



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 64TH SESSION
GENERAL DEBATE

ADDRESS

BY

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NEW YORK, 26 SEPTEMBER 2009

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great honor for me to address, for the first time, this Assembly which represents the heart of multilateral diplomacy. As such, it is called to fulfill the expectations and hopes of peoples and individuals around the world – hopes for peace, hopes for an end to poverty and suffering, hopes to see human rights respected. Since my arrival in New York a few days ago, I have been encouraged by the multiple calls for international cooperation and the renewed commitment to multilateralism. For Liechtenstein, the United Nations has always been the epitome of multilateralism. And we believe that today genuine multilateralism is needed in order to address the challenges before us. On disarmament and non-proliferation we seem about to enter – finally – a new era. And on climate change, the United Nations is working hard to “seal the deal”.

Last Tuesday, an unprecedented number of Heads of State and Heads of Government gathered in this hall to discuss the threats of climate change. We applaud Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for this excellent initiative. The Liechtenstein delegation left that meeting with the belief that a breakthrough is possible – because everybody seems to understand the gravity of the situation. We are approaching Copenhagen with the firm conviction that we must listen to the voices of those who are most at risk – to those whose very survival is at stake. What is now required from us is a leap of faith: no half-hearted compromises, no more postponing. And no more talk about concessions, either. Copenhagen is not about “giving up” something – other than our self-destructive habits. It is about investing into the future of our planet.

Mr. President

The global financial and economic crisis has rippled through our countries and disrupted the lives of people worldwide. It has also deeply affected our progress

toward the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. While much attention has been paid and much money has been mobilized to keep the world economy afloat, another crisis has emerged in their wake. It is a crisis of global governance, and it may have lasting repercussions. We acknowledge that there are times when concerted action by groups such as the G-8 and the G-20 can bring us closer to solutions for everyone. But we cannot ignore the gap between those who are taking decisions and the rest of us. Good and effective solutions require the support of those who are to implement them. And, most importantly: Rules must apply to everyone equally, based on a level playing field. The notion of sovereign equality is one of the core principles of the UN Charter – and it is indeed the main pillar of genuine multilateralism. I was therefore pleased to accept an invitation from the Foreign Minister of Singapore to discuss, with some other colleagues and friends, issues of global governance. I look forward to continuing these exchanges and hope that the G-20 and other partners will find interest in our input and ideas. Our goal is positive engagement and productive cooperation – and the highest possible quality in decision-making.

Mr. President

The drafters of the UN Charter understood that the inclusion of all States is a prerequisite for effective multilateralism. In today's interconnected world, we must uphold this principle more than ever. But the practice of this organization has sometimes veered away from the ideals of inclusion, transparency and legitimacy. On international peace and security, the Security Council is mandated to carry out its functions on behalf of all of us. Our understanding is therefore that the Council's legitimacy depends on the extent to which its actions reflect a very wide political consensus. Often, though, the Council shows little interest to include in its decision-making process those who are instrumental for implementation. Together with the other members of the S-5 group, we will continue to work for inclusion and transparency in the Council's work. In order to be truly legitimate, the Council must genuinely reflect the collective political will of the membership as a whole. We will

also specifically look for further improvements in the Council's sanctions procedures. As numerous judicial challenges have shown, these procedures must be brought closer to international standards of human rights and due process. Such improvements would go a long way in improving the effectiveness and perception of legitimacy of these sanctions.

Mr. President

The composition of the Security Council is outdated. This is sadly almost the only agreement we have found after many years of controversial discussions on the enlargement of the Security Council. Our position on the matter is clear: none of the proposals submitted at the 2005 World Summit, or variations thereof, will receive the necessary support in this Assembly, let alone in a subsequent ratification process. We see only two avenues toward expansion: we can wait for a massive institutional crisis to hit the organization and then expand the Council under enormous public pressure. Or we can work in a cooperative manner toward a solution that is a compromise and politically sustainable. We believe that only the latter approach is in the best interest of the organization. As a result of the last session, there are now clear ideas on the table on how to bridge the gap. They deserve a thorough review during the coming months.

Mr. President

Over the last two decades, multilateralism has perhaps been most successful in the area of international criminal justice. The first generation of international tribunals has had a tremendous impact and is approaching the conclusion of its work. Most importantly, we have created the International Criminal Court – an institution that seemed a distant dream not too long ago. During its first years in operation, the Court has been remarkably successful – and it has also been subject to controversial political discussions. This is not surprising, because justice can be difficult, and can seem inconvenient. That is particularly true in situations of ongoing conflict. But it is not a choice. To quote Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon “The debate is no longer

between peace and justice but between peace and what kind of justice.” Indeed, peace, development and justice go hand in hand. These tasks must be fulfilled, first and foremost, by States themselves. We must therefore galvanize efforts to strengthen national judiciaries, in accordance with the principle of complementarity. The International Criminal Court will not be able to put to trial all perpetrators of the most serious crimes. But its work illustrates the world’s consensus that there must be accountability for these crimes and that impunity is no longer an option. The 2010 Review Conference will give us the opportunity to add the crime of aggression to the list of crimes under the active jurisdiction of the Court. We hope that we will find it in ourselves to seize this historic opportunity.

Mr. President

The General Assembly remains the heart of genuine multilateral work. We trust that you, Mr. President, will lead this Assembly in a manner that reflects the priorities of the membership as a whole. Important negotiations are ahead of us. We will prepare the MDG Summit 2010, continue discussions on the Arms Trade Treaty, various UN reform processes, negotiate both a new budget as well as new scales of assessment, address human rights both in specific situations and thematically, keep working on the promotion of the rule of law at all levels, work to strengthen the framework for development and humanitarian assistance – and much more. Looking at the work programme ahead, it seems to us that the General Assembly does not need much “revitalization”. There are numerous concrete challenges in front of us, to which we Member States must rise. We must look beyond our short-term domestic interests and work hard to make progress on our comprehensive agenda. The renewed expressions of commitment that we witnessed in this hall over the last days give us confidence: This Assembly will do its best to live up to the world’s expectations and, more than ever, strive in unison.

I thank you.