“In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the UN has one of the largest human rights monitoring teams, which is an integrated team both of DPKO and of OHCHR. And the team has a monitoring and reporting mandate that comes both from OHCHR’s general mandate and from the UN Security Council’s mandate which calls upon the peacekeeping mission, MONUSCO, to monitor, report and advocate for the protection of human rights. As part of that mandate, the human rights team on the ground did an investigation into a police, law and order operation in the capital of Kinshasa at the end of 2013 and early 2014 that was – we believe – well-intentioned initially but ran quite afoul. Our team investigated allegations of a large number of extrajudicial killings and disappearances by the police carried out in the context of a law and order operation. We engaged the government on this over the course of 8 or 9 months, including in writing, and through a number of meetings, and eventually shared a report with them, received their comments, and published a report that documented 41 cases of violations of the right to life. The Government reacted quite strongly to the report, including declaring me persona non grata two days after the report was published.

“Following the publication of the report, there was quite a strong and concerted and very principled reaction from the UN. Initially the peacekeeping mission itself interacted with the Government to try to reverse the decision, which did not work, and published a very strong statement denouncing the decision and asking publicly for a reconsideration of the decision by the Government. This was followed by a very strong statement by the Secretary-General of the United Nations actually condemning the decision of the Government and calling for a reconsideration. And other parts of the UN, note the High Commissioner also, making a very strong statement to the same effect as the Secretary-General’s. Privately, there was also a number of letters written of confidential démarches and actions taken from within the Secretariat vis-à-vis the Government. But I think the public démarches had a very strong effect as well, in particular in terms of mobilizing further support. And the strong public and confidential reaction from the UN mobilized a large number of member States, international organizations, international NGOs and importantly national NGOs to also express their great concern and dismay at this decision, and pointing towards the need to carry out an investigation – for the Government to carry out an investigation – into the allegations that were documented in the report.”