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**COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
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**COUNCIL OF EUROPE / LIECHTENSTEIN SIDE EVENT:
CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE: BREAKING DOWN GENDER STEREOTYPES IN MEDIA AND ADVERTISING**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. DOMINIQUE HASLER
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN**

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to welcome you to our side event entitled “Catalysts for Change: Breaking Down Gender Stereotypes in Media and Advertising”, organized by the Council of Europe within the framework of the Liechtenstein Presidency of the Committee of Ministers.

Liechtenstein took over the Presidency a good three months ago. It is an immense privilege and at the same time a challenge to hold the Presidency in these critical times. The guiding motto of our Presidency is “United by our values, towards a better future, for the needs of all”. Our Presidency is dedicated to promoting and strengthening human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe.

Human rights are, of course, also women’s rights – and vice versa. Undoubtedly, achieving full and effective gender equality not only remains crucial for the rights of women and girls, but also contributes significantly to democratic stability in our societies. Combatting gender-based violence and domestic violence, as dangerous manifestations and consequences of persistent gender inequality, therefore remains critical to ensuring this goal.

The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, better known as the Istanbul Convention, is the key instrument to assist us in this endeavour. Liechtenstein is proud to have ratified the Convention two years ago, after first undergoing an extensive and inclusive national process to ensure that our legal framework and institutional

set-up is in line with the standards set out in the Convention. Under our presidency programme, we will host an expert meeting of national co-ordinating bodies established under the Istanbul Convention at the end of April in Liechtenstein.

Excellencies,

The protection and promotion of the rights of women and girls is a long-standing foreign policy priority of Liechtenstein. We are therefore delighted to connect our engagement under our Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe with our collective work at the United Nations. Effective gender equality can only be achieved if we all work together. When I attended the first part-Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in January, I was honored to participate in a panel discussion on the role of women in multilateralism. For the first time in its 75-year history, the Council of Europe is led by five women: the Secretary General, the President of the European Court of Human Rights, the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly, the Commissioner for Human Rights, and myself as the President of the Committee of Ministers. As the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights said very aptly, the occupation of top positions by women must not be a mere snapshot that is celebrated. It should be a matter of course.

Together, the five of us discussed how the societies we grew up in shaped our perspectives and the challenges women still face, but also the responsibility we all share to promote and support women and their participation in multilateral fora.

The agency of men in these efforts remains critical. And that brings me back to our event today.

The Council of Europe has played an important role in fostering women's rights and gender equality by developing a sound political and legal framework. In the context of this side event, I recall two important Committee of Ministers' Recommendations: The Council of Europe Recommendation on Gender Equality and Media urges media regulators to respect gender equality principles in their decision making and practice, while the Council of Europe Recommendation on Preventing and Combating Sexism contains the first official definition of sexism, which explicitly refers to media and advertising.

The "Council of Europe Guidelines on the Place of Men and Boys in Gender Equality Policies and in Policies to Combat Violence against Women", which were published last year, puts the finger precisely on the topic we will discuss today – that engagement from everyone is necessary in order to achieve gender equality, especially from men.

Media and advertising undoubtedly have enormous potential – and can indeed serve as catalysts – to bring about social change. Let us seize this potential and engage in a fruitful exchange that will give us a better understanding of how media can contribute to promoting gender equality by challenging misogynist discourse and avoiding sexist advertising, language and content, just to name a few aims. I very much look forward to a discussion of both concrete actions to be

taken in that direction as well as promising examples and best practices that could inspire us to rethink how to break down persistent gender stereotypes.