

**Security Council Open Debate on Women, Rule of Law and Transitional Justice in Conflict- Affected Situations, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013, Security Council Chamber**

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Women and children continue to be disproportionately affected by armed conflicts and their aftermath. We have witnessed, in particular, an alarming increase in sexual violence, which is often used as a method of warfare. It has disastrous long-term consequences, not only for the victim, but also for the affected communities. Liechtenstein is proud to give its support to the sexual and gender-based violence work of the Justice Rapid

Response initiative and is among the 124 States that have endorsed the United Kingdom initiative to end sexual violence in conflict.

A pervasive culture of impunity continues to be a major challenge in the area of women, peace and security. Accountability, human rights and the rule of law are recognized preconditions for successful political transition and development, but women are too often denied full and equal access to justice. States must offer effective and universally accessible national judicial systems and provide all victims with support, protection and redress. The needs of vulnerable groups, such as women with disabilities and indigenous women, among others, require special attention.

The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) has significantly contributed to ending impunity for gender-based crimes, and its Prosecutor has declared the issue of sexual violence to be one of the priorities of her work. Indeed, 18 of the persons currently accused in the Court's cases are charged with sexual crimes. Where national justice systems are unable to deliver justice, the ICC can play an important role pursuant to the principle of complementarity. It can also assist in domestic proceedings by providing information and evidence. The Court also provides direct assistance to victims on the ground through its Trust Fund for Victims, which Liechtenstein continues to support. Like other speakers before us in the debate, we remain of the view that the grave situation in Syria merits referral to the International Criminal Court by the Council.

The need to protect women and girls must not overshadow the participation pillar of the women, peace and security agenda. My delegation is therefore pleased to see that resolution 2122 (2013), adopted earlier today, builds on the core elements of resolution 1325 (2000) and contains key commitments for several stakeholders to the full participation of women.

Women's full participation — including in peacekeeping operations, national reconciliation processes and mediation — enhances the effectiveness and sustainability of development efforts and contributes to the prevention of conflict. But women continue to be underrepresented at all levels of decision-making. Their interests are often not, or insufficiently, reflected in peace agreements. Out of 10 peace agreements signed in 2012, only three included provisions on women and peace and security. Against that background, we welcome the Peacebuilding Commission's recent declaration on women's economic empowerment for peacebuilding. We have noted with great interest the Mediation Support Unit's commitment to increasing its efforts to include more women in mediation processes and the increased female capacity in that respect.

We believe that it is important that the United Nations lead by example to advance this agenda. The appointment of Mary Robinson as the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region of Africa is therefore a very important step in that respect. We welcome the Special Envoy's active engagement to involve women and ensure their participation in mediation efforts.

As in other areas, we have noted a lack of consistency when it comes to the inclusion of concerns raised by the issue of women and peace and security in the Security Council's work. It is important that the Council consistently implement the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) and the follow-up resolutions in all its resolutions on country situations.

