



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

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**GENERAL DEBATE OF THE HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Mister President,

With this year's High-Level Political Forum, we have reached the mid-way point of the 2030 Agenda. But unfortunately, the current state of implementation of the sustainable development goals provides only little reason for optimism. While progress on many targets continues to be slow and fragile, hard-achieved progress on many others has been partially reversed due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, armed conflict and climate change. SDG 16 is one of the seven goals for which no target is currently on track, despite its crucial importance in addressing the multiple and cascading crises we are currently facing. Effective, accountable and inclusive institutions are not only important in and of themselves, but also integral enablers of the sustainable development agenda at large. We all must do our part to reinforce the increasingly fragile trust in public institutions, fight corruption and uphold democratic principles, human rights and fundamental freedoms that have come under attack over the past years. Strengthening the rule of law at both the national and international level is indeed a prerequisite for the success of our commitment to peace and prosperity for people and the planet.

Mister President,

The rise in global inequality and violent conflict leave many people vulnerable to different forms of exploitation, including human trafficking and modern slavery. Ending these abominable crimes requires the active engagement of all relevant stakeholders. The Finance Against Slavery and Trafficking Initiative (“FAST”), that was launched by Liechtenstein, provides the necessary platform to bring together key stakeholders, and forms a global public-private partnership. In its nearly five years of existence, FAST has offered financial actors a practical blueprint to promote sustainable and innovative financing, responsible lending and investment, and compliance and regulation. And it has promoted financial inclusion, with participating financial institutions providing 2,977 accounts for survivors referred by FAST. The demand from countries around the world for collaborations and trainings with FAST is very high, and the outlook on the re-orientation of the Initiative to include even more stakeholders is promising. The Liechtenstein Government will remain strongly supportive of the FAST Initiative and, in doing so, contribute to the realization of SDGs 5, 8, 16 and 17 among others.

Mister President,

Liechtenstein has presented its second voluntary national review on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda last Friday. The report outlines the overall positive developments, particularly the significant strides made to align national policies and strategies with the SDGs since the presentation of our first VNR in 2019. In fact, the government has not only embraced the three dimensions of sustainability as guiding principles for policy strategies, but also committed to subject all draft legislation and other Government bills to an SDG analysis to ensure that sustainability is at the forefront of political deliberations. Despite these achievements, the report also highlights a clear need for action to improve de-facto gender equality and strengthening measures to achieve climate neutrality by 2050, amongst others. However, global challenges such as the latter also require global solutions and partnerships. Liechtenstein is therefore

determined to provide support to developing countries in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Official Development Assistance spending has increased by 22% in comparison to 2018 and focuses notably on poverty reduction, food security and access to education as well as climate protection – goals which suffered from some of the most significant setbacks and require decisive action. This increase reflects our efforts to ensure that new and emerging crises do not lead to a reduction of our existing engagement. In this regard, we hope that the SDG Summit in September will indeed mark a new phase of accelerated progress towards the Agenda 2030.

I thank you.