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## **Statement at the 46<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council**

**10 March 2021**

**Mr. Patrick Ritter, Deputy Permanent Representative**

Thank you, Madam President, for giving me the floor.

I am here to deliver a statement no diplomat ever wishes to deliver in his career. It is my very sad duty to address the Human Rights Council on the very unexpected and tragic decease of our Permanent Representative, Ambassador Peter Matt, who sadly passed away in the course of the night from Sunday to Monday, shortly before his 55<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Ambassador Matt joined the Foreign Service of the Principality of Liechtenstein in 2008 after a long legal career in the Private Sector and became Deputy Permanent Representative in Geneva in 2013. One year later, he was appointed Ambassador and Permanent Representative in Geneva.

In all those years, Ambassador Matt consistently and strongly advocated for human rights for all people and in all circumstances. He lobbied for giving a voice to those who are often unheard and forgotten. He was not only an excellent representative of his country; it was also his personal desire to improve the situation of human beings worldwide. He always had a strong emphasis for marginalized groups and civil society actors, and foremost, he fought hard for the recognition of the importance of accountability for human rights violations and abuses.

Madam President,

Besides the excellent representative and colleague we lose, we first and foremost lose a wonderful friend who passed away too early. My delegation still is in shock and full of sadness over the loss of an appreciated Head of Mission who always stood up for his team and who always had an open ear for personal and professional desires and initiatives. We will miss him very much.

In the past days we have received many messages that draw a picture of a man who was well-respected, engaged, beloved, approachable, humorous, cordial, professional, and much more. We thank all who have reached out to us to express their sadness and their sympathy, and to offer their assistance to our Mission. We would like to encourage all to keep Peter in the good memories we have of him.

In his honour, we are currently planning the holding of a virtual memorial event that allows for colleagues and friends to share their grief, their empathy and maybe even good stories of their relationship with Peter. We will inform all delegations in due course about the exact details of the event.

Madame President,

Ambassador Matt has dedicated many years of his life to this Council. He has always done so because he believed in human rights and in what the Council can deliver to promote and protect them. It is in his spirit and our duty to continue the efforts and work we put into the promotion and protection of human rights.

In the past days we have tried to find words to express the sadness and emptiness we feel over the loss of Ambassador Matt. Sometimes words can't describe them. For this reason and for honouring Ambassador Matt's engagement, we would appreciate if the Human Rights Council could pay tribute to his work and dedication by holding a minute of silence.

I thank you, Madam President.