



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

SECURITY COUNCIL – OPEN DEBATE

**MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY: MEDIATION AND SETTLEMENT OF
DISPUTES**

STATEMENT BY MR. GEORG SPARBER

CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I., DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF
LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Madam President,

We welcome this timely debate on mediation and settlement of disputes. Chapter VI of the UN Charter defines mediation as a central function of the UN in the maintenance of peace and security. In 2009, the Security Council recognized “the importance of mediation, to be launched at the earliest possible phases of conflicts”,¹ reflecting a widespread understanding of the core functions of the United Nations. We are grateful that the Secretary-General has chosen to prioritize conflict prevention, including through his High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation. Our thanks to Archbishop Welby, one of its members, for joining us today. We also extend our support for the activities of the DPA’s Mediation Support Unit, as well as the Standby Team of Mediation Experts. I wish to focus our comments today on the need to build sustainable peace: through inclusion, through preventing impunity for grave abuses of international law, and through addressing the proliferation of intra-state conflicts over issues of self-governance.

¹ SC/9640

Madam President,

Successful mediation is not only about preventing or ending conflict, but about building the foundation for a sustainable and durable peace. Peace requires the inclusion of participants and perspectives beyond the parties to armed conflicts themselves. In particular, both participation and outcomes in mediation processes must be gender-sensitive. Women must have a meaningful role in negotiations, and there must be adequate gender expertise around the table. A 2015 study of 156 peace agreements showed that when women are included in peace processes there is a 20 per cent increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least 2 years, and a 35 per cent increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least 15 years.² In addition, in ensuring the participation of often marginalized groups such as youth, refugees, and indigenous peoples, the designers and facilitators of mediation processes can give the agreement the best opportunity to build a broad constituency for peace, and prevent a situation in which only the powerful are its beneficiaries.

Madam President,

Sustainable peace cannot allow for de facto or de jure impunity for the most serious crimes under international law. Making sure that those responsible for atrocity crimes face justice removes the most likely spoilers of a peace agreement from post-conflict society. The promise of justice will also deter them and others from committing similar crimes in the future. On the other hand, when mediation processes do not address serious crimes and ignore victims' calls for justice, they deny those victims the opportunity to heal and to collectively rebuild the fabric of society. When agreements do not seek out and remove the root causes of atrocities, there

² <https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IPI-E-pub-Reimagining-Peacemaking-rev.pdf>

can be no deterrence for such crimes; instead, they leave the seeds of conflict to grow again. Therefore, we support the UN's position that peace agreements it endorses "can never promise amnesties for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity or gross violations of human rights".³ Mediation efforts must give the necessary space to accountability work in situations where the most serious crimes under international law have been committed.

Madam President,

In order to continue to facilitate the mediation of sustainable peace settlements, we must take account of the changing nature of conflict itself. We have witnessed a significant growth in intra-state conflicts, in particular the proliferation of those that originate in claims by communities within a state to a greater measure of governance over their own affairs. We believe that finding peaceful means to address these 'self-governance' situations should be a focus area for the UN's conflict prevention and resolution architecture. UN field missions may be able to effectively support early local mediation in these situations by offering to facilitate a good faith dialogue on self-governance between the state and affected community where both parties have consented. Overall, we believe that a sustainable peace is most achievable when all communities have a stake in how they are governed, and can contribute to arrangements that take account of different identities within the state. We will continue to work on this issue, in partnership with the Liechtenstein Institute on Self-Determination in Princeton.

I thank you.

³ S/2004/616, para. 10.