

ITEM 149:
**SCOPE OF LEGAL PROTECTION UNDER THE CONVENTION ON THE
SAFETY OF UNITED NATIONS AND ASSOCIATED PERSONNEL**

STATEMENT

BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

NEW YORK, 20 OCTOBER 2004

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chairman

More than one year after the devastating attack on the United Nations Headquarter in Baghdad, on 19 August 2003, United Nations and associated personnel continue to face unacceptable security risks at several duty stations around the world. Liechtenstein condemns all acts of violence against local and international staff and reiterates its call for better protection and an end to impunity. The report of the Secretary-General underlines the fact that still way too few perpetrators are brought to justice, despite the enormous gravity of their crimes, as evidenced in particular by their inclusion in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation wishes thank all delegations for their constructive approach in the Working Group on the Scope of Legal Protection under the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. Liechtenstein is convinced that broadening the scope of the Convention through an Optional Protocol is the right way to strengthen the international legal regime regarding safety and security of UN personnel.

We are pleased to see that the Chairman's text includes several alternatives for an expansion of the scope of protection, without recourse to the trigger mechanism of a declaration of exceptional risk. We are convinced that such an expansion is warranted for two reasons:

First, it will not overburden the host state with inappropriate obligations of protection. The Convention only requires "appropriate" protection measures, which clearly reduces this burden in less risky situations. Furthermore it is clear that host states will still be able to exercise their national jurisdiction against law-breaking personnel which does not amount to arbitrary detention.

Second, such an expansion will provide more UN operations with adequate remedies after the occurrence of an attack. In our view, this is the most important and substantial part of the Convention of 1994. It offers an array of measures to fight impunity for attacks on UN personnel. Once an attack has occurred, it does not make sense anymore to discuss whether the operation was risky to begin with. In such a situation, the host State must bring the perpetrators to justice, where appropriate in co-operation with other States. Impunity is not an option.

Mr. Chairman

In conclusion, we look forward to the speedy conclusion of the work on an Optional Protocol to the 1994 Convention. The General Assembly owes this to thousands of UN staff and associated personnel worldwide.

I thank you.