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Statement at the 51th Session of the Human Rights Council

**Agenda item: 4 – ID on the interim oral update of the High Commissioner
on the situation of human rights in Belarus in the run-up to the 2020
presidential elections and its aftermath**

23. September 2022

H.E. Ambassador Kurt Jäger

Permanent Representative of the Principality of Liechtenstein

Thank you, Mister President,

Liechtenstein thanks the interim High Commissioner for her oral update on the situation of human rights in Belarus.

The systematic and arbitrary violations of human rights are truly concerning. An illustration of the repression and arbitrariness are the amendments to the Constitution and Criminal Code earlier this year, which again severely restricted several civil and political rights.

With all these restrictions, the Belarusian authorities make it almost impossible for journalists and human rights defenders to continue their work. They are either forced to remain silent or face the risk of arrest and an unfair trial.

Accountability and the rule of law is an imperative cornerstone of a democracy. Without a functioning independent judicial system, basic human rights such as the right to peaceful assembly and protest as well as the freedom of expression cannot be protected and thus cannot be realized. The absence of an independent judicial system leaves room for human rights violations, including torture and other ill-treatment.

We therefore urge Belarus to take appropriate steps to ensure a fully functioning, independent judicial system and to address impunity.

I thank you, Mister President.