STATEMENT

PERMANENT MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP BY

AMBASSADOR KINGSLEY MAMABOLO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

IN THE
SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY UNDER AGENDA ITEM "STATUS OF THE PROTOCOLS ADDITIONAL TO THE GENEY A CONVENTIONS OF 1949 AND RELATING TO THE PROTECTION OF VICTIMS OF ARMED CONFLICTS"

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the law of armed conflict, and assuring its implementation on the ground. Just as national governments have the primary responsibility to assure the safety and protection of their civilians, in times of peace or violent conflict, so national courts have a clear obligation to bring to court those accused of grave breaches of IHL and national laws based upon it. The law in itself does not protect; only the effective implementation and respect for the law protects. We are also of the view that the United Nations should play a significant role in respect of the implementation of IHL. During times of peace it is important for the UN to assist Member States, at their requests, with dissemination and effective domestication of IHL instruments. Many IHL instruments are very technical in nature and as such, some developing countries do not always have the resources nor the capacity to achieve the effective implementation of the IHL. The United Nations should also play a vital role in monitoring adherence to and persecution of IHL violations during times of armed conflict. It is important to note that a proactive approach of dissemination and education should be the primary focus; not a reactive approach where action is taken only after grave breaches of IHL have taken place.

Mr Chairman

The armed conflicts destabilizes Africa in a big way, politically, economically, and socially and give rise to loss of life, displacements, poverty, child malnutrition, and the loss of livestock. As we speak, Africa is home to half of the world's displaced

fourth meeting of States in 2015 after which a report will be presented to the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in 2015.

I thank you for your attention.