



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

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

SECURITY COUNCIL – OPEN DEBATE

**CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER**

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President,

We thank the Republic of Korea for organizing this important debate, and the distinguished briefers for their presentations. Liechtenstein reiterates the continued relevance of the Children and Armed Conflict Agenda, as the Secretary-General's Report for 2023 sadly illustrates. The mandate of the SRSG, including its effective tool of listing parties that have committed at least one of the six grave violations against children, is needed now more than ever and must be protected. The frequency of grave violations committed against children is shockingly high, with a 21 percent increase in 2022 and the largest numbers of violations in at least a decade. Of particular concern is the dramatic rise in children killed in conflict. The deteriorating situations in Gaza, Sudan and Myanmar are especially alarming and require the Council's immediate attention.

Liechtenstein is deeply troubled by the nearly 8,000 children reportedly killed in the Gaza Strip. Such a large number of casualties and massive suffering among children are unacceptable. So is

the targeting of homes, shelters, schools and hospitals, places where children and their families should feel safe. The psychological and physical impacts of living in a conflict zone endure for a lifetime.

Mr. President,

The children of Ukraine are also paying an extraordinary price for Russia's aggression, marked by 335 documented attacks on schools and hospitals last year alone. We remain deeply troubled by the continued abduction of Ukrainian children, including the abduction of 122 children by Russia. In this regard, we highlight that the International Criminal Court has issued arrest warrants against Russia's President and Children's Rights Commissioner for the war crimes of unlawful deportation and transfer of children. We reiterate the need for States parties to comply with the arrest warrants to ensure justice for the abducted Ukrainian children and their families and recall the essential contacts policy of the United Nations.

It is our collective responsibility to ensure that every child can be spared the scars of war – the protection of schools, hospitals and other health facilities are key in this respect. We therefore call upon all States to support the Safe Schools Declaration and to ensure the protection of hospitals as well as of humanitarian and medical personnel. We recall Security Council Resolution 2730 on “protecting the protectors” put forward by Switzerland in May which we have cosponsored, and emphasize the need for full respect of IHL at all times.

Mr. President,

Liechtenstein is deeply troubled by findings of the Secretary-General's report that reveal a 25% increase in conflict-related sexual violence which disproportionately affect girls. Such crimes are often underreported, particularly when perpetrated against boys, due to stigma, cultural taboo and lack of criminalization. As a result, male survivors of sexual violence are often unable to access legal remedies as well as medical and mental health services. We commend the tireless advocacy of organizations, including the Liechtenstein-based All Survivors Project, which raise awareness of this overlooked aspect of conflict-related sexual violence. All reported crimes must be vigorously investigated and prosecuted, including by the ICC that has done groundbreaking work in this regard.

I thank you.