



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

NEW YORK, 6 DECEMBER 2024

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

GENERAL ASSEMBLY – ITEM 127 – GLOBAL HEALTH AND FOREIGN POLICY

STATEMENT BY MYRIAM OEHRI, COUNSELLOR, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President,

I am speaking today on behalf of Andorra, India, Mexico, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and my own country Liechtenstein – the core group of this initiative. It is our honor to introduce draft resolution A/79/L.27 entitled World Meditation Day, which enjoys the support of more than 70 cosponsors. We are immensely grateful for the strong support received.

By adopting this resolution and creating World Meditation Day to be celebrated on 21 December each year, it is our intention and hope to raise awareness about meditation worldwide: The international day will provide an important anchor in the UN calendar each year, to be commemorated by the UN, its Member States, civil societies, communities and individuals. But even more so, it serves as a foundation to further promote and better understand the practice and benefits of meditation for the health and well-being of people around the world, and possibly as a regular practice.

Mr. President,

Meditation is a contemplative practice that uses a variety of techniques to focus the mind and improve awareness, clarity, balance and calmness that can benefit personal well-being and overall health. It goes back thousands of years, rooted in various traditions that are religious, secular, yogic and spiritual. Today, it is practiced in all regions of the world.

Meditation is not new to the United Nations either: This Assembly, in accordance with its Rules of Procedure, observes “one minute of silence dedicated to prayer or meditation” at its first and final plenary meeting of each session. The United Nations headquarters in New York furthermore houses a Meditation Room called “A Room of Quiet”, that was opened in 1952, and renovated and reopened in 1957 with the support of the second Secretary General of the United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld, who stated: “This house, dedicated to work and debate in the service of peace, should have one room dedicated to silence in the outward sense and stillness in the inner sense”. And the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has recently established a Well-being Unit which implements mindfulness and meditation as part of enhancing staff well-being.

Research has shown that meditation can be an integral component for improving mental health which also is a human right and reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals. Relevant United Nations resolutions in recent history have specified the added value of mental health for broader goals of the United Nations, such as sustainable development and peace.

Mr. President,

Here at the UN and beyond, we know the acronym “WMD” all too well as “weapon of mass destruction”. And to our regret, it has gained more relevance in recent years. With World Meditation Day, we offer an alternative perspective and effective approach to experience peace, happiness, freedom, compassion and unity. Especially in times of armed conflict and climate crisis but also of rapid technological advancement and Artificial Intelligence in particular, it is important to support and uplift the human consciousness, including through meditation, for the survival of people and the planet.

Or in the words of Shri Brahmananda Sarasvati, a medical doctor and spiritual teacher (1984): “We cannot create unity and peace, because they already exist within us. We have to experience them within our own being through meditation. Then only can we establish world peace and unity outside”.

Thank you, Mr. President.