**Liechtenstein on Women, Peace and Security
H.E. Ambassador Christian Wenaweser, Permanent Representative of the Prinicpality of Liechtenstein to the United Nations, UN Security Council Open Debate,
29 October 2003**

Mr. President,

The debate you have convened on the issue of Women, Peace and Security is a timely one and we thank you for your initiative. To our mind, there are two main areas of this broad topic which warrant equal attention: Protection and participation, as reflected in resolution 1325. On the protection side, women and girls continue to be prime targets, due to their perceived role as bearers of cultural identity and their vulnerability. The recent past has certainly brought about some landmark developments in the area of protection, most prominent among them the recognition of rape and other forms of sexual violence as a crime under international law. The ad hoc Tribunals established by the Security Council have done groundbreaking work in this area, and the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court are drafted in a manner which allows the Court to bring to justice perpetrators of gender-specific crimes in times of armed conflict. Protection under the law, in particular under international law, is of paramount importance and can have preventive effect, but must of course be complemented by practical and operational measures, in particular those undertaken by UN operations and presences in the field. In this context, we welcome in particular the appointment of an interim Gender Adviser in the Department for Peacekeeping Operations and hope that the permanent position of a Senior Gender Adviser can be filled shortly. We very much welcome the presence of the Senior Gender Adviser to MONUC at today’s meeting and her contribution to the debate.

Mr. President,

The study on Women, Peace and Security submitted last year also makes it clear that the effects of armed conflict on women are particularly grave where a culture of violence and discrimination against women and girls exist even prior to an armed conflict. There is thus a continued need for close cooperation between the Security Council and the General Assembly which is active in the elimination of discrimination and domestic violence against
women.

Mr. President,

The attention given to the participation of women must be at least as strong as the one given to the need for their protection: There seems to be a continued lack of awareness of the fact that women can play – and often do so – an active role in connection with armed conflicts: As participants in hostilities, but also as crucial players in peace processes, in particular when they are informal, and in post-conflict peace-building. The United Nations
and its operations on the ground are perfectly placed to utilize this largely untapped resource, and we continue to believe that the appointment of women as Special Representatives and Envoys can play a catalytic role for the stronger involvement of women in peace processes, especially when those reach more formal stages. Such appointments might also have a positive impact on the level of reporting on gender-related issues to the
Security Council which is still unsatisfactory. Again, progress on the representation of women in such leadership positions has been disappointing since the last time the Council met on this topic.

Mr. President,

SCR 1325 was a groundbreaking text that was followed up by an excellent study and report to the Council last year. The 21 points identified for action by the Secretary-General constitute a very concrete basis for action and their implementation would go a very long way to address and alter the current situation of women in armed conflict. We very much commend the work done by the Inter-Agency Task Force on Women, Peace and Security
and would also like to make particular mention of the implementation work carried out by Department of Disarmament Affairs (DDA) and also the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Nevertheless, there is obviously a long way to go, and we wonder if all the tools are actually in place to ensure full implementation. The action plan for implementation developed by the Task Force requires a significant coordination effort, and it is not clear to us whether the office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues is sufficiently equipped to fully play this crucial role. It further seems to us that the Council
itself has not been consistent enough in incorporating resolution 1325 or aspects thereof in its relevant resolutions. Enhanced coordination and monitoring, along the lines of the suggestion made by Chile earlier during this debate would be an excellent measure to improve the efficiency of the Council in this respect.

I thank you, Mr. President.