



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

NEW YORK, 13 AND 14 MAY 2013

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

STATEMENT BY

**STEFAN BARRIGA
CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I.**

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President,

I thank you for convening today's high-level meeting on the appraisal of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. Three years after its adoption it is timely to take stock of its achievements and to identify issues that need our increased attention. We need to renew our commitment to no longer tolerate trafficking in persons, in whatever form it occurs. Trafficking in persons is a heinous and insidious crime that treats persons as mere commodities and fundamentally undermines their human rights and human dignity. It often affects victims in an irreparable way and thus also represents a danger to the social fabric of entire communities. To combat trafficking in persons comprehensively and effectively we need the engagement of a broad number of stakeholders – governments, criminal justice systems, civil society, the private sector, the media and most importantly the victims themselves. Discussions in the framework of the General Assembly and elsewhere must therefore give a central role to victims of trafficking.

Mr. President,

The Global Plan has fostered our understanding of the different dimensions of successful strategies to combat trafficking in persons, including through prevention, prosecution and protection. We have made significant progress in establishing global legal standards to address trafficking in persons. In this regard, we sincerely hope that the Palermo Convention and its Protocols will soon enjoy universal adherence. At the same time, we need to do more to implement these standards. Human trafficking is still one of the most prevalent forms of transnational organized crime, yet criminal accountability lags decisively behind and far too often impunity prevails. In order to reverse this trend, we need stronger international coordination and cooperation and a robust mechanism to review the domestic implementation of international legal standards. Liechtenstein continues to engage constructively to that end with other States Parties to the Palermo Convention and its Protocols. But we also need criminal justice systems that are sensitive to the situation of victims. Authorities must be proactive in lowering the barriers for victims to seek justice while guaranteeing them full

protection – thereby contributing to ending the climate of fear and secrecy that breeds impunity. We particularly welcome the work of UNODC in building capacities in this regard.

Mr. President,

Liechtenstein has significantly increased its prevention efforts with regard to trafficking in persons over the past years. Our experience shows that persons vulnerable to being trafficked are often willing to work together with relevant authorities and institutions. Targeted and periodic awareness raising campaigns, counseling and information about victims' assistance services have consistently met with a positive response and have shown the need to further improve the engagement between all relevant stakeholders. At the same time, we cannot lose sight of the need to also address the root causes of trafficking in persons. We have to acknowledge that poverty and hunger often stand at the beginning of the many individual tragedies of trafficked persons. Women and girls are most vulnerable and in need of particular protection. As we are currently discussing the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, we should aim for an ambitious contribution to addressing these root causes, including through the adoption of a human rights perspective to development.

Mr. President,

Finally and most importantly, we have to pay increased attention to the particular needs and vulnerabilities of persons who have been trafficked. The legal framework in Liechtenstein has improved victims' protection during criminal proceedings and offers support services. These can include individualized and intensive psychological care, also intended to help breaking the cycle of re-victimization, legal counseling and reparations. Liechtenstein is committed to continuing and strengthening these efforts at the national level and we value today's high-level meeting as a contribution to an increased engagement at the international level.

Thank you.