



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

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

SECURITY COUNCIL - OPEN DEBATE

THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

STATEMENT BY GEORG SPARBER, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I.

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Mr. President,

I thank you for this opportunity to discuss the situation in the Middle East. Developments in different parts of the region make this an important and meaningful topic for discussion among the entire membership, which should get the same opportunity to express itself also on other crisis situations before the Council.

Mr. President,

We continue to be disappointed by the failure of the Council to exert its leverage over the parties to the conflict in Syria, as the conflict appears to move inexorably toward a negative conclusion for the Syrian people. The conflict continues to be characterized by systematic and egregious violations of international human rights and international humanitarian law, including the use of chemical weapons and mass displacement, torture, and forced disappearances. We continue to value and support the important work of the Commission of Inquiry into grave human rights violations and we thank the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission for its continued efforts to bring details

of chemical weapons use in Syria to light. Liechtenstein welcomes the decision of the special session of the Conference of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) to task the OPCW with identifying the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons in Syria as an important contribution to the efforts of the Syria Accountability Mechanism (IIIM) to advance justice and individual criminal responsibility for these acts.

Mr. President,

Accountability must be part and parcel of any political agreement to end the conflict in Syria. This has long been a demand of the Syrian people and countless Syrian civil society groups. Sustainable peace and effective rebuilding of the country are only possible if those who have perpetrated crimes against humanity and large scale war crimes are held to account and are excluded from the political leadership. We are encouraged by the effective work carried out by the IIIM, whose mandate encompasses crimes committed by all perpetrators, irrespective of affiliation. The work of the IIIM is having concrete impact, as we see criminal proceedings moving forward on the basis of universal jurisdiction in several European judiciaries. In addition, we reiterate our call on this Council to refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court with a view to providing a comprehensive justice perspective to the Syrian people, echoing the clear call by the Secretary-General at the last Brussels conference.

Mr. President,

We share the Council's cautious optimism regarding recent developments in the efforts to end the war in Yemen, and hope that the new support mission (UNMHA) will ensure the agreements reached in Stockholm are fully implemented and can be built on further. Liechtenstein supports the efforts of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy and his team, and hopes that the parties will be able to maintain the recent positive momentum. As the peace process moves forward, it is key that the Council works to address atrocity crimes committed as part of the conflict. We note that 2/3 of current Council members are signatories to the ACT Code of Conduct on Mass Atrocity Crimes, which includes the commitment not to vote against a resolution in cases of mass atrocity

crimes, and to take action to prevent and end these crimes. Guided by the latter part of this commitment, the Council should also take steps to ensure that accountability for atrocity crimes is included in any final peace settlement, in order to prevent a return to conflict and bring real, tangible justice to the people of Yemen.

I thank you.