



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

AGENDA ITEM 31: REPORT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Madam President,

The annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly is a key mechanism of accountability established by the UN Charter to govern the relationship between two Charter bodies with carefully crafted mandates and clear provisions for cooperation. The fact that we hold this debate literally at the last possible moment, after only little time to review the report itself, submitted late for the third year in a row, is not a good sign. It illustrates disrespect by Security Council towards its own mandate, its working methods and most importantly towards the General Assembly. We call on the Security Council to take its responsibility seriously and submit its report to the General Assembly no later than April. We also call on the President of the General Assembly to set a date for the report's consideration that is conducive to the broadest participation.

Madam President,

The Security Council discharges its mandate on behalf of the UN membership and is thus accountable to this Assembly. We elect States to the Security Council and expect them to make a difference there. We applaud the efforts by Kuwait and the other elected members to improve conditions for that, for example

by establishing a system of co-penholdership and a fair burden sharing in the chairing of committees. The elected members have created positive momentum and initiated healthy discussions on better working methods within the Security Council – they can be assured to represent the collective will of the membership, as numerous past debates on working methods have shown. At the same time, we are disappointed by the lack of response from the Permanent Members, who should share the goal of making the Council a more effective body, but are taking a collective defensive stance on working methods issues.

Madam President,

The present lack of accountability is compounded by the fact that the Council falls significantly short of its Charter mandate to maintain international peace and security, with the most severe consequences for the people it is supposed to protect as well as for its own standing. The annual report is illustrative mainly not in what it says, but in what it leaves out. The Council has continued its long failure to address the situation in Syria: accountability is still not part and parcel of the political process nominally led by the United Nations. There was no progress towards a referral to the ICC called for by so many States and the SG. The IIIM continues to be a lone beacon of hope for justice, along the important steps individual States have taken to prosecute war criminals. On Myanmar, the Council for the most part even refused to discuss the situation, let alone take measures to address and remedy the grave injustice against the Rohingya people. On Yemen, a fragile political process has emerged – one is tempted to say in spite of Security Council procrastination. Meaningful and decisive support for peace efforts would be very much needed to solidify political progress. In Libya, the Security Council is unable to end the violence and increasingly let's outside influence determine the country's fate, undermining efforts to unify the country under joint institutions and prospects for a better future. In Sudan, Liechtenstein welcomes the recently signed peace agreement. Yet, the Security Council risks to let the best opportunity pass to ensure justice for the victims in Darfur – justice that the Council itself has mandated the ICC to provide, yet has consistently failed to support the Court's many efforts to that effect. While the Secretary-General and other authoritative voices such as the ICRC report record numbers of IHL violations and failures to protect civilians, we see today that the Security Council has very little to report on what it has done to address and reverse these trends. Most telling are the many instances where the Council disregards ongoing and serious violations of its own resolutions, be it on the DPRK, Iran or the Middle East.

Madam President,

These shortcomings are systemic to some extent and thus constitute an underlying risk to the UN as a whole – a risk the General Assembly has a responsibility to address. This Assembly needs to reaffirm its role, which is narrow in practice, not by law. The IIIM is an important case in point for what the General Assembly can achieve when the Security Council fails to do its work. The use of the veto has significantly increased over the last decade. Its paralyzing effect of anticipatory obedience has had enormous negative consequences on the performance of the Security Council. The veto power must be checked by the membership, in particular as it is increasingly used in violation of the very purposes and principles of the Charter. The ACT Code of Conduct, now supported by 120 States, is an important commitment by a large majority of member States against the abuse of the veto in cases of mass atrocity crimes.

Madam President,

But we need to do more work on the veto. Liechtenstein is of the view that the General Assembly should discuss any use of the veto in a formal meeting, as a measure of accountability. Such a discussion should take place without prejudice to any possible outcome and independently of the substance of the resolution that was subject to a veto. The Security Council should be invited to contribute to the discussion in the General Assembly with a special report in accordance with article 24.3 of the Charter. We invite all interested delegations to work with us to create the basis for such a discussion here in this Assembly in the coming weeks. We consider it an important contribution to strengthen the United Nations as the most important incarnation of inclusive multilateralism. An overwhelming majority of States wants the United Nations to succeed in its mission to bring peace and security, sustainable development and fundamental rights and freedoms to the peoples. Liechtenstein will continue to help strengthen the voice of that majority. The Charter provides ample ground and the Security Council report before us provides ample reason to do that.

I thank you.