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Madam President,

I would like to thank Germany for taking the initiative to organise this meeting and for giving us the opportunity to co-sponsor it. I would also like to thank the excellent speakers we have heard today. They have reminded us of our duty to do everything in our power to end the heinous crime of using sexual violence as a method of warfare.

Twelve years ago, the Brussels Call to Action to Address Sexual Violence in Conflict and Beyond (2006) advocated providing national justice systems with the necessary resources to prosecute the perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence. The protection of civilians in cases of sexual violence in conflict situations is, in the first instance, the responsibility of the Member States. It was with this goal that Belgium financed the team of United Nations experts to help national authorities to strengthen the rule of law.

My question to the Special Prosecutor of the Special Criminal Court of the Central African Republic is how he thinks the Court could contribute to the national justice system in sharing best practice for combating impunity in cases of sexual violence in conflict situations. What lessons can be learnt from his experience of recognising the right of all victims to compensation?

Accountability and combating impunity are an integral part of an approach that aims to prevent violent conflict in general and sexual violence in conflict situations in particular. The international courts and accountability mechanisms play a vital role in combating impunity for sexual violence in conflict situations. Belgium salutes the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court for its 2014 general policy document, which sets out measures for prosecuting sexual and gender-based crimes, based on the best practice of the ICTY and the ICTR, and which then inspired similar efforts by the IIIM in Syria and UNITAD in Iraq.

My question to the representative of the Global Justice Center is how could the Security Council better coordinate its work to stop sexual violence in conflict situations with the work carried out through international accountability mechanisms that map sexual violence in conflict situations and provide a database for current or future accountability?

This Council has for a long time stated its intention to consider sanctions as a deterrent for the parties committing sexual violence in conflict situations. Based on this declaration of intent, it is our responsibility to systematically and explicitly include sexual violence as an independent designation criterion in sanctions regimes. We should also explore the possibility of using the Informal Expert Group on Women, Peace and Security to create specialised recommendations for sanctions regimes.

How would the Special Prosecutor of the Special Criminal Court in CAR assess the impact of an independent sanction criterion in the sanction regime in the Central African Republic?