



PERMANENT MISSION OF HUNGARY

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**Security Council open debate on protection of civilians in armed
conflict**

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Intervention by

H.E. Ambassador Katalin Bogyay

Permanent Representative

Your Excellency, Mr. President,

Honorable members of the Security Council, Dear Colleagues,

Hungary align itself to the position expressed on behalf of the European Union as well as the statement by the Group of Friends of R2P.

We would like to thank the Polish Presidency of the UN Security Council for organizing this debate at such an appropriate time, when we are the witness of series of violations against civilians/human beings.

Today, as the line between the international and internal armed conflicts is becoming more blurred, vulnerable groups are deliberately and systematically targeted during conflicts in a systematic and the right interpretation of the rules of the international law is being questioned, the international community has the primary responsibility to step up all its efforts to **strengthen the respect of human rights and international humanitarian law.**

Mr. President,

Hungary believes that **the best way to protect civilians is the prevention of armed conflicts.** The United Nations should use its entire available means for early warning and for political mediation in order to prevent the outbreak of conflicts and reverse the escalation of hostilities.

Hungary dedicates special attention to the principle of R2P as it is a core element of prevention. We are taking a multi-tier approach towards implementing R2P in the practice by focusing on both **prevention** and penalization. We must pay **persistent attention to the warning signs** of potential atrocity crimes, particularly those of **serious violations of human rights** in certain areas. Human rights mechanisms can contribute to the effective and timely prevention.

This is why Hungary strongly **supports utilizing the prevention mechanisms of the Human Rights Council** and as a member of the Human Rights Council for the term 2017-2019, one of our priorities is to work towards the **prevention of these atrocity crimes** and to **promote the already existing tools** of the international community.

Moreover, **accountability and ending impunity are key** for the protection of civilians in armed conflicts. Ensuring accountability for serious international crimes – as proved deterrence – should be an essential component of efforts targeting protection of civilians. Therefore, Hungary has always been dedicated to support the efforts driving the UN system towards accountability, coherence and transparency.

In this context, we need to set up **effective accountability mechanisms** by enhancing capacities of national institutions. Our attention must **focus on empowering victims** of armed conflicts. We need to strengthen reporting mechanisms and we have to make sure that any violations against civilians are investigated and prosecuted.

At international level, Hungary supports the work of the **International Criminal Court (ICC)** and as well as the work of the **International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM)**, assisting the investigation and prosecution of the most serious crimes committed in Syria.

The **UN Security Council**, as the ultimate guarantor of international peace and security, has a major role in preventing and adequately responding to the violations against civilians in armed conflicts. It is more important than ever to enhance the performance of the SC. The Council should pay more attention to further **improving its working methods** and **increasing transparency**.

As an active member of the **Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) Group**, we encourage all Member States to sign the ACT Code of Conduct that aims at refraining voluntarily from the use of veto in the SC in cases of mass atrocities, genocides, war crimes

and crimes against humanity. 116 member states already done so, including 9 current members of the Security Council.

Hungary attaches **great importance to the protection of women and children**. We are deeply appalled by the systematic and widespread use of sexual violence in armed conflicts as a tool to terrorize populations, destroy communities and deprive them of their identity, cultural roots and therefore, their future as a community.

We support international initiatives aimed at combating **sexual violence in conflict**. Women and girls are especially threatened by rape, forced marriage and sexual slavery. Their protection, return and safe re-integration into their communities, as well as eliminating stigma can only be successful in partnership with local communities and moderate religious leaders. We cannot forget about **children born to survivors of rape**. Ensuring birth registration and acceptance by the family and community is key in this regard.

One of the most outrageous violations of **international humanitarian law** is the increase in attacks on civilian infrastructure, such as healthcare facilities and schools. **Attacks on education**, including on students, teachers and schools, with special regard to female students,

has a dramatic impact on the lives of children, breaking their hope for a better future.

Mr. President,

Ensuring the human rights and international humanitarian law of women, children and their empowerment is vital in bringing long-term stability, peace, reconciliation, and creating a necessary environment for sustainable social and economic development.

I thank you for your attention.