



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

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NEW YORK, 04 MARCH 2024

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**AGENDA ITEM 63 – USE OF THE VETO**

DEBATE - VETO INITIATIVE – “THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, INCLUDING THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION”

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER**

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**(Delivered on behalf of Austria, Bulgaria, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, Iceland, Kenya, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Malta, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, and my own country Liechtenstein).**

Mr. President,

I am delivering this statement on behalf of a cross-regional group of countries committed to the effective implementation of GA resolution 76/262, known as the Veto Initiative – Austria, Bulgaria, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, Iceland, Kenya, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Malta, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, and my own country Liechtenstein).

We have now seen six vetoes by three permanent members of the Security Council on resolutions and amendments related to the ongoing massive humanitarian and protection of civilians emergency in Gaza. Four texts - two draft resolutions and two amendments - have in addition failed to be adopted for lack of sufficient votes. We are grateful to those Members who have worked towards the adoption of resolutions 2712 and 2720, and urge the implementation of these resolutions. We call on the Council to act in accordance with its primary responsibility for

the maintenance of peace and security, as well as its responsibility to our organization and to protect civilians. And we encourage this Assembly to make the most of its Charter-defined role to inspire necessary action where it is prevented by the use and threat of the veto. We also remind all signatories of the ACT Code of Conduct, both in the General Assembly and Security Council, of their commitments in this regard.

Mr. President,

The Charter of the United Nations makes clear that Member States have conferred on the Security Council primary responsibility for peace and security, and that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Council acts on our behalf. We also note that the Membership, both in meetings such as today's and in Emergency Special Session, has demonstrated its desire to bring an end to the ongoing crisis.

But the use - and threat of use - of the veto has clearly and significantly constrained Security Council action and as a result our collective capacity to act. The veto limits the ambition of potential proposals precisely when it is most needed.

Mr. President,

Article 1(1) of the Charter of the United Nations calls upon the membership "to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace". The Council is not only meant to approve agreements reached elsewhere, but to be the author of action in line with the purposes of the Charter. We have all agreed, under Article 25, to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the Charter. Accordingly, this Assembly cannot only lament missed opportunities for Council action, but should set out our expectations for this Organization, for its Members, and in particular, for the Council to whom our primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security is delegated in this case. We recall that a meeting called in line with resolution 76/262 indeed allows for the adoption of

a resolution. We also commend to the General Assembly the use of its functions and powers outlined in Articles 10-14 of the Charter, including to make formal and explicit recommendations to the Security Council in relation to any questions relating to the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as the further capacities it has under the 'Uniting for Peace' resolution in the absence of Council action.

In the context of transforming global governance processes we should also consider how to empower the General Assembly to act more decisively when the Security Council is unable to do so. We urge all interested Member States to work with us to consider actions we can take collectively to this end.

***In national capacity:***

Mr. President,

I will now make some brief remarks in national capacity. Liechtenstein is deeply troubled by the fourth veto on the situation in Gaza cast by the United States. This veto has obstructed Council action on a draft resolution supported by 13 Security Council members calling for a humanitarian ceasefire, unimpeded aid delivery to all parts of Gaza, rejection of forced Palestinian displacement, compliance with provisional measures mandated by the International Court of Justice, and adherence to international humanitarian law by all parties. We acknowledge the tireless efforts made by the elected members in particular to ensure that the Council can fulfill its responsibility.

The General Assembly must step in as it has done previously. The imperatives outlined in the past resolutions adopted by this Assembly are mutually reinforcing. A durable ceasefire is the most important step towards ensuring full, immediate, safe, unhindered and sustained humanitarian access as well as to enable the release of all hostages.

Our highest priority continues to be the protection of civilians. Against this background, possible

ground operations in Rafah are particularly alarming. All parties must uphold International Humanitarian Law, and we note the 2022 political declaration on the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas. The forced displacement of Palestinians undermines the two-state solution and is illegal under international humanitarian and criminal law. We also join the call for an international investigation of the killing of more than one hundred civilians in a single incident last week and recall the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court in this regard.

Over 70% of essential infrastructure lies destroyed or damaged, hindering access to basic needs, while nearly the entire population of Gaza, some two million people, face the risk of famine. These tragic realities underscore the urgency of immediate action.

Mr. President,

We again join the call for an immediate, durable, and sustained humanitarian ceasefire, the protection of civilians, and full respect for international humanitarian law, including immediate unimpeded humanitarian access. Liechtenstein condemns again in the strongest possible terms the heinous 7 October terrorist attacks by Hamas and calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages. We reiterate our support for the role of the International Court of Justice in resolving disputes under the Genocide Convention, and emphasize the importance of compliance with provisional measures ordered by the Court. Finally, we reaffirm the Palestinian right to self-determination and reiterate our strong support for a two-state solution as the only way to bring a peaceful, stable and sustainable solution for the region.

I thank you.