



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

SECURITY COUNCIL – OPEN DEBATE ON THE MIDDLE EAST

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President,

The Middle East is in turmoil and experiences dangerous levels of escalation that must be of immediate concern to the Security Council. The rising tensions between the US and Iran and associated military actions are a source of grave concern and a threat to international peace and security. They have already caused horrendous human suffering, including as a consequence of the shooting of civilian aircraft Ukraine International Airlines 752, killing all on board. We call on all parties, directly and indirectly involved, to exercise maximum restraint and to recommit to diplomatic means to reduce tensions. The UN Charter sets out clear benchmarks with respect to the use of force, in particular on the very restricted and well-defined cases where it is legal to use force against another Member State. Liechtenstein is concerned that recent developments undermine fundamental tenets of international law – provisions on which our collective security depends and which the Security Council is mandated to protect on behalf of the entire international community.

Mr. President,

We have observed with growing concern over the past months in particular that the right to self-defense, in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter, is increasingly put forward as the legal basis for preventive military action without appropriate justification. Sufficient legal justification would, as a minimum, include evidence of the imminence of an armed attack, as well as of the necessity and the proportionality of measures taken in response. It would need to clearly spell out the framework of applicable law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law. Excessively expansive and unchecked interpretations of Article 51 undermine the international rules-based order and are an obstacle to the United Nations mandate to maintain international peace and security. We attach the utmost importance to preserving the integrity and authority of the UN Charter, both with respect to this situation as well as in the context of other relevant crises.

Mr. President,

Liechtenstein is concerned at the precarious state of the JCPOA – a milestone achievement of multilateral diplomacy that has strengthened the international rules-based order and achieved concrete results in terms of nuclear non-proliferation. The security gains associated with it need to be preserved and full compliance with its terms needs to be restored. Liechtenstein recognizes the decision by the European signatories to trigger the dispute settlement mechanism as an effort to that end. While the proceedings will critically depend on a constructive approach by the remaining JCPOA parties, Liechtenstein also recalls that resolution 2231 continues to be in force and thus continues to be binding on all States, with a special responsibility for all members of the Security Council. A positive result could send an important signal of détente and allow for agreement to serve its intended purpose as a building stone for a larger peace effort in the Middle East encompassing all relevant aspects for regional stability and security.

Mr. President,

Recent discussions in the Security Council on Syria have demonstrated, once again, that the Council can still not muster the political will to prioritize the protection of the Syrian people, even if the humanitarian necessities are perfectly clear. Liechtenstein thanks those members of the Security Council, in particular among the elected members, who have put their collective weight behind achieving at least a minimal solution for the continued cross-border delivery of aid. They have acted responsibly against strong political opposition, in keeping with their role as accountable members of the Council who serve on behalf of the UN membership. The same membership has expressed itself predominantly and clearly on the need to ensure accountability for the worst crimes committed in Syria. While the Security Council continues to ignore these views, in particular the call for an ICC referral, Liechtenstein welcomes that the IIIM is now established as a full-fledged subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, including in budgetary terms. As the IIIM continues to diligently implement its mandate it not only advances the cause of justice in practical terms, it is also a constant reminder of the essential role of criminal accountability for the future of Syria. Peace and justice cannot be separated in a political process aimed at sustainable and lasting peace in Syria. Liechtenstein welcomes the clear commitment to that effect by the participants of the Brussels conference and remains fully aligned with it.

Mr. President,

Liechtenstein continues to support a two-State solution based on applicable international law, in particular international humanitarian law, and relevant Security Council resolutions as the only pathway to a sustainable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Developments on the ground, including with regards to the question of Jerusalem and renewed settlement activities, risk to undermine the very prospect of such a solution and are in violation of international law and relevant Security Council resolutions. Liechtenstein follows with interest the activities by the ICC Prosecutor, and notes, in particular, that her preliminary examination into the Situation in Palestine has concluded with the determination that all the statutory criteria under the Rome

Statute for the opening of an investigation have been met. Such proceedings by a standing and authoritative international court are the expression of an effective international rules-based order as advocated consistently by large parts of the UN membership. Political attacks against the ICC can only intend to weaken the rule of law and to strengthen the rule of might – a trend that we are determined to oppose, along with many others. We will thus continue our support for the ICC in providing justice undeterred and with the confidence of its broadly supported mandate.

I thank you.