



**PERMANENT MISSION  
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN  
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SECURITY COUNCIL – OPEN DEBATE  
**PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS**  
**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. CHRISTIAN WENAWESER**  
AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. President,

We welcome the most recent report of the Secretary-General, the adjusted reporting cycle, the thematic structure and the substantive recommendations.

The suffering of civilians in armed conflict, caused in large part by the alarming disregard for international humanitarian law, continues unabated. There have been important appeals on conflict parties to uphold the norms that safeguards humanity – in several previous texts adopted by this Council, the joint statement by the UN Secretary-General and the President of the ICRC of October 2015, and most recently at the World Humanitarian Summit. Such appeals are indeed warranted and important. But they must be supported by concrete action that seeks to enforce compliance, where needed, especially by the UN Security Council. The report rightly identifies accountability and justice mechanisms as a key tool available to the Council. It recommends in particular that the Council systematically condemn violations of IHL by any

party to a conflict and take action on the most serious violations, by applying targeted sanctions against perpetrators, and by mandating commissions of inquiry or fact-finding missions. Most importantly, the Council should refer situations of large-scale impunity, such as those in Syria, to the ICC and ensure the necessary follow-up. I would also like to echo the Secretary-General's call on Member States to ratify the Rome Statute, to provide adequate political, technical and financial support to the ICC – and the call on all States to fully cooperate with the Court. We are encouraged by the recent ratification by El Salvador, including the Kampala amendments on the crime of aggression, which became the 124<sup>th</sup> State Party to the Rome Statute.

Mr. President,

As stated in the report, “Accountability is crucial to deter violations, promote reconciliation and provide justice for victims”. The potential for UN peacekeeping operations to enhance accountability efforts is still largely untapped, but there are also encouraging signs of progress. The example of the Central African Republic in particular shows that peacekeeping mandates can be tailored to assist accountability efforts. MINUSCA's direct support for the Special Criminal Court of the Central African Republic as well as for the work of the ICC is a promising model that could also be replicated in other situations.

Mr. President,

The UN and the ICC are independent, but complementary organizations, committed to the same values. In order to fully reap the possible synergies, the Security Council should consistently task peacekeeping missions to support the Court's work on the ground. In this regard, it is also essential that peacekeeping missions support the work of the Court and consistently apply the Secretary-General's policy of avoiding non-essential contacts with

fugitives of international criminal justice. Peacekeeping missions can also play a key role in preventing and ending atrocity crimes. Their presence on the ground gives them unique access to relevant information which the Secretary-General should put before the members of the Security Council, in accordance with the Human Rights Upfront initiative. Acting on this information is then the responsibility of Council members - and 111 States, including the majority of the current members of the Council have committed to making the Council more responsive by joining the Code of Conduct aimed at ending and preventing genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes.

Mr. President,

We can only break cycles of violence by bringing perpetrators of war crimes and other serious violations of international law to justice. The international community can be proud that it has created the tools to do so. Yet in a number of situations, it is primarily the Security Council that can make sure that these tools are put to good use. With the lives of countless civilians in conflict at stake, Council members should do their utmost to live up to this responsibility.

I thank you.