



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

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SECURITY COUNCIL – OPEN DEBATE – “WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY: PREVENTING CONFLICT-RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE THROUGH DEMILITARIZATION AND GENDER-RESPONSIVE ARMS CONTROL”

STATEMENT BY MYRIAM OEHRI, COUNSELLOR, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President,

We thank Malta for convening this timely debate on demilitarization and gender-responsive arms control. In spite and because of the record number of armed conflicts since World War II as well as the record global military spending, we must reimagine a world of peace. The United Nations, which at its very heart is a peace organization, has prioritized disarmament efforts since its inception. The full and effective implementation of milestone documents such as the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the Arms Trade Treaty, will be key to a more peaceful world.

We are particularly concerned by the large number of civilian casualties, including women and girls, and the increased use of explosive weapons in urbanized areas, and call upon all States that have not yet done so to sign the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated

Areas (EWIPA). The use of small arms and light weapons by non-state actors such as in Haiti is of particular concern as well, and we call for the effective implementation of Security Council Resolution 2699 (2023) on the prohibition of the supply, sale and transfer of such weapons to Haiti.

Mr. President,

Sexual violence continues to be a crime committed in virtually all armed conflicts – with various scopes and links to policies. While women and girls are disproportionately targeted, in certain circumstances, such as prison settings, men and boys even make up the majority of victims. We are deeply concerned about reports of widespread and systematic use of sexual violence against Ukrainian prisoners of war by Russian authorities and thank the All Survivors Project for its important work in this regard, including today's side event on the topic.

We are alarmed by the many credible reports of rape and gang rape since the outbreak of the armed conflict in Sudan over a year ago, underscoring the immense suffering of the civilian population at the hands of the two rival factions. Following the latest report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, many of these incidents may amount to war crimes.

And we are also alarmed by the findings of the report by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict on conflict-related sexual violence committed on October 7 and in its aftermath. All reported incidences of conflict-related sexual violence must be vigorously investigated and prosecuted, including by the International Criminal Court.

Mr. President,

Structural discrimination against women and girls and their systemic persecution simply because of their gender in some part of this world, such as in Afghanistan, remains unacceptable and violates international law. We call upon this Council to monitor the situation in Afghanistan carefully and hope for a speedy appointment of the Special Envoy by the Secretary General to support the implementation of the independent assessment's recommendations, with a view to protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all. We also condemn the ongoing gender persecution by Iranian authorities and the violent repression of the peaceful "Women Life Freedom" movement, including through the weaponization of rape and other forms sexual violence against both female and male protesters. Impunity for these crimes under international law must end.

I thank you.