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47th Session of the Human Rights Council

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression

2 July 2021

Intervention by Ambassador Kurt Jäger,
Permanent Representative of the Principality of Liechtenstein

Thank you, Madam President,

Liechtenstein thanks the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression for her report.

The right to freedom of opinion and expression is an integral part of every democratic society. The Special Rapporteur highlighted in her report that the promotion and protection of this right is a key factor in combating disinformation. A safe, unrestrictive and free environment for civil society actors and the independent media are key in upholding all human rights, including the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

Liechtenstein therefore strongly calls upon states to refrain from all forms of threats, harassment, attacks and reprisals targeting media workers and human rights defenders online and offline. It is vital for States to allow journalists, civil society and others that are able to challenge disinformation to exercise their work in an enabling environment. Measures that arbitrarily infringe upon the right to freedom of opinion and expression as

well as the right to access information, such as internet shutdowns and imprecise laws censoring or criminalising online speech, must be put to an end. All efforts to combat disinformation need to be firmly grounded in international human rights law.

In these digital times, companies play a critical role in protecting these rights as well. It is critical for them to apply a human rights based approach and to ensure transparency and due process in their content-moderation practices and business models.

Liechtenstein wishes the Special Rapporteur her all the best in her new position.

I thank you.