



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

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ITEM 67: REPORT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

STATEMENT BY H.E. CHRISTIAN WENAWESER, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President,

We thank the President of the Human Rights Council for presenting a comprehensive and rich account of the Council's work over the last year. With the breadth of its thematic activities and its responsiveness to human rights emergencies the Council lives up to its role as the central and permanent human rights body of the United Nations. Since its creation in 2006, the Human Rights Council has established itself as an authoritative voice in the promotion and protection of human rights, including through the truly Universal Periodic Review and its body of Special Procedures, and through its close engagement with human rights defenders. The review of the Human Rights Council in 2011 has confirmed the generally positive perception in the membership: We collectively refrained from an institutional or substantive overhaul, but rather used the opportunity to strengthen the Council's institutional standing in relationship to the General Assembly and the Third Committee. A large majority of the Council's decisions are taken autonomously and are immediately implemented. But the Council also reports to the plenary of the General Assembly, as we witness today, and feeds its recommendations into the dedicated General Assembly Committees, namely the Third and the Fifth Committees. This arrangement represents a finely calibrated political compromise at the time. We believe that it

has served both the Council and the General Assembly well and constitutes a good basis to go forward.

Mr. President,

As a strong supporter of the Human Rights Council, Liechtenstein sees also room for improvement in a number of areas. As pointed out by others, not all provisions of the Council's founding resolution, General Assembly resolution 60/251, are implemented in practice. Paragraph 9 of that resolution stipulates that Council members shall uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights. This has been a binding political commitment by the membership of this Assembly and States have to live up to this responsibility when electing the membership of the Council. We call on States to publicly renew that commitment and adapt their election practice accordingly as a contribution to strengthening the Council in its mission and daily work. If these provisions lack implementation it is due to a lack of political will, rather than a deficiency of resolution 60/251.

Furthermore, Liechtenstein supports calls for a more efficient and effective work and functioning of the Council. The Council's efficiency and impact on the ground can certainly benefit from a review of its working methods and setting of priorities. Liechtenstein welcomes the effort undertaken in the framework of the Council in Geneva, which can and should build on experience and best practice from the entire UN system.

Mr. President,

Let me now turn to the substantive points in the report. We welcome the resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council in its 34th session (A/HRC/RES/34/22) on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, and in particular the Council's decision to dispatch an independent international fact-finding mission in order to establish the facts and circumstances of the alleged human rights violations by military and security forces in Myanmar, in particular in Rakhine State. The creation of this fact-finding mission is an important step in ensuring full

accountability for perpetrators and justice for victims. Events since have illustrated that more is needed, and we hope that the General Assembly will make its own contribution.

We furthermore welcome the resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council in its 36th session (A/HRC/RES/36/31) on human rights, technical assistance and capacity-building in Yemen, and in particular the overdue establishment of an international, independent investigative body to carry out comprehensive, impartial and transparent investigations of atrocities and violations of international law in Yemen. Such a body is crucial to monitor and examine the human right situation and the abuses of international human rights and international humanitarian law. With this decision, the Human Rights Council has finally shown its readiness to address this urgent situation and sent a clear signal for the need of accountability.

Mr. President,

Our commitment to the protection of human rights is first and foremost at the national level. The most significant recent measure is the creation of an independent National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) in accordance with the Paris Principles. We have thus implemented long-standing recommendations of various international human rights bodies.

The Liechtenstein NHRI is being developed independently by civil society, without the involvement of the government, while receiving funding from the State. Its responsibilities include advising public authorities and private parties on human rights issues, supporting victims of human rights violations, informing the public about the situation of human rights in the country, carrying out investigations and recommending measures, preparing comments on draft laws and ordinances and on the ratification of international agreements, and promoting dialogue with national and international bodies. Liechtenstein is convinced that the new institution generates an added value in the protection of human rights and thus further strengthens the high standard of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

I thank you.