



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

**NEW YORK, 12 JUNE 2018
GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 72TH SESSION
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT ON HIV/AIDS AND THE
POLITICAL DECLARATION ON HIV/AIDS**

**STATEMENT BY GEORG SPARBER, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I.
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President,

The fight against HIV/AIDS is as showcase for the impact the international community can have if we all join forces, but also a reminder how fragile progress can be if we fall back into complacency or waver in walking the last mile. It is therefore extremely important that the General Assembly regularly discusses and readjusts its policies in this area. For over three decades the HIV/AIDS epidemic has caused immense human suffering across the globe with devastating effects on those affected and their communities. Yet, while a lot remains to be done, ending the epidemic by 2030, as agreed in the SDGs, is possible. At the halfway point of our 2016 fast-track commitments the Secretary-General reports very welcome progress. We should use this momentum to make sure that we deliver on our promise collectively and comprehensively.

Mr. President,

We have known for a long time that HIV/AIDS is not only a public health issue, but also has an important sustainable development and human rights dimension. It is encouraging that a number of countries have taken positive steps to de-stigmatize people affected by HIV/AIDS, for example by protecting the rights of marginalized populations and prohibiting discrimination on the basis of HIV status. At the same time, we are alarmed by the ongoing legal and de facto discrimination in many other countries. The fact that homosexuality is still criminalized in almost 60 countries remains a key obstacle to effectively addressing the epidemic. People at higher risk of HIV infection, including drug injectors, sex workers, prisoners, transgender people and men who have sex with men, continue to suffer from stigmatization which often prevents them from fully enjoying their fundamental freedoms and human rights – above all the right to health. A comprehensive and sustainable response to HIV/AIDS must be based on the recognition of all fundamental elements of HIV risks and vulnerabilities. Gender inequality and harmful gender norms contribute to an unacceptably high risk for HIV infection of women and girls. Their particular situation must therefore be at the focus of our response. Granting women and girls access to sexual and reproductive health services is successful in preventing HIV/AIDS

and has, as a matter of fact, significantly helped eliminate mother-to-child transmission. However, neither the recognition of women's rights nor the availability of women's health services is universal. Their disenfranchisement and marginalization happens against our better knowledge and we have a collective moral responsibility to stop it.

Mr. President,

The Secretary-General report contains encouraging data on our efforts to reach the 90-90-90 targets. 70% of people living with HIV globally know their HIV status, of which 77% are accessing antiretroviral therapy, of which 82% have suppressed viral loads. Nevertheless, important gaps remain in the area of HIV testing and treatment and they need to be addressed as progress on reducing HIV infections has slowed. In addition, our commitments need to be more consistently translated into investment and action on the ground. Financing is falling short significantly compared to our 2016 commitments. Innovative tools and strategies, such as community based HIV testing models, HIV self-testing and viral load testing, continue to be underutilized. And more needs to be done to ensure that young people have the necessary skills, knowledge and capacity to protect themselves from HIV. This is where we need to focus our attention to bring us on the path to achieving our targets comprehensively.

Mr. President,

To conclude, let me express our full support for the recommendations of the Secretary-General and commend his staff for their tireless work to translate the 2016 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS, the 2030 Agenda and other important agreements into reality. Liechtenstein remains committed to this endeavor, both politically and financially. We will continue to support HIV/AIDS related projects through the Global Fund and others, with a priority on prevention. By investing into prevention we have the best chance to create sustainable results in the long-term.

I thank you.