



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

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

AGENDA ITEM 63 – USE OF THE VETO – DEBATE

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President,

I am speaking on behalf of the following group of States committed to the implementation of resolution 76/262, otherwise known as the Veto Initiative: Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Georgia, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Liberia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Myanmar, Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Singapore, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Türkiye, Ukraine, and my own country, Liechtenstein.

In opening, Mr. President, we thank you for convening the second annual debate on the Use of the Veto since its consensual adoption on 26 April 2022. We are gratified that debates under this agenda item close to the anniversary of the adoption of the Veto Initiative will henceforth take place every year. These debates provide us with an opportunity to take stock of the progress of the implementation and impact of our initiative, as well as to chart the road still to travel.

We thank the Secretary-General for his public support to the Veto Initiative, and we appreciate your strong support, Mr. President, for it, as one of the most meaningful tools to empower the

General Assembly as the central decision-making body of the United Nations. Over the past two years, the Veto Initiative has begun to fundamentally reshape the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly and our collective approach to questions of peace and security. It has strengthened the accountability of the Council to the Membership, in particular when its action is blocked by the veto. And it has become a tool to engage the General Assembly as a body fit and ready to take up its Charter-defined role in Chapter IV to uphold peace and security. Mr. President, we also welcome your commitment to working with the membership to produce a handbook on the peace and security role of this Assembly during your tenure.

Mr. President,

The implementation of the Veto Initiative over the past two years has led to very meaningful change and concrete results. Since the adoption of 76/262, on each of the occasions a veto has been cast, the Security Council has produced a Special Report in line with Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter – something that had not previously happened since the 1970s. Every State casting a veto has come to the General Assembly to account for its actions in front of the Membership. Every veto cast, ranging from the DPRK, Mali, the Middle East and Ukraine, has been addressed by a significant proportion of the Membership, demonstrating the interest that we all have in upholding the Charter's peace and security framework. States have taken the opportunity to respond to the explanations of those casting a veto. The veto is no longer the end of the conversation. As we move forward, we must also ensure that a veto is not the end of UN action.

At the same time, we are aware that relations between the Permanent Members are further deteriorating, reflected in decreased unity and agreement, and we salute in particular the elected members of the Council who have risen to the challenge to build bridges where the permanent members are divided. The veto continues to be used in ways that violate other provisions of the Charter – ranging from Article 2 to Article 27 itself. We note in particular that the voluntary abstention principle contained in Article 27(3) is repeatedly ignored, and urge a recommitment to the letter and spirit of the text.

Mr. President,

In a context of increasing concern for the work of the Council, we must take further steps in this body to safeguard the credibility and legitimacy of our organization. In this respect, let us lay out a plan for progress.

Firstly, we must take further efforts to enhance the accountability of the Security Council to the membership. We must be ready to use the collective political weight of the Membership to make clear our dissatisfaction with instances where the veto is used and threatened, and the ensuing deadlock of the Council, including through formal recommendations. Mr. President, your initiative to produce summaries of these debates is an important starting point in this respect.

Secondly, we must consider how our commitments to oppose the abuse of the veto can be implemented in other ongoing processes. Resolutions on the revitalization of the General Assembly should continue to highlight the evolving peace and security role of this body. Further, Chapter 5 of the Pact for the Future is an opportunity to envision a world in which the veto is made subservient to our obligations to the Charter, rather than one in which the veto is abused to justify breaches of the Charter. As ever, Mr. President, we continue to encourage all States to sign the ACT Code of Conduct and the French-Mexican Initiative on veto restraint, which demonstrate the intent of the membership to limit the use of the veto.

And finally, Mr. President, the General Assembly must be ready to fill the gap left by the use of the veto through the adoption of recommendations and products, in line with its Chapter IV powers. While there are steps that the Assembly itself clearly cannot take, such as the exercise of Chapter VII powers, we must, each time a veto is cast or threatened, consider our responsibilities to act in advance of a meeting under this agenda item. In doing so, we acknowledge that the Council has a primary responsibility to maintain peace and security, and that action taken by this Assembly in this respect is in concert with this distribution of responsibility. A veto is a clear signal that the Council has failed to exercise its primary

responsibility. The Veto Initiative was conceived as a reaction to Council paralysis due to the threat or use of the veto that endangers international peace and security. Each of us has an obligation of fidelity to the Charter to do our part in response.

I thank you.