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27th Session of the HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Interactive Dialogue with the Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic

16th September 2014

Intervention by H.E. Mr. Peter Matt,
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Principality of Liechtenstein

Mr. President, Mr. Chairman, Members of the Commission of Inquiry,

We would like to thank the Commission for its latest report, which once again highlights mass atrocities committed by Government forces and non-State armed groups in Syria. We deplore the continuing blatant disregard for the civilian population. The situation in Syria stands out among the numerous cases where civilians become victims of a violation of the R2P principle. We call on all parties to end all restrictions to humanitarian access, and call in particular for full implementation of Security Council Resolution 2165.

We are gravely concerned about the reported continuous influx of foreign fighters and the success of extremist groups, such as the ISIS and Al-Sham. These are further evidence of the regional dimension of this conflict. The Syrian war has for a long time now clearly constituted a threat to international peace and security that requires action by the Security Council. We fully support the Commission's recommendations to the Security Council, in particular regarding the need for an arms embargo, targeted sanctions, as well as accountability.

Mr. President

Victims of the worst crimes under international law deserve accountability no matter where in the world these crimes may happen. We have for a long time now advocated for a referral of the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court. We regret the vetoes cast against this initiative in the Security Council earlier this year, in face of overwhelming support for such a referral in the Council itself and the membership as a whole. We will continue to work to ensure that accountability remains on the table. In this regard, my delegation would like to raise the following questions:

- How does the Commission make sure that the information it collects can be used at a later stage to support accountability mechanisms, irrespective of the nature of such mechanism?
- Given the increasing number of foreign fighters in Syria, there is an increased likelihood that third States would proceed with criminal investigations against their own nationals who may have committed crimes in Syria. Is the Commission aware of such developments, and is it cooperating with such third States?

I thank you.