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28th Session of the HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Biennial high-level panel discussion on the question of the death penalty

“Regional efforts aiming at the abolition of the death penalty and the challenges faced in that regard”

4th March 2015

Intervention by Mr. Pascal Schafhauser, Deputy Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein

Mr. Chair,

Liechtenstein considers the death penalty a cruel, inhuman and degrading form of punishment. Wrongful convictions occur even in the most advanced domestic justice systems, which further exacerbates the all too final and irrevocable character of capital punishment. There is no empirical evidence that the death penalty deters crime more effectively than other forms of punishment.

We are particularly concerned about the death penalty being applied in several regions to crimes that do not meet the threshold of "most serious crimes", as stipulated in article 6 paragraph 2 ICCPR. Even more troubling are laws that allow the application of the death penalty against children as well as persons with mental or intellectual disabilities.

But the trend is clear. More than 80 percent of UN Member States have either abolished the death penalty or are not practicing it. This is a clear sign that this cruel, inhuman and degrading practice is destined to be relegated to the books of history. Member States that have imposed a moratorium on the death penalty should take the final step and abolish the death penalty completely and irreversibly.

Mr. Chair,

Liechtenstein has actively contributed to the drafting process of resolution 26/2 and commends the convocation of the biennial high-level panel discussion in support of regional efforts aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. We will continue to advocate for the abolition of the death penalty and commend the important work undertaken by the treaty bodies, special procedure mandate holders as well as the civil society to address this cruel, inhumane and degrading practice.

I thank you!