



**PERMANENT MISSION  
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
NEW YORK**

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NEW YORK, 10 OCTOBER 2017

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

THIRD COMMITTEE

**ITEM 68: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN**

**STATEMENT BY MYRIAM OEHRI, SECOND SECRETARY**

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. Chair,

Last year we celebrated the 70th anniversary of UNICEF. Its longstanding commitment and work is essential in the promotion and protection of the rights of children all around the world. 2016 also showed that the UN has a lot of work ahead on this issue, with approximately 535 million children living in countries affected by conflict, natural disasters, epidemics and other emergencies worldwide. Nearly 50 million children were on the move, more than half of which were forcibly displaced. And 385 million children lived in extreme poverty and millions more experienced discrimination and exclusion.<sup>1</sup>

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development offers a framework to ensure that children can enjoy their rights. It sets ambitious goals to eliminate extreme poverty and hunger, to provide education for all, to protect the planet and to promote peaceful and inclusive societies. Target 16.2 to end all forms of violence against children is of particular importance for the protection of children and to ensure that no one is left behind.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/UNICEF\\_Annual\\_Report\\_2016.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/UNICEF_Annual_Report_2016.pdf)

Mr. Chair,

The monitoring mechanism established by Security Council Resolution 1612 to document grave violations against children in conflict situations is of essential importance to the protection of children's rights. This mechanism is all the more relevant these days as we are witnessing an overall erosion of the respect for international humanitarian law which includes grave and serious violations of the rights of the child: This year's report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict reflected at least 4'000 violations by government forces and more than 11'500 such violations by non-State armed groups. Casualties were documented in Afghanistan, Yemen, Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Lake Chad basin. Other illegal practices such as the recruitment and sexual exploitation of children in conflict situations occurred in various parts of the world.

We reiterate our strongest support for the mandate of the Secretary-General's Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict, and the necessity to protect its independence and integrity. The credible and evidence-based listing of perpetrators is an essential tool in this regard. Any interference with the mandate, for instance as a result of political pressure as witnessed in the context of this year's report, seriously jeopardizes the independence and integrity not only of this mechanism, but also of others that the UN has created. And worst of all, it indirectly hurts children suffering in situations of armed conflicts, whom we have an obligation to protect.

Mr. Chair,

Worldwide, there are 21.3 million refugees, fleeing conflict situations, violence and persecution. Half of them are children. Not only do these children miss years of school, which severely compromises their futures, but many of them experience profound physical and emotional traumas, often with irreversible effects. Unaccompanied minors are especially

vulnerable to discrimination and exploitation.<sup>2</sup>

Child trafficking is one of the biggest human rights scandals and a brutal reality of our time. Girls and boys are being exploited for numerous purposes, including forced labor such as domestic servitude, agricultural and factory work and mining, and commercial sexual exploitation and abuse. Child trafficking is a lucrative business, often times linked with criminal activity and corruption.<sup>3</sup> We need to stop human traffickers from committing these crimes and to close the extant impunity gap. Therefore, we call upon all Member States to ratify the Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. Reaching universalization of the Protocol is essential in protecting children from trafficking and modern slavery.

I thank you.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.savethechildren.org/site/c.8rKLIXMGIpI4E/b.9532313/k.66A0/End\\_Child\\_Trafficking.htm](http://www.savethechildren.org/site/c.8rKLIXMGIpI4E/b.9532313/k.66A0/End_Child_Trafficking.htm)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.savethechildren.org/site/c.8rKLIXMGIpI4E/b.9532313/k.66A0/End\\_Child\\_Trafficking.htm](http://www.savethechildren.org/site/c.8rKLIXMGIpI4E/b.9532313/k.66A0/End_Child_Trafficking.htm)