Launched in November 2019, this cross-regional group aims to empower and recognize the central role of women in both the development gains over the past 20 years and in discussions on the future of Afghanistan.

We are deeply concerned about the current situation of Afghan women and girls. They have faced widespread violence and discrimination, restrictions on their freedom of movement and a lack of full access to health care and services, including sexual and reproductive services, education, jobs and justice for many years. The important progress achieved on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls — over successive generations — must be protected and expanded.

We call on the Taliban to respect human rights, including the rights of women, to uphold international humanitarian and human rights law, to take actions consistent with resolution 1325 (2000) and its consecutive resolutions and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and to protect the gains of the past 20 years.

We are alarmed by the accounts given by Afghan women's rights advocates. Thus far, no women have been included in leadership roles by the Taliban. Only some women are currently able to work, including in the health and education sectors. Too many girls over 12 years of age are now prevented from going to school, even though education is a fundamental right and the engine for development.

We call on the Taliban to protect the gains made on the rights of Afghan women and girls and to ensure women's participation at all levels of decision-making. All women have the right to work and should be allowed to return to work immediately, and all girls have the right to attend school. Inclusive governance is fundamental to a stable Afghanistan. Women's full, equal and meaningful participation in decision-making processes and civic spaces would allow their voices to be heard and enable them to play full, equal and meaningful roles in all aspects of national life, including education, employment and public life. We stand in full solidarity with women and girls in Afghanistan and we will continue to monitor the situation in the country closely and use all the tools at our disposal to protect and advance women's and girls' rights.

The Group of Friends takes note of the Taliban's assurances to the United Nations and partners that they will allow unconditional humanitarian access for all those involved in the delivery of aid, including all female staff. Women must participate in the humanitarian response in Afghanistan — both as decision-makers shaping the response and as front-line responders — in order to reach those most in need, including women and girls. All services and centres that offer critical support to survivors of gender-based violence must be able to operate unobstructed.

The Group of Friends welcomes the Security Council's emphasis on the importance of the full, equal and meaningful participation of women, promoting their protection, and upholding human rights, including those of women in the September mandate renewal of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). We encourage Security Council members to ensure that UNAMA's mandate continues to prioritize women and peace and security — in line with the Secretary-General's report on women and peace and security of 2020 (S/2020/946) — and that the international community continues to support the

work of women human rights defenders and women peacebuilders and ensure their protection. We welcome the recent appointment of a Special Rapporteur to monitor the human rights situation and call on the Taliban to cooperate with them.

**Annex 24****Statement by the Permanent Mission of Uruguay to the United Nations**

[Original: Spanish]

At the outset, Uruguay would like to thank the Permanent Mission of Kenya for convening this open debate and giving Member States the opportunity to share their progress, trends and challenges, as well as to deliberate on some of the best practices and lessons learned and make recommendations to advance the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

This delegation associates itself with the statement of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security (see S/PV.8886) and would like to reflect on and share some of the progress made in this area in its national capacity.

At the national level, the Government of Uruguay has implemented State policies to promote women's participation in the armed and police forces and their inclusion in peacekeeping operations and is currently finalizing details that will enable the publication of its first national action plan on women and peace and security.

Another clear example of this commitment is the implementation — within the framework of the Elsie Initiative — of an assessment of opportunities for women in peace operations, developed by the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, in partnership with Cornell University, whose central objective is to serve as an innovative and comprehensive methodology for troop- and police-contributing countries to identify and assess barriers to and opportunities for the meaningful participation of women in uniform in peace operations. This study has already been completed at the armed forces level and is in its final stage at the national police level.

At the regional level, our country's participation in the Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network, which Uruguay co-chaired together with Canada until 16 September, is noteworthy, and we believe that this type of cooperation is useful and necessary in our efforts to bring together the various actors, States, the United Nations, regional and subregional organizations and civil society to accelerate the long-awaited and necessary implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

Furthermore, we cannot fail to highlight the launch, on 26 March, of the Regional Network of Women Mediators of the Southern Cone, which includes Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. This Network will serve as a tool to promote the greater participation of women in peace negotiation and mediation processes in situations of humanitarian crisis, conflict and post-conflict.

Uruguay reiterates its commitment to the Action for Peacekeeping initiative and its Action for Peacekeeping Plus implementation strategy, which Uruguay has endorsed and by which it has committed to work to promote the presence of women in peacekeeping operations to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women during all stages of the peace process, with an integrated gender perspective.

Finally, Mr. President, you can count on Uruguay's commitment to continue working on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), the strengthening of the rights of women and girls, the elimination of structural obstacles that prevent their equal participation in society and the empowerment of women as agents of change essential to the achievement of development and sustainable peace.