



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK**

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

THIRD COMMITTEE

ITEM 26: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

STATEMENT BY Noah OEHRI, SECOND SECRETARY

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. Chair,

Almost halfway to 2030, the state of implementation of the sustainable development goals requires our urgent critical scrutiny. The multiple crises we have been witnessing over the last years have slowed, or even reversed, progress on many goals. And in many instances, they have disproportionately affected women and girls. Indeed, the Covid-19 pandemic, climate change and armed conflict have further deepened gender inequality across the globe. We cannot effectively address or overcome these challenges as long as half of the world's population does not enjoy equal rights and opportunities. It is therefore more important than ever that we re-commit and strengthen our efforts towards the advancement of gender equality as both a fundamental human right and a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable future.

Mr. Chair,

Women around the world continue to face societal and legal barriers which prevent them from full and equal participation in decision-making processes. Often among the most active agents of change at grassroots level, they routinely face discriminatory practices that exclude them

when legislation is negotiated and adopted. Liechtenstein has long made the empowerment of women and girls a priority of its foreign policy. We believe in women as agents of change and support their equal, full, and meaningful participation in all decision-making bodies as a condition for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda. States must do more to protect the rights of women to engage on equal terms throughout all phases of political transition, to guarantee their right to speak and to assemble freely. In line with our firm commitment to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, we particularly endorse the participation of women in conflict prevention and in peace and reconstruction processes. In the context of an increasingly polarized world with a record number of protracted armed conflicts, gender equality remains a crucial, but unfortunately often undervalued factor, for the restoration and maintenance of international peace and security. Earlier this year, the UN General Assembly has recognized the important role and historic contribution of women in our own profession, diplomacy. Ever since the first female ambassador of Liechtenstein was appointed to this very organization more than three decades ago, the representation of women in diplomacy has grown consistently in our foreign service, making up more than half of my colleagues today. Liechtenstein will continue to shed light on the special needs of women and girls as well as on their empowerment and gender equality in our foreign policy.

Mr. Chair,

According to the latest statistics, the number of people living in modern slavery has increased by over 10 million over the last decade. These concerning developments clearly run counter to our commitment to end this heinous crime in line with SDG target 8.7. More than half of those affected, or about 27 million people, are women and girls. Traffickers capitalize on the existing inequalities. As a result, women and girls are at heightened risk of forced marriage, sexual exploitation, forced labour or domestic servitude. The fight against modern slavery and trafficking remains a core priority for Liechtenstein – and our key international activity in the SDG area. The “Finance against Slavery and Trafficking” (or FAST) initiative initiated by Liechtenstein more than three years ago places financial institutions at the heart of the fight against these horrific crimes – in particular in the area of compliance, responsible investment and financial innovation. It has undertaken activities with respect to the risk of human trafficking as a result of the massive refugee flows from Ukraine, both in the area of prevention and of financial inclusion

of the Ukrainian people who have fled their country due to the Russian aggression. In this context, FAST has collaborated with Eastern European Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) to promote the European financial inclusion measures. And, the three largest banks in Liechtenstein are providing refugees from Ukraine with fee-free bank accounts, as a result of a joint financial inclusion initiative with FAST. These actions clearly demonstrate the impact that the financial sector can have. We invite all interested States and the UN system to join us in our effort to implement the FAST blueprint in order to make progress on an important part of the 2030 Agenda.

I thank you.