



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

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

UNITED NATIONS 2023 WATER CONFERENCE

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

[PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS]

[Mr. Chair,]

I am honored to speak today at the Water Conference. This Conference is an important opportunity to address a topic that requires urgent action by the international community. Water is the basis for all life on earth and therefore a key factor for sustainable development. SDG 6 on “ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all” is thus not only a goal for itself. It is also closely interlinked to almost all other SDGs. I am concerned that despite our joint commitment the world is off-track to meet SDG 6 targets. Billions of people lack safely managed drinking water and sanitation, in denial of their basic human rights. And estimates suggest that 700 million people could be displaced due to scarcity of water by 2030. With less than 10 years to implement the SDGs, this Conference should be a wakeup call for all of us to take responsibility and, more importantly, to take action.

In 2017, Liechtenstein launched a project called “Waterfootprint Liechtenstein”. Its principle is simple: “Use tap water! Donate drinking water!” The amount of money that organizations and individuals save by not buying bottled water is donated to partner organizations which invest in clean water projects around the world. The ultimate goal of the initiative is to create awareness and fairness: awareness to value the precious commodity of water, fairness by providing access

to drinking water to fellow human beings around the world. I am especially proud that the State, all Municipalities and all major private companies in Liechtenstein are part of this project, which has helped provide over 178,000 people with access to clean drinking water to date.

But ensuring access to safe drinking water is only one of many pressing issues we must confront in relation to water. As we all know, Member States are far off track to avert the worst consequences of climate change. Only drastic reductions to global emissions will spare small island developing states, particularly those that are low-lying, from the most serious consequences of sea-level rise. In line with our commitment to the rule of law, Liechtenstein has co-sponsored the draft resolution to request an Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice on climate change.

In addition to climate action, the international community must also ensure that particularly affected States and countries have the legal certainty to make their own decisions on behalf of their populations going forward. Liechtenstein continues to support ongoing efforts at the International Law Commission to clarify aspects of international law relevant to sea-level rise, including statehood. Part of the role the international community can provide for those most affected is to recommit ourselves to the right to self-determination of peoples set forth in Common Article 1 of the twin Human Rights Covenants. The novel situation of full or partial inundation of the territory of a State or country, or the relocation of its people, should not change the presumption in international law more generally that only the relevant people should be able to determine the mode of expression of their right to self-determination, including through Statehood.

I thank you.