

Statement by Chad at Security Council Meeting on: The situation in the Middle East: Referral of the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court

22 May 2014
(Unofficial Transcript)

For more than three years, the situation in Syria has worsened daily. There is no sign of improvement or calm on the horizon. Nearly every day brings its share of new victims. Syrian civilians, in particular women, children and the elderly, are caught in the middle and continue to be the targets of deliberate attacks, daily facing air strikes, artillery fire, barrel bombs, forced displacement, car bombings, rape, torture, abduction and kidnapping. Such acts are serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law and their perpetrators, whatever their affiliation, should be brought to justice.

Chad has always denounced and firmly condemns all kinds of violence and atrocities against civilians by whomsoever. Unfortunately, we note with regret that all such atrocities have not only gone unpunished but have become more frequent as the conflict escalates. We believe that the scope of violence and the lack of prospects for a peaceful way out of the crisis jeopardize the conditions conducive to the credible and fair prosecution of the most serious crimes in national courts. In that regard, not to support an initiative seeking to combat impunity and the denial of justice would be a serious failure by Chad as a State party to the Rome Statute. In that strong belief and wanting to contribute to the common effort to put an end to the suffering of victims, Chad voted in favour of the draft resolution that we have just voted on but, unfortunately, not adopted.

While voting in favour on principle, Chad regrets that the draft resolution, like those on Darfur and Libya, provides for the discretionary treatment of a category of State nationals with respect to the same crime. However, such exemptions, which are in some cases justified, are difficult for victims to accept and undermine the principle of settling scores and the ideal of independent and credible international criminal justice for all, without exception, for the most serious crimes.

In conclusion, Chad reiterates its appeal to all parties to the Syrian conflict to immediately meet their obligation to protect civilians, humanitarian personnel and medical vehicles and to allow the humanitarian agencies unimpeded access to the entire civilian population.