



GOVERNMENT
PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN

MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS, JUSTICE AND CULTURE

Alliance for Multilateralism
Side Event of the 43rd Session of the Human Rights Council
Room VII, Palais des Nations on 24 February 2020 in Geneva

- Chek against delivery –

Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Principality of Liechtenstein

Thank you for giving me the floor

Excellencies, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to speak today as a committed member of the Alliance for Multilateralism. Liechtenstein has always been a staunch supporter of multilateralism, but today it is more important than ever to express that support clearly. I thank my colleagues XX and YY from Germany and France for taking the lead – be assured that you can count on us in taking this initiative forward.

In its 75th year, the United Nations Charter remains the centerpiece for multilateralism and the international rules-based order. Upholding its purposes and principles is indispensable for the maintenance of international peace and security. A clear renewed commitment by the membership to this end is necessary to respond to the ongoing erosion of international law, including key provisions of the Charter. A core commitment of the Charter is “to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained”. This is, in other words, a commitment to the rule of law at the international level.

What are the odds that we face? Increasing global tension and unilateralist action, the loss of key security pillars, the unwillingness to jointly tackle global problems and the erosion of international legal norms. Whether we are talking about climate change, nuclear disarmament or the fight against pandemic diseases – multilateral approaches are simply indispensable if we want to be successful in addressing these massive dangers.

If we speak of the erosion of international law, we often think of our collective inability to address the most serious violations of international law – our repeated failure to prevent and stop mass atrocity crimes and our repeated failure to hold the perpetrators responsible. This is why we pursue a strong accountability agenda.

In too many instances we have seen political division paralyze the Security Council, with enormous costs in terms of human suffering and with enormous damage to our organisation. In response we try to better use the potential of the General Assembly and the Human Right Council: the International Impartial Independent Mechanism for Syria [IIIM] and the Independent Investigative Mechanisms for Myanmar [IIMM] are a case in point and key successes for multilateralism.

This Council, of course, has a central role for multilateralism: The standards we have been able to set in the area of human rights in the last 75 years are impressive.

But we are clearly doing less well in upholding and enforcing them – a key function of the HR Council. In adopting the 2030 Agenda, we have agreed that sustainable development goes hand in hand with the respect for human rights – in line with the right to development which we agreed on over three decades earlier.

On International Justice Day 2018, the ICC's jurisdiction over the crime of aggression went into effect – a milestone also for the United Nations and the prohibition of the use of force enshrined in the Charter. We are currently looking, together with eminent experts, into how the crime of aggression relates to cyber warfare, which is, by all means, a future that has already reached us. It is unfortunate, but not surprising, that erosion of international law also expresses itself in political attacks against the ICC.

For us, standing up for the rule of law and multilateralism also means supporting the Court to deliver on its mandate undeterred and to help the Court make the necessary improvements to better discharge its important mandate. I look forward to working with all of you to advance our collective goal to strengthen the United Nations and the international rules-based order.

I thank you for your attention.