



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

NEW YORK, 28 SEPTEMBER 2017

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE APPRAISAL OF THE UN GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

STATEMENT BY H.E. CHRISTIAN WENAWESER, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

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Madame / Mister Chair,

Excellencies,

Colleagues

Human trafficking and modern slavery are among the biggest human rights scandals of our time. They are an affront against public conscience, constitute grave violations of human rights law and are a serious obstacle to sustainable development. And they directly affect 46 million persons worldwide. With the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (“The Palermo Protocol”), we have agreed on an international definition of the crime of trafficking in persons. The protocol provides a legal framework to effectively prevent and combat all forms of trafficking in persons, including “the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs”.

While the Palermo Protocol has been widely ratified, it still lacks the universal acceptance that would allow it to exert its full potential. We hope that this goal can be achieved soon.

Liechtenstein has been a strong advocate for universality, among others in the context of the Universal Periodic Review under the auspices of the Human Rights Council.

Law enforcement and criminal justice are key dimensions in our common fight against human trafficking and modern slavery. A comprehensive response by the international community, including to new and emerging challenges, also requires strong cooperation in other aspects. We therefore welcome that the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development addresses the issue in three of its 17 goals: SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth and SDG 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies. We have thus achieved a collective understanding that combatting trafficking of persons and modern slavery is intimately linked to sustainable development efforts, peace and security and human rights. We had hoped for an ambitious Political Declaration for this high-level meeting on the appraisal of the Global Plan of Action which reflects the need for comprehensive policy responses. In that respect, we consider the Declaration a missed opportunity.

Mister / Madame Chair,

Human trafficking and modern slavery are complex phenomena. We have identified two areas in which to focus our engagement: First, we aim to strengthen accountability, including the involvement of international criminal justice mechanisms. There is a customary international law norm against slavery. Enslavement is listed as crime against humanity in the Rome Statute of the ICC. And second, we have used the expertise and knowledge of our financial center, in particular our Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), to adapt existing tools to fight money laundering and the financing of terrorism to help us in the fight against human trafficking and modern slavery, by “following the money”. This engagement is of particular relevance as modern slavery is one of the big illegal business models of our days, generating more than 150 billion USD annually.

The UN can be an ideal platform to form the necessary partnerships among different UN entities, as long as awareness of the common cause, a cooperative spirit and a commitment to a complementarity of efforts prevail. This would allow the UN to attract the support of those

governments, private sector actors and NGOs alike that are committed and ready to invest in the fight against trafficking in human beings and modern slavery.

Thank you.