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STATEMENT BY H.E. MRS. DOMINIQUE HASLER
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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen

We gather this year at a time of enormous challenges: Geopolitical conflicts, mass displacement, food insecurity and the effects of the pandemic continue to make people suffer around the globe and pose massive threats to human security. And we need more ambition and effective action to fight climate change. In short: We are off track to meet the Sustainable Development Goals. The conclusion from all of this should be obvious to all: We urgently need to recall our commitment to “leave no one behind”, and to come together, for the sake of our common interest, embrace multilateralism and redouble our political investment in the United Nations. Instead, we are witnessing a frontal assault on the Charter of the United Nations itself. The aggression against Ukraine is nothing less than an attack on the international world order established after the second world war. Indeed, this order, which we have all built up together, and which is best represented right in this General Assembly Hall is being challenged in its very foundation. This act of aggression, carried out with complete disregard for the most basic rules of international law, is an unprecedented test to our resolve to stand up together for our international order. We in Liechtenstein are committed to defending our freedom. We have joined with our partners from our region, in particular with the European Union, but also from other parts of the world, to stand united with Ukraine and to stand against aggression, wherever it is committed.

Mr. President

We have witnessed dramatic events in the past few months, developments of historic dimensions for the United Nations: A military build-up on the borders of one of the founding members of this organization, meeting the threshold of the threat of use of force foreseen in the UN Charter, accompanied by denial and disinformation. After the military attack on Ukraine commenced, the Security Council was blocked, predictably, yet again through the veto. However, for the first time in decades, it then invoked the Uniting for Peace formula and

handed its competence over to this Assembly. The resolution passed in this hall, with an overwhelming majority, on 2 March, will stand out as a landmark in the history of the United Nations. Condemning the aggression against Ukraine in unequivocal terms was of enormous importance. It backs the international response to this assault on our rules based order. Just as importantly, it lays the foundation for what we should do going forward: Holding those political and military leaders criminally accountable who have initiated the aggression committed against Ukraine. The source of all the crimes committed in Ukraine is the crime of war itself. Therefore, as President Zelensky also made clear in his speech to this Assembly this week: addressing the crime of aggression is a powerful deterrent to help defend the international order reflected in the UN Charter. The newly announced sham referenda for parts of occupied Ukraine are a continuation of the aggression, and make a mockery of the right to self-determination – a cornerstone of the UN Charter and the international order.

Mr. President

This is also a moment for us to not just reflect on the future role of this organization – but to decide together which United Nations the planet needs today. This organization is playing a crucial role in the current global challenges – be it humanitarian assistance, global public health, nuclear safety or food security. It enjoys strong support and high levels of trust among the wider public. At the same time, it continues to disappoint – especially in its core task, the maintenance of international peace and security. Its mission “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war” is deeply ingrained in the collective conscience of the peoples on whose behalf it works. But more often than not, it does not meet these expectations. For us in Liechtenstein, maintaining peace and security remains the core purpose of this organization. And we remain committed to being part of the change required to have the United Nations at the center of this effort – through prevention, mediation and collective action. In this spirit, Liechtenstein has put before this Assembly the “Veto Initiative” adopted earlier this year. I wish to thank all those partners who have supported this idea. And I am grateful for the way it continues to resonate, far outside this building. The Veto Initiative of course introduces a very important measure of accountability for the use of the veto. But more

importantly, it creates a policy space for this Assembly – to step in where the Security Council is paralyzed or deadlocked, as it may well be on frequent occasions in the future. The veto, indeed, is no longer the last word.

Mr. President

In some of the ongoing conflicts, we are witnessing the use of military force in its most crude and brutal form. But in parallel, we are also dealing with cyberwarfare, which has added an insidious and often invisible layer of challenges to our collective security. Liechtenstein is a small country in the heart of Europe. We do not have armed forces. Therefore, we must rely solely on the respect for the rule of law and on strong partnerships in the region and beyond. We are certainly shocked by the frontal assault on the European security architecture. And we are horrified that military force, in its crudest form is, against our hopes and beliefs, applied again in our part of the world. And yet, in thinking about our national security, our biggest concern are the insidious ways in which cyberspace is used to undermine democratic institutions, the foundations of our societies, the very basis of our prosperity and of the peace we have enjoyed for long decades. Addressing these threats and enforcing international law in cyberspace is therefore one of the key challenges we must face.

Mr. President

When addressing this Assembly in the past, Liechtenstein has regularly talked about the nexus between peace and justice. About the need to ensure accountability for the most serious crimes under international law, if we are to be successful in our efforts to achieve lasting peace. Time and again – in Myanmar, in Syria, in other places – we have witnessed how impunity has led to more and often even more serious atrocities, to crimes against humanity, to genocide, causing immense human suffering, destroying societies, and destabilizing whole regions. The aggression against Ukraine is but the most recent illustration of this sad pattern. This war is not only illegal in and of itself, it is also carried out with systematic disregard for international humanitarian law, in particular the Geneva Conventions, mirroring the playbook of the conflicts in Syria and elsewhere. As a long-standing supporter of the International Criminal Court, we

have supported the referral of the situation in Ukraine to the ICC. This referral is a decisive test in two ways – of the effectiveness of the Court. But also of our consistency in extending political and financial support to it. This is our chance to illustrate our resolve not just to prosecute crimes committed in Ukraine, but to give steady support to an ICC that does its work independently, across the globe, and fully in line with its founding treaty, the Rome Statute.

Mr. President

Our work to address the UN's role to safeguard peace and security must embrace a comprehensive notion of security, with climate change one of the key threats. Every year natural disasters and extreme weather events increase in severity and frequency. Yet our collective understanding of the threat is not matched by the determination to move forward – together, with the required sense of urgency. Progress in the climate negotiations has been insufficient – and the pandemic, armed conflicts and challenges to energy supplies have done their part to contribute to a negative outlook. Our collective action in the framework of the COP process will remain instrumental. But it may well not be enough, in and of itself, to achieve the goals we have set ourselves in the Paris Climate Accord. Many of our friends are contemplating legal avenues to fight climate change. And in line with our commitment to the rule of law, we are open to work with them. In conclusion: Protecting the planet and saving the livelihoods of future generations are the biggest challenges of our time. And the ultimate test of our ability to be truly united nations. It is our duty to take action together, to ensure that no person, no country and no region are left behind. Everyone committed to these goals will find a reliable partner in us.

I thank you.