



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

SECURITY COUNCIL - OPEN DEBATE

WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

Madam President,

Thank you for convening this important open debate and your efforts in mainstreaming the WPS agenda in the work of the Security Council during your membership.

Women's full, equal and meaningful participation in all stages of conflict prevention and resolution is a key pillar of the WPS agenda. Security Council resolution 1325 and subsequent decisions bring gender-responsive approaches for sustaining peace to the forefront and highlight women's crucial role as agents of change. In many parts of the world women have advanced political change and contributed to sustainable peace – as peacekeepers, mediators, lawyers, journalists and human rights defenders, among others. At the same time, women in those key roles often face violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, intimidation, threats, harassment and reprisals for their work to bring peace and prevent and end conflict. We are concerned about the rise of verified killings of women human rights defenders, journalists and trade unionists in conflict-affected countries as documented by OHCHR in 2020.¹

We owe it to these women that their human rights are respected at all times and that the environments they operate in are safe and enabling at all stages of the conflict cycle. This includes

¹ Women and peace and security report of the Secretary-General S/2021/827

overcoming gender stereotypes and inequalities and moving away from patriarchal masculinities which are at the root of gender-based violence and discrimination. It also requires adequate medical, psycho-social and legal assistance for all victims and survivors, and that perpetrators are held accountable.

Madam President,

Liechtenstein remains deeply concerned about the risk of targeted violence women and girls are exposed to in many conflicts, including in Yemen, Myanmar and Ethiopia. We note in particular the precarious situation of women and girls in Afghanistan who have fought with great courage and resolve for their rights and freedoms. The ongoing financial and humanitarian crises have disproportionately affected women, children, minority communities and female headed households.² And violence against Afghan women is sadly, and yet again, on the rise.³ Liechtenstein calls for the respect and protection of all human rights, including women's and girls' rights to free expression, movement, quality education and employment. Those exercising effective control must comply with their obligations under international human rights law and relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. UNSCR 2593 (2021) encourages "all parties to seek an inclusive, negotiated political settlement, with the full, equal and meaningful participation of women that responds to the desire of Afghans to sustain and build on Afghanistan's gains over the last twenty years in adherence to the rule of law." The backsliding in women's political participation over the last few months is disastrous for Afghanistan's future and its prospects for peace and must be arrested immediately.

We also want to highlight the situation in Belarus, on which the Council has been silent so far. Many women have stood up with courage and conviction to advance critical political dialogue for democracy and the respect of human rights. The "Women in White" movement is just one example to illustrate women's crucial role as agents of change around the globe. We condemn the excessive use of force and unlawful retaliation by the authorities against peaceful protesters. Mass detentions, intimidation, torture and sexual and gender-based violence against

² <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=28011&LangID=E>

³ <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2021/10/news-afghan-women-leaders-speak-at-the-un>

those who seek political change and respect for democratic principles⁴ need to be investigated and perpetrators must be held accountable. It is the obligation of the United Nations, and this Council in particular, to work towards ending impunity for such crimes and ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peacemaking, conflict prevention and peacebuilding as well as their protection.

I thank you.

⁴ A/HRC/47/49 Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus, Anaïs Marin