

## **Report of the Meeting to Present**

### **The Draft Lucens Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict**

#### **Hosted by:**

**The Permanent Mission of Norway  
The Permanent Mission of Argentina  
The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA)**

**2 April 2014  
Palais des Nations, Geneva**

### **Introduction**

On April 2, 2014, the Permanent Missions of Norway and Argentina in collaboration with the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA)<sup>1</sup> hosted a meeting on the *Draft Lucens Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict* (Guidelines) at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

The overall purpose of the event was to inform representatives of Permanent Missions in Geneva and other interested UN and humanitarian organizations about the Guidelines. To do this, a panel of experts presented the rationale for and process of their development, their content, and their relevance and practical implementation from an operational perspective. The experts also outlined the next steps regarding their finalization, endorsement, and formal launch.

Following the expert panel, representatives of states issued statements of support for the Guidelines. These public statements of support were followed by interventions by international organizations, which referenced the importance of the Guidelines and how they are, already, being implemented in the field. The event ended with concluding remarks by the moderator.

### **Highlights**

There were eighty-four participants at the event, including the representation of thirty-four states, eighteen international organizations and academic institutions, and seven UN agencies. In addition to the supportive opening remarks by host countries Norway and Argentina, fifteen states issued statements of support for the Draft Lucens Guidelines and three organizations made positive interventions with respect to their implementation. State representation was regionally diverse and included delegations from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Oceania. UN agencies and international organizations sent delegates representing different sectors including humanitarian, human rights, child protection, education, and international law.

Below is a summary of the event.

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<sup>1</sup>The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA) was established in 2010 by organizations from the fields of education in emergencies and conflict-affected fragile states, higher education, protection, international human rights, and international humanitarian law who were concerned about on-going attacks on educational institutions, their students, and staff in countries affected by conflict and insecurity. The Steering Committee of GCPEA includes: CARA (Council for At-Risk Academics), Human Rights Watch, the Institute of International Education/IIIE Scholar Rescue Fund, Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict (PEIC), Save the Children, UNESCO, UNHCR and UNICEF.

## Opening Remarks

**Ms. Anita Bay Bundegaard**, Director and UN Representative, Save the Children, Geneva, and event moderator, initiated the opening remarks with a note of welcome to the participants. Ms. Bundegaard thanked the Norwegian and Argentinian ambassadors for co-hosting the event, and showing their support for the Draft Lucens Guidelines. Ms. Bundegaard introduced the GCPEA with special reference to Save the Children's role as a founding member of the steering committee. She further stressed Save the Children's engagement with the Draft Lucens Guidelines process, both operationally (in the field) and through advocacy efforts in international and regional fora. Ms. Bundegaard said a few introductory words about the Draft Lucens Guidelines process and concluded by expressing her optimism that the event would bring more states into the process to bring the Guidelines to their final status, endorsement and wider implementation.

**H.E. Mr. Steffen Kongstad**, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Norway, offered opening remarks that stressed the importance of access to education. He noted that the Norwegian government would attach greater attention to this issue in its foreign and development policy, including through strengthening related development policy and increasing efforts to support and protect education in emergencies. Ambassador Kongstad also stressed Norway's commitment to increasing the protection of civilians during conflict. He referenced GCPEA's recent report, *Education under Attack 2014*, and highlighted its research relating to attacks and military use of schools and universities. He affirmed Norway's readiness to support efforts that contribute to the reduction and elimination of such practices and welcomed the work of GCPEA in this regard. Ambassador Kongstad also welcomed the Draft Lucens Guidelines as an "important initiative that has a practical approach to tackling the issue." He recognized that the Guidelines would need "champions" and that Norway was ready to provide its support in that regard. Ambassador Kongstad declared Norway's interest in working with states, NGOs, and the GCPEA on the promotion and implementation of the Guidelines.

**H.E. Mr. Alberto Pedro D'Alotto**, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Argentina, offered opening remarks in which he recognized the great importance of the Draft Lucens Guidelines, as an initiative that could reduce the use of schools as part of military actions. He noted that Argentina was one of the first states to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. Ambassador D'Alotto recalled UN Security Council resolutions, including SC Res 1998, which calls on all parties to a conflict to respect the civilian character of schools. He affirmed that the Draft Lucens Guidelines are a clear step in this direction and should be supported by States. Indeed, the Guidelines are a useful and simple instrument that can assist States in taking concrete measures to better protect schools in conflict settings. Ambassador D'Alotto highlighted the positive meeting on the Guidelines between Argentinian officials and the GCPEA in Buenos Aires in December 2013. He concluded by affirming Argentina's commitment to leading the Draft Lucens Guidelines process toward a final text and endorsement in the near future.

## Expert Panel

**Mr. Bede Sheppard**, Deputy Director, Children's Rights Division, Human Rights Watch (Human Rights Watch is Chair of the GCPEA Steering Committee), opened the expert panel with a presentation about military use of schools and universities: its definition, scope, prevalence, and impact. He noted that this practice is a global phenomenon, occurring in the majority of countries with armed conflict over the past nine years. Commenting on its significant economic cost, Mr. Sheppard gave the example of South Sudan, where eighteen schools were used by government forces with a cost of \$67,000 to repair a single school. He cited the effects of this practice on both safety and education: teachers and students are exposed to physical and sexual violence and recruitment as child soldiers and school attendance and enrollment diminish. Mr. Sheppard outlined the Draft Lucens Guidelines process, including the rationale for their development, the expert consultations leading to a draft text, the public release of the text accompanied by briefings with government delegations in capitals around the world, and now, the process toward bringing the draft text to final form, endorsement and implementation by states. The next

significant step would be an international meeting of supportive states in autumn 2014 where the Guidelines text would be finalized, the formal endorsement process would be agreed on, and the international launch event—planned for 2015—would be decided.

**Mr. Steven Haines**, Professor of Public International Law, University of Greenwich, Drafter of the Draft Lucens Guidelines, discussed the approach taken by the Guidelines as well as a review of each of the six guidelines. With respect to the former, he stressed that the Guidelines are not intended to change international law. Rather, they respect the law as it stands—drawing from both international humanitarian and international human rights laws—and try to encourage a change of behavior in practice of the fighting forces of *both* state and non-state armed groups. To do this, they are intended to be practical, achievable and responsive to what is happening on the ground. Accordingly, they reflect current good practice. While they have been produced specifically for armed conflict, they may also be applied when conditions for armed conflict do not yet apply (i.e., before or after and in conditions of insecurity or violence). Mr. Haines discussed each guideline in turn, and concluded his presentation recalling that the Guidelines will not be implemented in a single manner, but that each state must find its own way of implementing them.

**Ms. Ellen van Kalmthout**, Senior Education Adviser, UNICEF, Coordinator, Global Education Cluster, commented on the importance of the Draft Lucens Guidelines process in bringing attention to a widespread issue that was not previously defined. She also positively remarked on the engagement of a variety of stakeholders at different levels in this process. The process has offered an opportunity to expand partnerships between military, education, humanitarian and human rights actors in a way that has not been seen before. She affirmed that education clusters are advocating in country to find alternative solutions with respect to military use. Ms. Kalmthout stated that the Guidelines are an excellent and manageable framework and can play an important role in the protection of schools. She concluded by reaffirming UNICEF’s strong institutional support of the Guidelines.

**Ms. Ann Makome**, Judicial Affairs Officer, Criminal Law and Judicial Advisory Service, Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions, United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), focused on the relevance of the Guidelines to work in the field. In noting the timeliness of the Guidelines, she referenced the advocacy around UN Security Resolution 1998 with respect to the protection of schools, including the call for enhanced monitoring of the military use of schools. She highlighted three impacts resulting from SC Res 1998: 1) greater visibility of and awareness about military use of schools, including its scope and impact, 2) better advocacy by child protection actors with parties to armed conflict to vacate schools (citing the example of South Sudan whereby armed forces vacated schools after the government signed an action plan) and 3) better practice by the UN’s own peacekeepers, who have been instructed and are receiving training with respect to the protection of schools, including directives not to use them during operations. Importantly, they have also been instructed to signal to child protection actors any such use by other actors. DPKO has integrated a prohibition of military use into its “United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual” and training (and is currently piloting regional training sessions). Ms. Makome closed by noting that the Guidelines provide very pragmatic and practical guidance for UN peacekeepers, which they can bring back to their national forces.

## **Statements by Supportive States**

### **FINLAND**

We would like to express our commitment to the guidelines process. It is the firm belief of Finland that the continuation of education is extremely important for children, youth and even adults in conflict areas. Education provides a sense of normalcy and safety, and brings hope for the future. Education is also a powerful driver of economic and sustainable development, for more peaceful and equitable societies. Protecting education is therefore of key importance. Finland’s development policy program states that Finland promotes human development by advancing the lives of children, and particularly girls’ right to education, from early childhood all the way up to higher education. Building the capacity of educational institutions is also important. Thus, protecting education and schools & university from attack is central. We see the draft Lucens guidelines as a valuable and pragmatic contribution to promote respect for IHL and human rights (HR). As

we said in the common Nordic statement during the Security Council (SC) Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict in March this year, “we urge all member states to act to protect schools, teachers and students from attacks and to hold perpetrators accountable. We condemn attacks on schools and the military use of schools, and urge member states to take steps within their own legislation, military policies and doctrine, as well as internationally, to end such use of school facilities and protect children’s right to education. We welcome the drafting of the Lucens Guidelines and we are committed to support their finalization and endorsement by states”. Therefore, Finland looks forward to cooperating with you all on this issue, and we are committed to participating on the meetings of the supporting states.

## **MEXICO**

We would like to recognize the efforts behind the drafting of the guidelines. We have no doubt on the relevance and the timeliness of the guidelines. You may remember Mexico’s commitment to fight against the involvement of children in armed conflicts in every way. As to the guidelines themselves, we welcome the approach and we believe that the simplicity and pragmatism increase the likelihood of their widespread adoption. If I may make a couple of preliminary comments regarding the guidelines themselves, I believe that guideline number 2 could benefit from an explicit humanitarian emphasis to make it clear and not to allow any misinterpretation of it. And for guideline number 4, we would like to see stronger language to prevent attacks to schools; there might be room for a stronger language there as well.

## **NEW ZEALAND**

New Zealand is very pleased to restate its ongoing close interest in the Lucens Guidelines. In our view, the guidelines merit serious consideration and they are obviously important for both states and non-state actors (NSA). We all know that the consequences of the conflicts that we witnessed around the world can be very grave. They may include children and young people experiencing gaps in their schooling and lacking access to essential educational resources. The consequences of those deficiencies and the trauma of the conflicts themselves continue to be felt long after the fighting stops. We note in particular the relevance of these guidelines to the education of girls; the right that girls have to education is one that the international community has fought hard for over many decades. Yet it is a right particularly vulnerable in the context of armed conflict, and we see the guidelines as being a very important step towards protecting the said right. We are pleased to see that the guidelines draw on both IHL and HR norms on the right to education, and we note that the right to an education means nothing if students cannot attend their educational facilities. New Zealand’s current practices would be consistent with the guidelines; nonetheless we propose to use these guidelines in planning military operations should we need to and to making operational decisions. We intend to draw on the guidelines in NZ’s defense forces training on the law of armed conflict. Finally, we very much encourage other states and relevant parties to carefully and favorably consider the guidelines and we look forward to further discussions on this very important and timely issue.

## **NETHERLANDS**

The protection of schools during armed conflict is of crucial importance. This priority was discussed intensively in a meeting yesterday about Syria. We warmly welcome the initiative of the Coalition to create specific guidelines and the Guidelines not only restate existing rules that parties to armed conflict have to adhere to in relation to schools but they also contain good practice from around the world regarding the protection of schools. This good practice usefully serves as an invitation to parties to actually change behavior. My colleagues in The Hague have been involved in shaping the guidelines and we hope that more states and NGOs become involved in the initiative. We look forward to initiatives aimed at finalizing and further promoting the guidelines.

## **LUXEMBOURG**

I would like to use this opportunity to express the support of Luxembourg to the Lucens Guidelines. In this context, let me reiterate that the protection of education and more generally child protection in times of armed conflict is a priority to Luxembourg, first through its actions in the Security Council where, as of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013, Luxembourg chairs for 2 years the group on children and armed conflict, and second through its actions here in Geneva. Allow me to point out on this occasion that in the context of the Luxembourg presidency of the Security Council, resolution 2139 of which Luxembourg was a co-author and resolution 2143 which has been proposed by Luxembourg have been adopted unanimously. Both resolution express a deep concern at the military use of schools and demand as well their demilitarization. Let me also point out that the high level group on humanitarian challenges in Syria, which is co-chaired by Luxembourg, has defined the demilitarization of schools as one of its 6 priorities in the humanitarian response in Syria. Recognizing that education is not only a fundamental human right for all children but also one of the most efficient tools for development, Luxembourg tried through its actions at the UN to strengthen the protection of schools and education in times of armed conflict.

## **PORTUGAL**

I will just mention how committed my country is to this process and to seeing it to a good harbor. Our internal process of internalization among our armed forces and our security forces as well is ongoing. Discussions have attracted a lot of interest on competent ministries. From our side, this gains a particular dimension when we bear in mind that Portugal is one of the main sponsors of a traditional resolution on right to education, which should be coming up next June in the HRC, and also because during our last mandate as an elected member of the Security Council we have been very much involved in the successful negotiations and adoption of resolution 1998; this is something that we hold very dear. Just to close, a personal impression reading the Guidelines and being walked through them by you today, I'm tempted to make an extensive interpretation of the text, so when we talk about education, I think we obviously have to talk about educators, and especially through the videos that Bede has brought here, I think that when we think about the role that educators (not only teachers but educators at large) play in the lives of these children and when those lives and those roles are obviously put at risk by the military use of schools, I think this inevitably brings us to a much more vast universe which we will of course discuss in due time, and this for us is very important indeed. Count on Portugal to be part of the efforts.

## **FRANCE**

We have read with great attention and also with great concern the GCPEA report documenting the military use of schools in various armed conflict situations, including Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. We are following with great interest the Lucens initiative; we consider that states must be encouraged to work with civil society to implement best practices in order to better protect education in situations of armed conflict and the panelists this morning have shown how the Lucens Guidelines can be instrumental in doing so. My capital has already provided some comments to the Guidelines, and we will go on to be involved in the process towards its finalization.

## **ALGERIA**

We encourage this type of initiative because it gives us opportunities to come up with concrete ideas to protect schools and universities. Algeria paid special attention to this question, and you know that last week during the last Human Rights Council, Algeria introduced a resolution on how to protect children. Some countries in Africa and the Middle East are facing the military use of schools, and I want to ask if the organizers, especially Norway, whether it has taken any initiative to open consultations in this subject with regional organizations like the African Union and Arab League. And don't you think that we have to insert in the Guidelines the idea on what one will have to do on the situation of post conflict in terms of rebuilding schools, especially schools destroyed during this conflict or to reopen schools which have been closed during this conflict.

## **GERMANY**

Germany shares the concerns expressed in OP 18 of Security Council Resolution 2143 which was adopted on March 7 this year that schools and other education institutions are used in international armed conflicts as well as in non-international armed conflicts by armed forces and by organized armed groups respectively. We would certainly wish this practice to be discontinued. We do take note of ongoing deliberations and the update we received on the status of the Lucens process today. We will report the relevant details back to Berlin in order to enable the competent bodies of the German government to assess the process at this stage and in due time to define the position Germany considers adequate and constructive in this respect. While we wish to express our appreciation of the work of the driving forces behind this process, Germany will give careful consideration to the information we received today, especially in the briefing, on both the substantive as well as the procedural developments in a spirit of open-mindedness to the importance of the issue before us.

## **LITHUANIA**

The growing use of schools for military purposes and increase in attacks on schools not only seriously disrupt children's right to access to education but is a violation of international humanitarian law. Schools must enjoy immunity from war. Impunity for violence against children at schools as well as lack of access to education due to fear of attacks must be addressed. Monitoring, assessment and report are crucial in this regard. Some progress exists but we need to do more on monitoring and reporting partnerships, to improve data collection and verification. Dialogue between local community leaders, armed groups, governmental forces, government officials is also very important, as well as strengthening legislation in this regard. Lithuania welcomes the development of Lucens guidelines. They may guide states to improve their domestic legislation and military doctrines. Some countries have already introduced legislation and relevant practices prohibiting the military use of schools. More states need to follow these examples. We also note an important role played by regional and

intergovernmental organizations in protecting all conflict-affected children. In this regard, we would like to ask the panelists to elaborate on possible avenues for regional and sub-regional organizations to contribute to the finalization of the Lucens guidelines and also to promoting their practical implementation.

### **SWITZERLAND**

Switzerland welcomes the drafting of the guidelines and we are committed to supporting their finalization and endorsement. The military use of schools converts the school into a military target under international humanitarian law and makes students, teachers, and learning facilities not only vulnerable to attacks but also to reprisals and violence by parties to the AC. Reports from the GCPEA document that during the period from 2005-2012, schools and universities in 24 countries around the world have been used by parties to the conflict as military bases, firing positions or armories. Switzerland strongly condemns the widespread targeting of schools, teachers and students and the practice of using schools and universities for military purposes during armed conflict; it deplores a negative impact on the safety and access to education of children and youth. Switzerland calls on all parties to armed conflicts to refrain from the military use of schools. Switzerland calls upon all parties to armed conflicts to respect international humanitarian law and we reiterate that state parties have an obligation to impartially investigate and prosecute alleged violations committed by individuals responsible for the use of schools and universities in a manner that violates international law. We must fight against impunity of perpetrators of such serious violations. Switzerland therefore calls upon all UN member states to take the necessary measures to protect students, teachers, schools and universities from attack and military use. The Draft Lucens Guidelines presented here today are an excellent tool to this end, and can have an invaluable impact on people living in an AC. We call upon states to endorse and implement these guidelines in their military policies and doctrine.

### **QATAR**

The state of Qatar is proud that a Qatari NGO—Education Above All/PEIC—is part of the GCPEA. We are here today to support the initiative of the Draft Lucens Guidelines. These guidelines, which aim at reducing the use of schools and universities by parties to armed conflict, provide an added value to the existing framework for the support of students and education and insecurity in conflict situations. Relevant international humanitarian law and human rights norms and good practices are already applied by some states. Realization of the access to education and education places should be immune from attack. That is why we demonstrate our commitment to these Guidelines and their process today.

### **SOUTH AFRICA**

South Africa is fully aware of the incidents of using schools as a military tool during armed conflict. Education is one of the key elements of human rights and contributes to the development of children. Schools should be a safe area for children and using them as a military tool compromises their security whilst denying them their right to education. South Africa condemns such kind of action and calls upon all the conflicting parties to adhere to international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We share the sentiment that armed conflict causes the loss of education, kills ambitions and the development of children. In this regard, we are consulting with the relevant stakeholders across government to develop a permanent national position. South Africa's preference in terms of development of laws and standards in IHL and IHRL is to uphold the rules of international binding laws and not just mere guidelines. We will always consider guidelines as a transition to legally binding norms and standards. Finally, South Africa seeks the demilitarization of schools and civilian facilities in times of armed conflict.

### **SLOVENIA**

We give great importance to the right to education and we believe in the power of education, which is why we remain strongly concerned at increasing reports on the attacks on schools and the military use of schools. We welcome the process of drafting the Lucens Guidelines and as we already expressed our support in the Security Council's Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict, I would just like to repeat our support to the drafting of the Lucens Guidelines and their finalization, which should be followed by a broad endorsement by states.

### **COTE D'IVOIRE**

The right to education is a fundamental one and it must be protected. For this reason, my delegation welcomes the Draft Lucens Guidelines. I have a question: you know that the ICRC plays an important role in the implementation of international humanitarian law, so I would like to know what will be the interaction between the Coalition and the ICRC?



## Other Interventions

### **INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC)**

We have followed with great interest this initiative as an external observer. At the ICRC, we share the same analysis as the GCPEA, i.e. that military use of schools might lead to attacks on schools and as such might lead to serious humanitarian consequences and is a serious humanitarian issue that we need to tackle. From a legal perspective, even if international humanitarian law (IHL) does not prohibit as such the military use of schools, IHL addresses the consequences of the military use of schools, and one of those consequences is the loss of protection which is as such an important deterrent when belligerent parties think about using schools for military purposes. Moreover, IHL contains a number of principles which help restrict the military use of schools, and I would like to highlight here the principle of precautions against the effects of attacks, and also the obligation to provide special respect and protection to children. So here we would like to highlight the importance to respect at the very minimum IHL rules. So here we would like to highlight the importance to respect at the very minimum IHL rules. Regarding the Guidelines, we take note of the fact that it is a non-binding instrument which does not purport to change the law but rather aims at developing practical tools to change behaviors on the ground. And this is also something which is important for the ICRC to highlight, the importance of implementation of existing rules and of looking at what happens on the ground. So the Guidelines help to raise awareness on this important issue and constitute in our view a good basis for discussion and a tool that we can use in engaging with parties to armed conflict, in order to minimize the military use of schools.

### **NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL (NRC)**

NRC is part of the Global Coalition and we would like to stress that these guidelines are very welcome and necessary. We work with 100,000 of children who are affected by conflicts and also teachers and other educators who are trying to provide education to those children around the world. The vast majority of them are in the countries that are covered or would be covered by these Guidelines. We reiterate what ICRC has put forward: these are an essential articulation of existing obligations and so should be read in that way, and they do not take away from the force of the obligations on the party to a conflict to abide by their obligations. We are already using these Guidelines as a tool in countries; they have already provided practical mechanisms that can be used when engaging with different parties to the conflict and different government entities. We would encourage and urge the member states to provide much more support in terms of their own diplomacy with the different actors that they have influence over, and also that there is more focus on how to practically support the actors on the ground from the humanitarian and the development side to engage in this. In this respect, I would like to highlight that education is an emergency response and what these guidelines do is they also bring out the fact that education and child protection are essential components of any emergency response. Often what we see is that education is something that can happen afterwards, and this is the perception that one can see in areas where education and child protection is often under-funded. The three areas that are the most unfunded include education and protection (eg. Syria). I would encourage that in order to implement the protections that are required, including those who are engaging with these parties to the conflict, that we also need the funding to be able to do that. Also one other note of caution is that when we think about the more practical experience in Afghanistan, to consider the new forms of how conflict is being engaged in. The Guidelines may be interpreted in terms of traditional conflict but also the actions of member states in terms of how they link political and military strategies together, which can also politicize educational facilities, and what may seem practical in a context such as Switzerland or in Norway or other places can actually lead to perceptions of schools being something that can be used as a military target. I encourage that we focus on finalization and also the necessary resources for implementation.

### **GENEVA CALL**

Geneva Call has been quite actively involved in the development of these Lucens Guidelines and we are quite pleased to see that this almost final product is quite pragmatic, realistic, and an achievable document, which is very important for its effective implementation. Geneva Call works in hand with other actors who promote IHL but also IHRL in situations of armed conflict, and we specifically engage with actors on the issue of child protection, including the question of attacks against schools and the use of schools. The feedback we got so far from these armed groups is that they say that we are attacking schools and we acknowledge the problem but that if we don't do it, there is a military advantage for the government which are themselves attacking schools anyways. The main issue with the Guidelines in terms of their effective implementation is the good faith, because we know there is no explicit prohibition regarding attacks against schools. Therefore in this sense, Geneva Call would like to call on the states which are here to support the endorsement of these

guidelines and to call for other states to also support this process and sign the Lucens Guidelines. We believe that the only way for armed groups also to respect themselves is if the states play the role of models. Lastly, on the issue of awareness raising, Geneva Call believes that this is a very important matter. Nevertheless, armed groups are also parties to the armed conflict and also they need to be informed and sensitized about the norms relating to education and attacks against schools, therefore we also as an organization encourage states to facilitate access of the UN, of the NGOs and other agencies to engage into a dialogue with the armed groups so that we can sensitize them on the crucial issue of prohibitions of attacks against schools. This is even more important because armed groups can also play a role in protection of children and also facilitating access of children to schools, and also making schools more protected in times of armed conflicts.

### **Closing Remarks**

By way of closing the event, Ms. Bundegaard thanked the panelists, the states that made supportive statements, and the international organizations that offered positive interventions. She gratefully acknowledged the leadership and support of the Permanent Missions of Norway and Argentina in co-hosting the event. She concluded by calling on the states present to affirm and intensify their support of the Lucens Guidelines and actively participate in the next steps, including participating in the autumn meeting of supportive states.