



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

FIFTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
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STATEMENT

BY

MR. GÜNTER FROMMELT
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Madame Chairperson,

We welcome the fact that the Commission on the Status of women focuses its deliberations this year on the topic of financing for gender equality and empowerment of women. This is particularly appropriate against the background of the importance that the follow-up to and review of the Monterrey Consensus will be given this year both in the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The annual session of the Commission thus makes a direct contribution to the overall work of the United Nations this year. It is indeed clear that financing of and investing in gender equality means investing in development. We therefore particularly look forward to the examination of the level of progress we have reached in achieving Millennium Development Goal 3, in the framework of our "mid term review" later this year.

At the national level, the Liechtenstein Government supports gender equality and the empowerment of women through a national mechanism and by financial means earmarked for this purpose. Liechtenstein put in place a national mechanism by creating the Office of Gender Equality in 1996. It was renamed the Office of Equal Opportunities in 2005 to better reflect the emphasis of its work. With its aim to empower women, it now engages in courses in politics, in seminars on strengthening self awareness of women or in overseeing the implementation of pertinent legislation and information campaigns. The state budget contains a regular line item with regard to measures on equal opportunities for men and women. As an indispensable measure for the promotion of gender equality, the Government has created a positive environment for non-governmental organizations. It has done so inter alia by providing financial support to these civil society organizations through substantial public funding, based on performance agreements. Civil society organizations have traditionally played an important role in Liechtenstein's gender equality policy and continue to do so. Their diversity covers a wide spectrum of areas relevant to the equality of women and men. Many NGOs, but also the women's organizations of Liechtenstein's political parties, have joined together in the so called Liechtenstein's Women's Network. The Network is currently comprised of 18 organizations attuned to the equal opportunity of girls and women. It meets regularly under the aegis of the Office of Equal Opportunities to exchange information; it also discusses draft legislation circulated for consultations and organizes projects. As a case in point, the Network has launched a request to parliamentarians to adjust the inheritance law to strengthen women's rights in marriage and partnerships. The Government has also set economic policies that have helped put in place a diversified economy which has consistently expanded over the years. A stable political and economic environment created by sound economic policies have most favorably contributed to a strong job market with very low unemployment rates and positive effects on job opportunities for both genders. Accordingly, the women's share in the job market, measured by the labor force participation rate, has increased consistently over time for both part-time and full-time employment. While Liechtenstein has made strides over the past few years in the area of legislation and de jure equality of women and men, insufficient levels of practical implementation persist, as is the case elsewhere. We will therefore continue investing in the de facto equality and view this both as an obligation

flowing from our ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women as well as a sound policy to secure sustainable economic development.

Liechtenstein also regularly contributes to the advancement of women at the international level. The Government has consistently given financial support to UN funds and programs that deal with gender related issues. On several occasions, support given to development projects was earmarked for the specific purpose of financing gender related projects. Last year, our level of Official Development Assistance (ODA) has reached 0,6% and we are therefore on track to meeting the 0,7% target reaffirmed in the Monterrey Consensus.

Madame Chairperson

We hope that the General Assembly will soon make a decision on the necessary institutional strengthening of the parts of the system dealing with gender equality. The High Level Panel on the system wide coherence left us with little doubt on how to address gender equality and the empowerment of women in the UN system more effectively. As the report of the Secretary General states in its recommendations, more needs to be done on enhancing coherence and coordination. We are encouraged to see that the process on system wide coherence in general is gaining renewed momentum and hope that this will lead to concrete results very soon. And we would certainly expect that the area of gender equality is among those where progress is possible at an early opportunity.

Thank you.