



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN  
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**Advancement of Women**

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**LIECHTENSTEIN**

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Violence against women has become the major topic of discussion under this agenda item of the Third Committee over the past years. The growing international attention paid to violence against women has its origin in the relentless efforts and grass-roots work of women's organizations and movements around the world. Their advocacy over several decades has led to the identification of many different forms and manifestations of violence against women, drawing them out of the private domain to public attention and the arena of State accountability. Today, we have before us the Secretary-General's comprehensive study on violence against women. This document is not just another study. It has the potential for real change in our dealings with the violation of women's rights worldwide. We wish to sincerely congratulate the authors of the study and all the contributors on the high quality of the document and the innovative way of its elaboration. The broad involvement of many different stakeholders confers to the study a status which can hardly be matched by any other document on the same topic. In particular, we would like to commend the Secretary General's study for addressing issues which are often perceived, not least by the victims of violence, as taboos or non-issues, such as the impact of culture and its politicization on the phenomenon of violence against women. We also wish to support the emphasis which is placed by the study on the necessity to take effective counter-measures not only at the national and international levels, but also at the local and community level.

A few weeks ago, the General Assembly adopted its strategy to counter terrorism worldwide. The importance of the issue at hand would warrant a similar expression of commitment by the General Assembly. The process leading up to the adoption of such a text could promote the necessary political will among States to fully comply with their obligations and effectively prevent, punish and eliminate violence against women, while providing remedies and redress to those against whom acts of violence have been committed. The Secretary General's study provides all the elements for such a comprehensive text to be adopted by the General Assembly, including the necessary flexibility to address violence against women in its multiple forms and manifestations. Such a process would benefit from the input of specific discussions on violence against women in other intergovernmental bodies, in particular the Security Council, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council. With respect to the latter, we are of the view that the newly created Human Rights Council is particularly well placed to play a leading role in this process.

Liechtenstein also welcomes the particular emphasis of the study on the pressing need for ending impunity for acts of violence against women. We fully share the assessment that impunity for violence against women compounds the effects of such violence as a mechanism of male control over women. The result of such impunity is not solely the denial of justice to the individual victim, but a message that male violence against women is acceptable and the underlying discrimination of women and girls normal. If States condone such acts, they reinforce prevailing gender norms which discriminate against women and girls. Resolute action against impunity for such acts must therefore be an absolute priority for counter-measures at all levels, including the local and community level. The manner in which the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court treats violence against women in the context of crimes against humanity and war crimes in particular constitutes one of the major advances of this landmark achievement of international law. We hope that the ICC will soon be able to send a clear signal that violence against women will not go unpunished. Fighting impunity for acts of violence against women should also be a top priority of national judicial systems. At the same time, victim assistance must not be neglected. In this regard, the ICC and its victims' trust fund have also set a promising example. We believe that such examples need to be multiplied and consolidated so that all States and the international community are able to meet the challenge of eliminating violence against women.