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Annual high-level panel discussion on human rights mainstreaming: The contribution of human rights to peacebuilding through the enhancement of dialogue and international cooperation for the promotion of human rights

Joint Statement delivered by H.E. Aurelia Frick
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Geneva, 27 February 2017

Mr. President,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of Austria, Slovenia, Switzerland and my own country Liechtenstein.

At the outset, we would like to thank the panelists for their presentations and the Office of the High Commissioner for the preparation of this important event.

We welcome the shift towards a more comprehensive approach on sustaining peace that is based on all three pillars of the United Nations. The universal nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is itself a reflection of this approach, in particular SDG 16. If implemented, the SDGs are a powerful prevention tool. The same holds true for the United Nations body of human rights obligations. Gaps in the implementation of sustainable development commitments and violations of human rights obligations are warning signs for the erosion of peace, security and stability – they should be treated as such and should serve as signs for the Council and the United Nations as a whole to take early and preventive action. Our countries have made strong commitments to support preventive action. We are proud signatories of the Appeal launched on 13 June 2016 aiming “To put Human Rights at the Heart of Conflict Prevention”. We are also among the 112 States supporting the Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. In the prevention of mass atrocities, deterrence is a key tool and a notable achievement of the International Criminal Court (ICC). By sending a clear message that perpetrators of mass atrocities will be held to account, the ICC directly contributes to the prevention of future crimes.

Let us also recall that the Human Rights Council was established to also address gross and systematic human rights violations, as set out in its founding resolution. We therefore call on United Nations member states, to support this important aspect and to continue working towards the highest standards of human rights protection.

In closing, we would like to invite the panelists to share with us their views on how the Council and the international community can advance the prevention tools available to us and ensure coherent and swift action on human rights violations.

I thank you!