

UN Human Rights Council

23rd Session – Item 3

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons and the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial executions

Geneva, 29 May 2013

Statement by AUSTRIA

Thank you, Mr. President.

Austria fully aligns herself with the European Union statement.

Mr. Heyns,

We would like to thank you for your interesting and timely report focussing on lethal autonomous robots. In this context, Austria would like to refer to the statement of the European Union and to the cross-regional statement of Austria, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand and Switzerland on this issue. Mr. Special Rapporteur, due to your expertise in this field, are there any criteria from a human rights or humanitarian law perspective which would imply that a distinction between drones and robots, or rather, between autonomous and semi- or partly autonomous weapons is necessary?

Would you consider ethical guidelines on lethal autonomous weapons as a useful tool in order to ensure that the use of such weapons complies with international human rights law?

Mr. Beyani,

We thank you for the presentation of your report and commend you for the constructive and highly professional way in which you have successfully contributed to the advancement of the human rights of internally displaced persons over the past three years in exercise of your mandate. Austria will again initiate a resolution on the extension of the IDP-mandate and we look forward to continuing our support for your work in the coming years.

Mr. Special Rapporteur, your recent report focuses on the specific human rights challenges faced by internally displaced women and girls. We welcome your focus on

women and girls and their particular vulnerabilities in cases of internal displacement and we particularly welcome the specific recommendations which you have made to governments, international organisations and other relevant actors.

Austria wants to highlight three particular aspects in this regard, first of all the grave and persistent problem of sexual and gender-based violence. The Human Rights Council will address this issue also during this session in several ways. In your opinion, what concrete steps should governments undertake to prevent sexual and gender-based violence in the context of internal displacement effectively?

Secondly, you also highlight the need to dramatically improve the collection, analysis and dissemination of detailed data, disaggregated by age, sex, location and other relevant indicators. In this regard, the valuable work of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and the Joint Internal Displacement Profiling Service deserves to be welcomed. We would like to ask you what measures affected states and the international community can take to further improve the availability of accurate data?

Thirdly, you emphasise the need for ensuring the meaningful participation of IDPs, including IDP women, in all relevant decision-making processes. How can the Human Rights Council contribute to the further advancement of participatory approaches?

Finally, we also express our appreciation to you for your reports on three country visits to Afghanistan, Cote d'Ivoire and Sudan. We welcome the significant progress which you have observed in Cote d'Ivoire. We fully support your call on the Government of Sudan to expeditiously ratify the African Union's Kampala Convention on internally displaced persons.

In conclusion, we re-iterate our appreciation to both Rapporteurs for your tireless efforts and assure you of our continued support.

Thank you.