



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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SECURITY COUNCIL – PEACEBUILDING AND SUSTAINABLE PEACE: DIVERSITY, STATE BUILDING AND
THE SEARCH FOR PEACE

STATEMENT ATTRIBUTABLE TO H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President,

Thank you for bringing this topic to the attention of the Council today, which is under-studied given its prevalence amongst Council situations. For our comments, we base ourselves on your analysis that the majority of Council situations begin as intercommunal tensions with roots in ethnic, racial, regional, partisan and religious differences. While factually accurate, this in no way takes anything from the fact that diversity is every country's strength. To fully realize this strength, communities within a country, in particular those that are in a minority within a State, must be able to benefit from governance arrangements that allow them to flourish and which are in line with international human rights standards.

Mr. President,

Liechtenstein sees this process of seeking out governance arrangements as an extension of the right of self-determination, expressed internally within a State. Applied in such a manner, expressions of self-determination can include self-governance, autonomy and devolution arrangements within a State, and as a preventive measure, with the aim of preventing internal tensions over questions of governance from developing into violent conflict. By applying a 'self-determination lens' to the causes of and solutions to conflict, the UN can significantly strengthen

its conflict prevention and resolution architecture. Three elements of this approach are worth highlighting for the Council's consideration:

Firstly, the Council should encourage relevant actors to uphold the human rights of minority communities as a means to enhance conflict prevention. This is not only the right thing to do under international human rights law – it is also a powerful way to defuse tensions, prevent conflict and facilitate economic prosperity as well as sustainable development, given that many conflicts grow out of forms of inequality, injustice and exclusion from power, opportunity, services and security that specifically affect minority groups and indigenous peoples. Important work on the link between conflict prevention and the protection of the human rights of minorities has been undertaken by the UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues, and the topic should inform the Council's effort to prevent conflict, including its recurrence, for example in post-conflict peace processes and transitions.

Second, the Council should ensure that efforts to prevent and resolve conflict are inclusive. Figures from UN Women show that women's participation increases the probability of peace agreements lasting two years by 20 percent, and by 35 percent the probability of a peace agreement lasting 15 years.¹ The lesson here is simple - inclusion works. And of course, processes should not only be inclusive of women, but of all affected groups, including youth, ethnic and religious minorities and indigenous peoples, as well as civil society. In doing so, peace processes create the broadest mandate possible and expand a constituency for peace that lasts. Inclusion is a significant strand of the work of both the Peacebuilding Commission and this Council, and Liechtenstein hopes that both will continue to uphold high standards for inclusion in situations on their respective agendas.

Third, the Council can encourage internal governance arrangements that meet the aspirations of relevant communities, and that are in line with international human rights standards. Forms of self-governance, decentralization and devolution of powers not only contribute to upholding SDG

¹ <https://wps.unwomen.org/participation/>

16.7,² but as the UN-World Bank *Pathways for Peace* report notes, “[s]elf-governance arrangements such as federalism have proven effective in many cases in reducing local violent conflict”.³ One way to meet the aspirations and uphold the human rights of such communities is therefore to devolve power meaningfully, to a level in which it can be practically exercised in the service of sustainable peace.

Mr. President,

As part of our engagement on this issue, Liechtenstein earlier this year published a “Handbook on Self-Determination in Conflict Prevention and Resolution”. The handbook sets out a range of practices for States, mediators and others interested in preventing and resolving conflict seen through the ‘self-determination lens’, as well as case studies of relevant conflicts. We stand ready and able to engage with Council members further on the recommendations raised there. Going forward, the Council could also consider other steps within the UN system to enhance its consideration of the topic of this open debate. For example, the Council could encourage DPPA to consider how questions relating to self-determination, seen in a broad sense as discussed above, may be relevant to the causes of and solutions to conflict, including in mediation processes. Further collaboration with the PBC, which has dealt from time to time with issues relating to self-governance and autonomy in conflict resolution, may also enhance the Council’s capabilities in this regard.

I thank you.

² “ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels”
<https://indicators.report/targets/16-7/>

³ United Nations; World Bank. 2018. *Pathways for Peace : Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*. Washington, DC: World Bank. © World Bank, p. 146