



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

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**REPORT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**STATEMENT BY CHRISTIAN WENAWESER, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE**

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Madame President,

We thank the President of the Human Rights Council for presenting a comprehensive and informative account of the Council's work. The Council has again lived up to its role as the central and permanent human rights body of the United Nations. Its evolving body of Special Procedures and mechanisms are major achievements, as is the Universal Periodic Review, whose integrity and universality must be preserved. As a strong supporter of the Human Rights Council, we also see important room for improvement in a number of areas. As pointed out by others, not all provisions of the Council's founding resolution, General Assembly resolution 60/251, are implemented in practice. Paragraph 9 of that resolution stipulates that Council members "shall uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights". This is a binding political commitment by the membership of this Assembly, and States have to live up to this responsibility when electing the Council's membership. We call on States to publicly renew that commitment and adapt their election practice accordingly: States that do not fulfil these criteria should not be elected to the Council, as a contribution to strengthening its mission and daily work. We have followed this practice consistently even in situations where regional groups

present clean slates for elections. Having a similar policy implemented consistently by a group of States will help protect the Council from political attack and also enhance its effectiveness in its daily work.

Liechtenstein supports calls for more efficient and effective work of the Council and efforts to review its working methods and priority setting. Going forward the Council should build on experience and best practice from the entire UN system, and should draw on General Assembly resolutions 60/251 and 65/281 on the review of the Council. The understandings reached by the broadest possible consensus among Member States in these processes must be preserved, in particular in the area of institutional relationship with the Assembly.

Madame President,

Our longstanding concerns about the situation in Myanmar has found its tragic and full scale expression in the report of the independent international fact-finding mission. Consistent patterns of serious human rights violations and abuses in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan States, in addition to serious violations of international humanitarian law, rape and other forms of sexual violence were perpetrated on a massive scale and as the result of what appears to be a policy by the authorities. In light of the pervasive culture of impunity at the domestic level, the mission finds that the impetus for accountability must come from the international community. It recommends that senior generals of the Myanmar military should be investigated and prosecuted for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. We commend the clear stance of the fact finding mission that these crimes should be referred to the ICC as the permanent dedicated court dealing with the most serious crimes under international law.

We welcome the Council's decision – with an overwhelming majority – to establish an independent mechanism to collect, consolidate, preserve and analyze evidence of the most serious international crimes and violations of international law committed in Myanmar, and to prepare files in order to facilitate and expedite criminal proceedings. We applaud that the Council has taken up this recent and innovative format to advance justice and encourage close

cooperation and the use of best practices in setting up the mechanism. In addition, we continue to believe that the Security Council should refer the case to the ICC. But in the – unfortunately likely – absence of such a referral, States have other options available to them. The finding of the pre-trial chamber that the prosecutor can exercise jurisdiction over the crime of forced deportation of the Rohingya to Bangladesh opens a direct road to justice – through a referral by States Parties to the Rome Statute under its article 14. Finally, Liechtenstein welcomes that the Council has been briefed on the findings of the fact finding mission – a first small step to reverse the denial of realities in the Security Council.

Madame President,

Human rights defenders and civil society play an important and legitimate role in promoting and advocating the realization of all human rights, at the local, national, regional and international levels. They engage with Governments and contribute to the efforts in the implementation of the obligations and commitments of States. We are glad that the Liechtenstein National Human Rights Institution established in accordance with the Paris Principles is now fully functional and contributes to awareness raising, public discourse and the respect of human rights.

We are deeply concerned about the considerable and increasing numbers of intimidation, threats, harassment and attacks against individuals, groups and associations, which contribute to the effective elimination of all violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms of peoples and individuals. We strongly condemn reprisals against human rights defenders in retaliation for their engagement with international and regional human rights systems. And we are deeply concerned about the increasing number of assaults against journalists, including their arbitrary imprisonment and killing. Promoting the safety of journalists and combatting impunity for those who attack them must be a priority for each and every Member State and a central element of the work of the United Nations.

I thank you.