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Department for Theology
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Oral Statement: Item-10 Enhanced ID on HC Oral Update and Report on DRC

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**Emmanuel Gore
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Thank you Madam HC for your report and update.

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) remains deeply concerned by the political climate in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), while the results of the general elections held late last year continue to be disputed, and tensions are still running high between political opponents and their constituencies. LWF also regrets the ongoing deterioration of the humanitarian situation as a result violent confrontations between armed groups, which continue to cause more displacement of particularly women, children, the elderly and vulnerable groups. This has been further exacerbated by the Ebola outbreak in particular in the north of Kivu and Ituri regions, thereby placing greater need for unimpeded humanitarian access to mitigate hunger and starvation, and arrest child malnutrition and health risks.

Mr President, while LWF notes some progress with some armed groups giving up their arms, such as in Central Kasai region, there has been no comprehensive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration program in place that provides incentive for youth to pursue livelihood as civilians. Meanwhile sexual and gender- based violence continue to persist.

Therefore, to address these pressing issues, LWF calls on all parties to refrain from violence and to exhaust all non-violent conflict resolution means to resolve disputes. We also call on the Government to improve humanitarian access by removing bureaucratic impediments, and to set up a comprehensive DDR program to incentivize and support youth who are willing to renounce violence and give up their weapons with access to alternative livelihood. And finally, LWF urges the Government to ensure fair inclusion and representation of women in leadership positions and civil service as provided for in the constitution and other international legal instruments to better combat sexual and gender-based violence in DRC.

I thank you.