



# SPAIN

**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS AND COOPERATION OF SPAIN  
H. E. ALFONSO MARÍA DASTIS QUECEDO**

**HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON THE PREVENTION  
OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE**

**New York, 18 September 2017**

**Statement by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of  
Spain, H.E. Alfonso Dastis**

**HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON THE PREVENTION OF SEXUAL  
EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE**

**18 September 2017**

Allow me convey to you, Mr. Secretary General, the gratitude of the President of the Government, Mr. Rajoy, for his invitation to join the Circle of Leadership, an opportunity to show his personal commitment and that of my country with the common commitment to prevent and eradicate sexual exploitation and abuse. President Rajoy gladly lends his support to this cause and joins the collective effort to end these deplorable acts that undermine the essential values of the United Nations.

Spain is fully committed to strengthening and enforcing the zero tolerance policy against sexual exploitation and abuse. These acts cause enormous harm to the victims and undermine the extraordinary work by peace operations and the exemplary work carried out by the men and women deployed under the banner of the United Nations in all parts of the world, of which we are proud.

We have therefore supported the efforts of the Secretary-General and the entire United Nations system to combat this scourge. Preventing these acts is paramount, and prompt action must be taken to ensure adequate accountability and thus send a clear message to the victims and the perpetrators. We cannot allow any trace of impunity for those found guilty.

We must also continue to work to provide more and better assistance to victims. They must be at the center of our concerns. We therefore welcome the appointment of Ms. Jane Connors as the first Advocate for the rights of victims of sexual exploitation and abuse. We are convinced that this will help to repair and assist these people who must live with a harm inflicted by those who had an obligation to protect them.

Last year, as a member of the UNSC, Spain supported Resolution 2272 in the conviction that it would mark a turning point in this agenda by sending a clear message: Inaction cannot be an option in this matter.

This year, we renew our commitment to the prevention and eradication of this scourge, and my country has declared its intention to sign the Voluntary Compact with the General Secretariat in order to unite us in this collective purpose that today brings us together.

In order to succeed, this effort requires the cooperation of all, therefore we advocate continuing the dialogue that will allow us to work together to address this problem. In so doing, we not only provide reparation to the victims, we also proudly claim the values and principles of the United Nations and of the peace personnel of all nationalities who, day by day, embody these ideals.