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Statement at the 52nd Session of the UN Human Rights Council

High-Level Segment

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Mister (Vice-)President,
Excellencies,
Colleagues,
Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start by expressing my sympathy towards the thousands of victims of the catastrophic earthquake in Turkey and Syria. Liechtenstein expressed its solidarity with the victims in both countries from the first minute and immediately decided to provide CHF 200'000 as an emergency relief. We will consider further contributions in due course.

Mr. President,

One year ago, we met at the Human Rights Council in complete shock about the tragedy that the Russian aggression against Ukraine has brought to the Ukrainian people. Now, one year into this unprecedented and unprovoked war of aggression, we are still in shock over the overwhelming evidence of crimes that have been committed as well as the human rights and humanitarian crisis that has unfolded.

It is important that the perpetrators of the most serious crimes in Ukraine in the context of the ongoing Russian aggression are held accountable. In this respect, Liechtenstein strongly supports the establishment of a special tribunal on the crime of aggression, as aggression is ultimately the origin of all other international crimes committed in Ukraine. Given that the crime of aggression is a leadership crime, it is also of crucial importance to ensure that there are no immunities, including for Heads of State and other persons in political leadership positions. A special tribunal for the crime of aggression created through an agreement between Ukraine and the United Nations, on the recommendation of the UN General Assembly, would ensure such comprehensive accountability and help deter would-be aggressors in the future.



Liechtenstein continues to stand in solidarity with the Ukrainian people and reaffirms its support for the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Ukraine. In 2022, Liechtenstein provided approximately CHF 2 million for humanitarian projects in Ukraine and its neighboring countries. We have focused on emergency relief, support for displaced people in a from Ukraine as well as on projects to ensure accountability for the most serious crimes. Liechtenstein will continue its humanitarian engagement in Ukraine and will also do its part when it comes to reconstruction.

Mr. President,

The international community celebrates this year the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the 30th anniversary of the *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action* as well as the 25th anniversary of the *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*. These anniversaries remind us that the international community came together decades ago to agree on key principles to uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms and to prevent and respond to violations thereof as well as to international crimes. We should seize these anniversaries as an opportunity to recommit ourselves to the values and principles agreed upon in these milestone documents.

Let me be clear, upholding human rights and fundamental freedoms is a legal obligation and a prerequisite for sustainable development and peace. And whenever Governments or de facto authorities decide not to uphold human rights, it has dire consequences for large parts of the populations. We see that for instance in **Myanmar** where the military coup two years ago has led to a further deterioration of the already difficult human rights situation in the country and in crimes against humanity committed by the Tatmadaw regime.

We also see that in **Iran** where the peaceful protests in favor of the respect of rights, in particular for women and girls, have been responded to by a violent crackdown resulting in hundreds of deaths and thousands of arbitrarily arrested among protesters. We furthermore see such consequences in **Russia, Belarus** and **Egypt** where individuals are imprisoned for exercising their rights to freedom of expression as well as to freedom of association and assembly. There are obviously also major human rights violations in Afghanistan where the take-over by



the Taliban has led to drastic deterioration of the living conditions for civilians, particularly for women and girls.

Mr. President,

Unfortunately, these examples are only a few among many. It is important that the Human Rights Council addresses these situations and enables discussions on human rights situations which merit the attention of this Council. This is exactly why the Council has been established and all its members adhere to these principles.

It is our common responsibility to use this Council as a forum to discuss some of the most pertinent human rights challenges of our time and to find common ground to address them adequately. This includes, among many others, the persistent discrimination of women, contemporary forms of racism, the impact of the environmental crisis and climate change on human rights as well as challenges for the right to privacy stemming from new and emerging technologies.

Liechtenstein will continue to actively promote and protect human rights, at the domestic level but also in its foreign policy. We are looking forward to our fourth review under the UPR at the upcoming 43rd session of the UPR in May and to a constructive engagement with all delegations. Last but not least, I would like reiterate our strong support for the UN human rights system and urge all States to actively and constructively engage in order to resolve the human rights challenges we are facing. I thank you.