Statement

by

H.E. Dr. Amal Mudallali
Permanent Representative of Lebanon
to the United Nations

at the open debate
of the Security Council

“Women and peace and security

New York, October 25, 2018

Check Against Delivery
Mr. President,

Allow me at the outset to thank the Secretary-General Mr. Guterres for his statement and his work for gender parity. I also thank the Bolivian presidency for convening today’s debate on an agenda that is ever more relevant, since the adoption of landmark resolution 1325 (2000), 18 years ago.

I also wish to thank the briefers for their statements and their outstanding commitment.

Mr. President,

Throughout my life, I have sadly come to witness first-hand so many wars in my country, Lebanon. That allowed me to understand how important the "woman factor" is, in achieving peace, in maintaining security, in rebuilding a country from the rubbles, in healing the deepest wounds of a nation, in reinventing hope where it was thought that no dream was ever again possible.

It also helped me understand, that in a situation of conflict and war, women and girls suffer disproportionately and in the ugliest, and most abhorrent ways. In war their gender becomes their misfortune, and when the guns go silent they are the forgotten ones.

Mr. President,

There can be no peace, at least not a durable one, when half of the society is discarded from the processes.

There can be no security, at least not a sustainable one, when it is achieved discounting the vital participation and inclusive engagement of women.

There can be no future, actually no present Mr. President, where women's voices are not heard and heeded; ignoring their voices, overlooking their aspirations, impairs the perennity of peace everywhere in the world.

Progress has been made but it has been terribly slow. Nowhere is this more true than in peace negotiations and peace processes. I am sure you all have read and heard this stunning statistic: Only 2%, of the mediators in formal peace processes, from 1990 to 2017 were women.

Even here at the UN, it wasn't till 2013, that the first woman, Ms. Mary Robinson was appointed as UN Special Envoy. UN Security Council Resolutions on Peace processes, are deemed by women in conflict- ridden countries, as gender-blind. Few resolutions started acquiring a gender lens and are demanding real participation and inclusion of women in every level of the negotiations. We need to see more UN women peace envoys in this room, and around the world.

Mr. President,

Lebanon remains firmly committed to an inclusive approach on the Women, Peace and Security agenda.
During Lebanon’s parliamentary elections last May, a record-high number of women registered as candidates on the ballot. Although the elections resulted, in only six hard-won victories, they nonetheless showed that women are equally invested, as men in the political dynamics, and the future of the country. The leadership in Lebanon is responsive and is working on empowering women.

Prime Minister designate Saad Hariri, who was the first to appoint women ministers in his cabinets, is committed to appointing women Ministers in his upcoming cabinet. He promised to have a significant role for women in the new government, and said: “Had the country been handed over to women, we would have been in a much better, and more pleasant place today”.

The National Commission for Lebanese Women, and upon a mandate from the Council of Ministers, held six consultations between April and July 2018, that translated into the first National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325. The Plan is expected to be endorsed by the upcoming cabinet upon formation.

We are witnessing as well a more active participation of women on all levels of governance and in key positions. The Security sector is witnessing a qualitative leap in that direction and the Lebanese army is drawing on a "strategic plan" aiming at ensuring gender equality.

However, in Lebanon, as in other parts of the world, implementation gaps still hinder the full achievement of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. Gender barriers still exist and they stem from social gender stereotypes and patriarchal attitudes. We need to address them through a comprehensive legal approach to close those gaps. Tangible efforts should be made to prevent and eliminate, from both public life and the private sphere, all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls. This should, and must, include peace and security processes on all levels.

Mr. President,

After 18 years of voting the Women, Peace and Security resolution, Time is Now, for a real, irrevocable materialization of this agenda.

Women see gender equality as their last battle. This battle requires that we all fight together, shoulder to shoulder as women try to remake a world where peace is possible... a world where security is within reach!

This battle is inevitable, not only because it is morally the right thing to do, but because factually, it is the only way out! And because: We do not give up. Women will not give up! To borrow from SG Guterres.

I thank you