



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

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SECURITY COUNCIL – OPEN DEBATE

**CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT**

**STATEMENT BY MR. STEFAN BARRIGA**

MINISTER, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, CHARGE D’AFFAIRES A.I.

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to thank Luxembourg for holding this debate, and the Special Representative as well as the other briefers for providing the Security Council with timely information and analysis on the impact of armed conflicts on children around the world. We especially commend Mr. Sawaneh for his inspiring words and the courage to share his experiences with us here today. Liechtenstein strongly condemns the widespread intentional attacks on children and teachers at schools as a tool of warfare. We also deplore the military use of schools, which gravely endangers civilians and deprives children of their education. Both of these practices are clear violations of international humanitarian law. We urge States to take steps nationally as well as internationally to end these practices and to protect children’s right to education. We therefore welcome the draft Lucens Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict and hope for their widespread endorsement.

Mr. President,

Liechtenstein reiterates its firm support for the Office of the SRSG and welcomes the “children not soldiers” campaign it launched jointly with UNICEF yesterday. We are happy to see the willingness of Governments to sign national action plans and end the recruitment and use of child soldiers. At the same time, however, most of the parties listed in the annex to the Secretary General’s report are non-State actors. Along the same lines, 10 of the 11 persistent perpetrators, which have been listed for over a decade, are non-State actors. We therefore fully support the SRSG’s efforts to engage with *all* relevant parties to conclude action plans and promote their implementation. The early conclusion of such action plans is also in the interest

of the States concerned. They should therefore allow unconditional access for and facilitate the UN's important work in this regard. Efforts to end the recruitment and use of child soldiers would not be possible without the support of civil society organizations such as "Geneva Call", to which Liechtenstein has contributed financially for many years.

Mr. President,

Liechtenstein was shocked by the findings of the Secretary General's recent report on Children and Armed Conflict in Syria, which listed a number of horrendous violations and abuses against children, including arbitrary detention, sexual violence, torture, recruitment and use of child soldiers, maiming and killing, just to name a few. We are deeply concerned about these ongoing violations and abuses by both parties to the conflict and ask them to immediately put an end to them. The recent adoption of Security Council resolution 2139 is of particular importance for the situation of children, who suffer disproportionately from the armed conflict in Syria. We were relieved to see the Council take meaningful, albeit long overdue, action on the humanitarian situation in Syria and look forward to improvements on the ground. We hope that the Council will continue acting with resolve and impose appropriate sanctions should the parties fail to comply with the resolution. In addition, the Council should finally live up to its responsibility to ensure that those committing atrocity crimes in Syria, in particular crimes against children, are brought to justice. In the current circumstances, only a referral to the International Criminal Court could jumpstart accountability in Syria.

Mr. President,

Liechtenstein has for many years given priority to the area of Children and Armed Conflict in its work at the UN and is an active member of the Group of Friends. Let me conclude by drawing your attention to the outcome of a workshop we convened together with our NGO partner Watchlist and the Liechtenstein Institute on Self-Determination at Princeton University on 12 and 13 December last year. The report entitled "Children and Armed Conflict: strengthening the implementation of the United Nations Children and Armed Conflict agenda" was recently published as an official document of the Security Council and the General Assembly<sup>1</sup> and contains a number of useful recommendations for all stakeholders in the field of Children and Armed Conflict.

I thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> A/68/750-S/2014/91