



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

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NEW YORK, 19 SEPTEMBER 2012

SECURITY COUNCIL – OPEN DEBATE

**CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT**

**STATEMENT BY STEFAN BARRIGA**

MINISTER, DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President,

At the outset, let me join others in thanking you for organizing this timely debate. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Canada on behalf of the Group of Friends of Children and Armed Conflict, but also wishes to make a few points on its own. We welcome the Annual Report of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict, and the appointment of the new Special Representative, Ms. Leila Zerrougui. We reaffirm in strongest terms our continued support for the mandate of the SRSO. Despite today's vote it remains very clear that the mandate also includes situations of concern other than on the agenda the Council. We thank the former SRSO Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy and her office for their highly dedicated work to strengthen the mechanisms of the Security Council addressing the plight of children affected by armed conflicts. We welcome the latest expansion of the trigger of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms (MRM) to recurrent attacks on schools and/or hospitals, and call on the Council to expand the MRM trigger to the two remaining grave violations: denial of humanitarian access and abductions. We further call on the Security Council to ensure that SRSO Zerrougui regularly briefs the Council and its Working Group, including on situations such as Libya and Syria.

Mr. President,

The report of the Secretary-General again makes for disturbing reading. We are particularly concerned about the increasing number of persistent perpetrators listed in its annex. It is imperative that the Council uses all the tools at its disposal to strengthen accountability and stop these tragic developments. The Council should expand, where relevant, the mandates of existing Sanctions Committees and also consider allowing the Working Group to directly apply target measures against individuals. Furthermore, the Council should enhance its cooperation with international courts and make more frequent use of its power to refer situations to the International Criminal Court (ICC). The recent ICC sentence against rebel leader Thomas Lubanga Dyilo for recruiting and using child soldiers in hostilities shows the relevance of the Court in this regard. We believe that the ICC's deterrent effect should also be applied in the situation in Syria, where government forces have been killing and maiming of children as well as attacking schools and hospitals, as outlined in the annex of the SG's report .

Mr. President,

We agree with others that without effective investigations and prosecutions, national criminal laws will exert little deterrent effect. We must therefore increase our efforts at strengthening the capacity of national courts to investigate and prosecute violations against the rights of children. This is in line with the principle of complementarity, according to which international courts should only get involved as a last resort. Ultimately, the responsibility to respect the rights of children in armed conflict rests with the parties themselves. We call on all persistent violators to develop and implement action plans that may eventually lead to their de-listing. To that end, the States concerned must allow direct contacts between the office of the SRSB and relevant non-State actors.

Mr. President,

A further way to strengthen the UN Child Protection System is to apply the normative framework of the Security Council on Child Protection in a more consistent manner. Research reveals that the Security Council often fails to reflect its thematic agenda in its country-specific work. In close partnership with Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict and the support of the Office of the SRSG we have therefore developed a mobile application which seeks to increase the impact of the agenda in the work of the Council on mission mandates of peacekeeping operations and criteria for sanctions committees. The app will provide policy-makers with readily available key documents and appropriate language for these negotiations. The application was launched today by the SRSG at an event organized by the Mission of Liechtenstein in cooperation Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict. We would like to thank all who attended the event and made the launch a success.

I thank you.