



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

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

THIRD COMMITTEE

ITEM 74: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

STATEMENT BY CHRISTIAN WENAWESER, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. Chairman

70 years ago, the General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – to this day the biggest achievement in the area of standard setting on human rights. Not adopted unanimously back then, the UDHR is now part of customary international law. There can be no doubt that every individual on this planet is entitled to the full enjoyment of every right enshrined in the UDHR. But we have more reason to be concerned than to celebrate. While international law is clear with respect to the enjoyment of human rights, for way too many this remains an empty promise that has little to do with the reality of their daily lives. For years, we have been deploring the gap between the standards we have established in the area of human rights and their implementation. Today, the situation is more alarming than ever. Multilateral achievements, in particular in the area of international law, are increasingly under attack. As a result, human rights standards have come under even more pressure, resulting in ever more blatant violations, with the contempt for our common standards sometimes openly displayed. So the upcoming anniversary of the Universal Declaration is, more than anything else, a moment to

recommit and to agree on strategies to counter the adverse global trends.

Mr. Chairman

A bit over a decade ago, we created the Human Rights Council. While many of us did not agree with the political attacks on the Commission of Human Rights which had preceded it, we were in the end pleased with the outcome, as a result of a difficult negotiating process. The Council quickly proved its worth and was able to transform the overwhelming political support with which it was established into concrete results. Most recently, it created a IIM-like mechanism for Myanmar, in a decision of the highest importance – and with the strongest support from the membership. We will continue our political investment in the Human Rights Council – with the clear expectation that it will be under attack both from the inside and the outside. Investing in the Council also means honoring its founding resolution 60/215 which stipulates among other things that Council members shall „uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights, shall fully cooperate with the Council”. If we continue our decision-making in the context of Council elections in a manner that is obviously inconsistent with these provisions, we only make the Council more vulnerable to attack. During the elections on Friday, we have abstained from supporting a number of candidatures who do in our view not meet the agreed standards and we will continue our policy in the future, also in the cases of clean slates in regional groups.

Mr. Chairman

The area of accountability for serious human rights violations requires our particular attention. 20 years after the adoption of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, we are facing a complex situation. While the most serious impunity challenges, from Myanmar to Syria, invariably lead to calls for the involvement of the Court, the ICC does still not enjoy universal reach. And those who could create jurisdiction in States that have not consented to it, are among the most ardent opponents of the Court and block relevant action in the Security Council. While continuing support for the court, we also have to explore other accountability avenues at the

same time. And indeed, we have made significant progress. The decision by the General Assembly two years ago to create an accountability mechanism for Syria was followed by a similar action in the Human Rights Council. These are very significant decisions, as they show a clear commitment to accountability and also illustrate our ability to take meaningful action in times of political paralysis in the Council. We are gratified to see that the IIIM model has gained such overwhelming political acceptance in the UN membership in a short time and that there is now a general understanding that this is an accountability mechanism that must be funded from the regular budget of the United Nations. We look forward to a productive GA session in this respect.

I thank you.