



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

NEW YORK, 28 OCTOBER 2014

SECURITY COUNCIL – OPEN DEBATE

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

Madame President,

We are seeing unprecedented numbers of displaced persons. 55 million were reportedly displaced by the end of 2013, 33 million due to violence and conflicts. Violent outbreaks in Gaza and Iraq have exacerbated the situation even further. **Displacement is a peace and security issue** that needs adequate attention by this Council, in addition to action by the other main organs. Liechtenstein therefore welcomes this open debate and its very timely focus on internally displaced and refugee women. My delegation hosted a workshop and policy forum on the topic in collaboration with IPI a few weeks ago in preparation for today's discussions.

Madame President,

Women and children account for 80% of displaced persons. Nevertheless, the way they experience displacement rarely shapes interventions and programs. Displacement has shown to **exacerbate existing gender inequality**. IDPs and refugees often lack identification documents, are deprived of their livelihoods and struggle with poverty, which puts them in a particularly vulnerable position. As a consequence, women face a drastic increase in violence, in particular violence inside their homes, and intimate partner violence. They are more vulnerable to sexual harassment and exploitation, as well as to child, early and forced marriages. We cannot limit our action to assistance to IDPs and refugees and thus to what is required to guarantee their

bare survival. IDPs account for 63% of the mentioned 33 million people displaced due to violence and conflicts. Internal displacement in particular is unfortunately a long-term experience, lasting an average of over 17 years. The assistance required must be complemented by the **protection** that currently very often is lacking. Much more is necessary to ensure protection from further harm and trauma, in particular to women and children, given their increased vulnerability. States also need to invest in **prevention**, work on preparedness and have policies in place to deal with displacement before it even occurs.

Madame President,

Displacement is not a short-term problem and we have to stop treating it as if it were. It is therefore not solely a humanitarian issue, but a **development issue**. Early investment in development will help IDPs and refugees rebuild their livelihoods. Rapid provision of ID documents, fair and equal access to asylum as well as access to education are key. Education in particular is a crucial element for empowering women, making them less vulnerable and allowing them to make active contributions to recovery. Women have to be part of the solution, their **full and equal participation** is absolutely crucial.

In this regard, I would like to mention the World Food Programme's excellent "**Safe Access to Firewood and Alternative Energy (SAFE)**" initiative in Sudan. It provides fuel-efficient stoves that help reduce firewood consumption and the clearance of community forests, which are a source of livelihood. The stoves reduced expenses for cooking fuel, which allowed women to buy other food items and improve the nutrition and diet diversity of their families. In addition, women no longer have to venture far from their homes to collect firewood for both cooking and selling. Such trips expose them to grave risks including physical and sexual violence. In less than three years, beneficiaries are reporting that SAFE has not only changed their lives for the better, but they also no longer need WFP food assistance.

Madame President,

It is simply unacceptable that the majority of humanitarian action still does not take the vulnerability and special needs of women and girls or their potential to make active contributions into account. This is not due to a lack of guidance, since we have the relevant instruments at our disposal, such as OCHA's Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, or CEDAW General recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations. These should help us address displacement, including the challenges faced by women. Furthermore, the Inter-agency Standing Committee's gender marker serves as a useful tool to assess whether or not a humanitarian project will benefit women and girls and men and boys equally. The instruments are there - it is up to us Member States, the UN system and all relevant actors in the field to ensure their implementation. Now is the time to **hold ourselves accountable to our own standards**.

Madame President,

In tackling displacement, we need a **holistic, inclusive approach** – based on close collaboration with civil society and women's groups, aimed at prevention, protection, participation and development. This is the only way that will allow us to build long-lasting peace and achieve full recovery.

I thank you.