



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

NEW YORK, 23 OCTOBER 2015

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

LAUNCH OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT REGARDING SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION AGAINST
GENOCIDE, CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY OR WAR CRIMES

STATEMENT BY H.E. MS. AURELIA FRICK

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to welcome you to the launch of the **Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes**. Today marks a highlight in a process that began nearly a year ago – while we and many others had reflected on this for many years already. In particular, I wish to recognize in this context the French/Mexican initiative on the veto. This effort is complementary to ours and deserves the support of all of us.

The ACT sub-group on the veto, under the leadership of Liechtenstein, drafted a document that was to be simple and effective – and legally sound, without being legalistic. We consulted very widely with Member States, the Secretariat and civil society – much to the benefit of the quality of the Code of Conduct. We presented the result to the membership in July and in its final form in early September.

The response to this initiative has been outstanding. Large and small States from all regions of the world have committed themselves to the Code of Conduct. Let us take a moment to recognize all States that have signed up.

Since the video was finalized this morning, Guinea-Bissau also expressed its support for the Code of Conduct, bringing the total number of supporters to 104.

105 States have committed themselves to the Code of Conduct. This includes nine of the current 15 Members of the Security Council, and three of the five incoming Council members. This is a significant achievement. I want to thank everybody who has signed up. My special thanks go to those who have helped us mobilize the membership.

But today is not the end of a process. It merely marks a **new beginning**. Our next two steps are clear: First, ensure application of the Code in the work of the Council. Second, increase the number of States signing on.

We hope that the Code of Conduct will **impact** the way the Council does its business right away. The seven Council members that have committed themselves to the Code have a particular responsibility in this regard: They are expected to be **proactive** in ensuring that the Council takes timely and decisive action to prevent or end atrocity crimes. But all of us have a responsibility to pressure the Council to take the required action. If we do this consistently, we will achieve two very big goals: **A culture of zero tolerance for atrocity crimes** and a **culture of political accountability** in the Security Council.

Similarly, the **Secretariat** should be aware that there is a strong cross-regional constituency of Council Members that will take information on atrocity crimes seriously. Indeed, these States expect that any such information be forwarded, even if this involves politically sensitive situations. In any event, the *Human Rights Up Front* approach requires nothing less. Over time, this change of culture will trickle down to the field level as well. Potential perpetrators of atrocity crimes should no longer have reason to believe that the Council will allow them to act with impunity.

So what *can*, what *should* we do in our daily work here at the UN, all of us?

First – as they say on the subways in New York – “**if you see something, say something!**” Remind Council Members of their responsibility, especially if you believe that greater action is required to address a situation that involves or is likely to involve genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes.

Liechtenstein is a member of the ACT Group – which stands for accountability, coherence and transparency. We feel very strongly that the Council collectively, as well as individual Council members, are accountable to the rest of the membership, the electorate. We hope, therefore, that this Code of Conduct will contribute to a broader **culture of political accountability**.

Second, let’s all work together to further increase the number of supporters. For Liechtenstein, commitment to the Code of Conduct is a **minimum standard** we expect all current and future Council members, including candidates, to live up to. We will continue to encourage them to join this initiative. I hope that all of you will do the same.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This Code of Conduct is our **70th anniversary present** to the United Nations. *Mr. President of the General Assembly*, I am aware that a traditional 70th anniversary gift would be made of platinum. But I hope that our Code of Conduct will have the same effect as platinum – a **catalytic effect**. It can be a catalyst for a **culture of zero tolerance** for atrocity crimes within the Council, and a catalyst for a **culture of political accountability** between the Council and the wider membership.

This way, the Code of Conduct can help the United Nations meet the goals set by the UN Charter seventy years ago. Surely, there can be no better present than that.

I thank you.