

The President (*spoke in French*):

I shall now make a statement in my national capacity.

I thank Ms. Amos, Mr. Leroy and Mr. Šimonović for their briefings. I associate myself with the statement to be made by the Acting Head of the Delegation of the European Union.

I wish to stress three points. First, when grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, war crimes and crimes against humanity are committed, it is the responsibility of the Security Council to intervene to end them. That is what we did in Libya. The Security Council authorized the forces of the coalition to protect civilians under bombardment ordered by their leaders. By striking Colonel Al-Qadhafi's forces before they entered Benghazi, France and its partners helped to prevent a massacre there. By demining the port of Misrata, we enabled humanitarian assistance to be delivered and civilians to be evacuated.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the Security Council gave the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) the resources it needed to fulfil its protection mandate. By helping to neutralize heavy weapons being used against civilians, UNOCI prevented the commission of atrocities. We hope that the resolve UNOCI has demonstrated will serve as a point of reference for all United Nations peacekeeping operations. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission should continue to intervene with equal resolve. We must support the Congolese authorities in building the capacity to ensure the effective, long-term protection of civilians.

Secondly, France believes that the protection of civilians and human rights is a priority in all situations. We are determined to ensure that the Security Council shall continue to take measures tailored to individual situations. For instance, the Government of Syria is firing on and besieging its own people, and resorting to arbitrary arrests by the thousands, forced disappearances and torture. This must end. Demonstrators, human rights activists and journalists should be freed and freedom of expression respected. The Government should cooperate with the commission of inquiry of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and authorize humanitarian access, including for the assessment mission dispatched by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Thirdly, the protection of civilians requires the victims to receive justice. The main responsibility in that respect falls to States, but the international community should support or supplement their efforts if they fall short. That is why the Government of Sri Lanka should undertake independent and impartial investigations into the alleged grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights law documented in the report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Experts, and those responsible should be tried. The Government of Sri Lanka must implement the other recommendations contained in the report and continue to cooperate with the United Nations. In Darfur, although the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for crimes against humanity and genocide, nothing has changed. Humanitarian access continues to be impeded, civilians continue to be bombed, and militias continue to surround the refugee camps. That is unacceptable. In recent months, the Security Council has demonstrated its capacity to apply the

principles of the protection of civilians to concrete situations in which civilians are threatened.
We must pursue those efforts.

I resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Uruguay.