



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

GENERAL DEBATE OF THE HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

STATEMENT BY H.E. DOMINIQUE HASLER

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Mister President,

It is an honor to speak before the High-Level Political Forum today. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's forum is of particular relevance and urgency. The pandemic has created an unparalleled health crisis with severe socio-economic effects in all our countries and societies. We all had to painfully acknowledge shortcomings both nationally and internationally in responding to the pandemic. One of the most important lessons has been the urgent need to fully and effectively implement the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda provides the necessary parameters to prevent and respond to global challenges, including the pandemic. It promotes effective, accountable and inclusive institutions. It highlights respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It stresses the importance of reducing inequalities and corruption. And it underlines the urgent need to protect the environment and to address climate change and biodiversity loss. The 2030 Agenda must guide our efforts in building back better.

The pandemic has also shown what can be achieved if we work together and truly deliver on multilateralism. In light of increased global needs, Liechtenstein has increased its budget for international solidarity by almost five percent. We have provided substantial contributions to support health care, food security, access to education and upholding human rights for the most vulnerable. COVAX is also part of our commitment and a positive example of international solidarity

and cooperation. Free and equitable access to vaccinations for all is crucial in our common objective to end the pandemic. We will continue to engage in emergency relief and development cooperation to overcome the immediate effects of the pandemic and to build a more resilient world.

Mister President,

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, an estimated 40.3 million people were living in slavery like conditions, despite the longstanding international abolishment of slavery. According to the Secretary General, the sharp increase in unemployment rates brought about by the pandemic is likely to increase human trafficking. It is commendable that the Ministerial Declaration - to be adopted later this week - reiterates the need to take immediate and effective measures to eradicate these crimes.

The engagement of the private and financial sectors is key for an effective response to modern slavery and human trafficking, and in meeting relevant SDG Targets. Together with our national and international partners we have created a global public-private partnership: the “Liechtenstein Initiative on Finance Against Slavery and Trafficking” (FAST). FAST equips the global financial sector with practical tools to respond to modern slavery and human trafficking. FAST has helped launch two investor-led initiatives with a combined 8 trillion dollars in funds under management, it has also trained over 4’000 financial service professionals on addressing modern slavery. And, I am particularly proud that FAST has helped create Survivor Bank Accounts. 700 survivors have received access to banking services in 2020, thanks to the FAST initiative.

I would like to invite all of you to join us at a side event on “The Role of Sustainable Finance to End Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking” on 13 July at 1 p.m. to learn more about the FAST initiative.

Mister President,

The rule of law both at the national and international level is a common thread in the 2030 Agenda. It is a goal in itself, but also a necessary precondition for the achievement of all SDGs. Yet, the pandemic has demonstrated that the world is off track. Corruption remains a particular challenge in all regions of the world. Not only does it undermine the rule of law and democracy, it also erodes trust in public institutions. And corrupt practices may constitute human rights violations and have negative effects on the environment. There is no doubt that corruption is one of the biggest

impediments to achieving the SDGs. We must strengthen institutions, uphold democratic principles and enhance international cooperation to successfully eradicate corruption.

With the Special Session on Corruption and the adoption of a political declaration earlier this year, we have taken a step forward in implementing our legal obligations under the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) – the cornerstone of the international legal framework against corruption. I hope that we maintain our collective momentum towards substantially reducing corruption and bribery in all their forms by 2030. With SDG 16 under review this year, the HLPF provides a unique platform for VNR presenting countries to share their experiences and efforts in promoting the rule of law.

Mister President,

Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is of crucial importance to achieve the 2030 Agenda in a holistic way. Only if we enable women and girls to be agents of change can we create peaceful, just, inclusive and prosperous societies. Liechtenstein is committed to the implementation of SDG 5 related targets. As part of our commitment, we are currently developing a new collection of statistical indicators on the equality between women and men in Liechtenstein. This collection of indicators will, for the first time, allow policy-makers and the interested public to learn about the current state of developments regarding equality between women and men, including gender-based violence, in Liechtenstein.

And I am particularly honored to be part of a government in which three out of five ministers are female. As such Liechtenstein is the top-ranking country in terms of percentage of women ministers worldwide. I hope this will inspire others, and that diverse and inclusive leadership will become a reality everywhere.

I thank you.