



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

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY – AGENDA ITEM 76, REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

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

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President,

First, let me join others in expressing our condolences for the loss of Judge Antônio Augusto Cancado Trindade. Judge Cancado Trindade was a very well-respected international lawyer and a passionate scholar who dedicated his life to the cause of international law. We pay tribute to his service to the work of the Court and we will honor his memory and legacy.

Mr. President,

This year's debate takes place against the backdrop of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the High-Level Rule of Law Declaration. In this regard, Liechtenstein underscores the crucial role of the International Court of Justice in safeguarding the rule of law at the international level, which has come under increasing and unprecedented attack. As the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, the ICJ continues to settle significant disputes between States and provides important advisory opinions. We applaud the ICJ's significant contribution to the progressive development of international law and to the strengthening of the rule of law. And, we support its central role in the international legal framework, which we will continue to work to reinforce.

Mr. President,

The Court's mandate to settle disputes between States is based on a model of consensual jurisdiction. It is, therefore, only when States are willing to accept the Court's jurisdiction that it can play its full role in the peaceful settlement of disputes. Only 73 Member States of this Assembly, however, have accepted the Court's compulsory jurisdiction, which means nearly 2/3 of the UN membership have yet to do so. We therefore renew our call on all States to join the Court's compulsory jurisdiction in order to strengthen its reach and impact in line with the Declaration on promoting the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice led by Romania last year. We also believe that given the important relationship of the ICJ with the Security Council, all States aspiring to serve on the Council and serving permanently on it should lead by example by accepting the Court's compulsory jurisdiction.

Mr. President,

The importance of the International Court of Justice is also mirrored in the relevance of its pending cases. In this respect, we particularly emphasize *The Gambia v. Myanmar* case on the application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide as well as the Case of *Ukraine v. Russian Federation* on the Allegation of Genocide under the same Convention. These cases deal with two of the world's most serious situations with respect to peace and security and the protection of civilians – core tasks of the United Nations. Liechtenstein recalls that the Court's provisional orders are legally binding.

The International Court of Justice can also provide us with much needed clarity regarding complex questions of international law through its advisory function. This tool offers States with important authoritative guidance with respect to the application of international law. Liechtenstein is therefore encouraged that States are increasingly requesting advisory opinions from the Court, not least because it further consolidates the role of this Assembly as the key initiator for the clarification of international legal questions. It is in this vein that we are actively engaged in the initiative led by Vanuatu to pursue an advisory opinion from the ICJ on the issue

of climate change. Climate change is a complex issue that affects us all in various ways and that raises many difficult questions. After all, it is the existential issue of the century. We therefore need clear and well-reasoned legal answers to be able to address the challenge appropriately. This is why we should bring the topic to the principle judicial organ of the United Nations.

Thank you.