

Statement by Chad at the Open Debate of the United Nations Security Council Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict Mr. Mangaral (Chad) (spoke in French): I commend you, Mr. President, for convening this debate on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, with a focus on the specific needs of women and girls. Let me also thank Ms. Kang Kyung-wha, Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, for her important briefing, and Ms. Helen Durham and Ms. Ilwad Elman for their statements.

Civilians, particularly women and children, in countries in conflict or post-conflict situations, suffer unspeakable atrocities. Statistics published by United Nations agencies on Syria, Iraq, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Sudan and South Sudan, among others, are highly informative. Given such atrocities, the international community must forge a consensus on the need to find urgent and appropriate solutions. That consensus is reflected in resolution 1325 (2000), which is the foundation of the architecture for the protection of women and girls in armed conflict. On that basis, the Secretary-General and various partners have established a series of technical and institutional arrangements.

The aide-memoire of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, endorsed by the Security Council, is a practical guide that could contribute effectively to improving the protection of civilians. It contains important measures that could be implemented in conflict situations. In particular, it stresses the responsibility of the parties to protect women and their accountability for violations of law, taking into account the specific needs of women and their involvement in the prevention and settlement of conflict. In that vein, resolution 2122 (2013) complements and strengthens those initiatives by categorizing various violations and abuse targeting women in conflict and post-conflict situations. It also addresses forced displacement and provides important technical elements to identify violence against such persons.

For its part, the Security Council has demonstrated a clear desire to end the violence against women and civilians, particularly through its recent debates and decisions. In 2014, the Council made a point of recalling, in presidential statement S/PRST/2014/3, the important role played by peacekeeping operations in the protection of civilians, and reaffirming their need of a protection mandate to implement. Furthermore, it called for improved coordination between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations to that end.

The Security Council also underscored in its presidential statement S/PRST/2014/21, of 28 October 2014, the important role of the United Nations in conflict prevention and the protection of women and girl refugees and internally displaced persons, particularly with regard to sexual and gender-based violence. It underscored that the fight against impunity can be strengthened through the work of the international tribunals, and encouraged Member States to involve women's organizations in the crafting of strategies to counter violent extremism and to strengthen women's role.

For their part, regional and subregional organizations are working to protect civilians in conflict areas, as has been the case in Somalia, Mali and the Central African Republic. A code of conduct for missions on the ground is being finalized by the African Union, with the establishment of a zero-tolerance policy.

Despite all of these initiatives, the situation of civilians in countries in conflict or post-conflict has unfortunately not improved. Violence against women and girls continues to increase and is therefore in urgent need of solutions, particularly in Syria, Iraq, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, South Sudan and Somalia. In South Sudan, for instance, some sources indicate that sexual violence in displaced persons camps and local communities is pervasive and persistent. Such practices are used as a weapon of war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where women and girls have been publicly raped in the presence of their fathers, brothers or husbands. Violence against women and girls has recently increased, owing in particular to the resurgence of many armed and terrorist groups, which have targeted them directly in a number of cases, such as the girls abducted by Boko Haram in Nigeria under unacceptable conditions.

The various reasons for this continuing violence against women in conflict or post-conflict situations are mostly well known. They include, for example, ignorance, fear of retaliation for denunciation, cultural values and practices and discrimination. We also believe that impunity, an absence of coordinated action in implementing Council decisions, both at the institutional level and in peacekeeping operations, and a lack of technical and financial resources constitute real reasons. Furthermore, the States that bear the primary responsibility for protecting their citizens show no genuine willingness to take steps to do that. In that regard, it is vital that sanctions regimes be strengthened and applied and, for instance, that countries harbouring armed and terrorist groups be blacklisted, similar to the list of countries where children are recruited into armed conflict. The implementation of all such actions by the international community and peacekeeping operations designed to protect civilians must be carried out without infringing on States' sovereignty and, of course, in the interests of the women and children concerned.

In conclusion, we believe that we should stop thinking about the issue in terms of the decisions to be made and start thinking about how to implement those decisions effectively. In that regard, the Council should work to efficiently integrate a specific gender perspective into every mandate renewal and resolution, ensure women's full, effective participation in efforts aimed at settling and preventing conflicts, investigate and follow up attacks that target women, integrate a gender perspective into all efforts against violent extremism and terrorism and, lastly, ensure that peacekeeping operations shoulder their responsibility to protect civilians. The involvement of regional and subregional organizations, as well as communities and opinion makers, could certainly help to produce convincing results in the protection of civilians, particularly women and girls.

Finally, we hope that the events scheduled for this year such as the review of resolution 1325

(2000), the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the establishment of the post- 2015 development agenda will provide opportunities for achieving the effective implementation of the protection of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations.