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**Open debate of the Security Council
on
Children and Armed Conflict
31 October 2017**

**Intervention by
H.E. Ambassador Katalin Annamária Bogyay
Permanent Representative**

Your Excellency, Mr. President,
Secretary General Mr. Antonio Guterres,
Special Representative Ms. Virginia Gamba,
Honorable members of the Security Council and Distinguished Colleagues,

I wish to thank France for providing us the opportunity to reflect on this extremely important topic, Secretary General Guterres for the presentation of the comprehensive report, as well as Special Representative Ms. Virginia Gamba and Mr. Mubin Shaikh for their powerful messages.

Hungary aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union as well as by the Group of Friends of Children and Armed Conflict.

Hungary is State Party to the **Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol** on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, and is firmly committed to the protection and promotion of the rights of children, especially in armed conflicts, where they are particularly vulnerable. We endorsed the **Paris Principles and Commitments**, and strongly encourage all Member States to do the same, along with other relevant international instruments.

We condemn in the strongest terms the abduction, recruitment, use, abuse, enslavement and trafficking of children, as well as the indiscriminate and targeted attacks by non-State armed groups, including violent extremist and terrorist groups, on civilian infrastructure, such as on schools and hospitals. These acts aim at terrorizing communities and depriving them of their very future. Girls are in even higher danger of sexual violence and abuse, as well as child, early and forced marriage. We condemn all perpetrators, and call for holding them accountable.

Compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law, and with relevant UN Security Council resolutions are key. **We should put children first**: the full protection of the human rights and respect for the best interest of children should be taken into account in counter-terrorism efforts, peace and ceasefire agreements, including their treatment as primarily victims - and not perpetrators - when associated with non-State armed groups.

Beyond immediate humanitarian assistance, **long-term assistance is indispensable**, including the reintegration of children, providing for a protective environment, ensuring their access to quality education, and addressing their specific physical and mental health needs, with a view to creating a basis for transformative and durable change for the society as a whole, leading to sustainable peace and stability.

In order to ensure rehabilitation and reintegration of survivors of sexual violence, we should promote **awareness-raising** in communities on the criminality of recruiting children, **and fight against stigmatisation**, hand in hand with local communities, civil society, grassroot and faith-based organisations, with a special focus on girls. The presence of child protection and gender experts throughout post-conflict accountability and reintegration is most valuable in this regard.

Recruitment through social media is another alarming emerging phenomenon. In order to prevent and reverse this trend, partnership with the private sector is indispensable, with a view to disseminate information, provide first-hand examples from survivors and create a positive alternative to extremism.

Mr President,

Hungary stands firm in these efforts.

Thank you for your attention.