



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

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SECURITY COUNCIL – OPEN VTC ON PANDEMICS AND THE CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINING PEACE

**STATEMENT ATTRIBUTABLE TO GEORG SPARBER, CHARGÉ D’AFFAIRES A.I.**

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President,

Liechtenstein conveys its gratitude to the Foreign Minister of Indonesia H.E. Retno L.P. Marsud for convening the second open debate on the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council thereby sets a basis for a hopefully regular engagement with the prime security topic worldwide. Rather sooner than later that engagement should also bring tangible results building on Security Council resolution 2532. In addressing the pandemic the Council makes an important, but not sufficient step to revise the paradigm of peace and security, which has been proven insufficient to deliver on the expectation of the membership that the Council act comprehensively and preventively against all threats to international peace and security. The Council should prioritise upholding human security, and analyse how threats to it can be best prevented or resolved – an imperative given the increasing evidence that crises of a similar nature are likely to reoccur. With its peace operations the Security Council has a powerful tool at its disposal to foster sustainable peace and comprehensive security. Unfortunately, the use of that tool diverges greatly in political aspiration and technical quality. In some contexts, such as in MINUSMA and MINUSCA, the Council has been able to articulate a more comprehensive approach to security in its peacekeeping mandates. But its handling of peacekeeping mandates remains inconsistent and is dominated by a militarized approach. The ongoing pandemic offers an obvious opportunity to review this approach.

Mr. President,

Many States have already stated the obvious in the Security Council in July: Never in the history of the UN have more people felt more insecure, not only due to the virus itself, but its devastating knock-on impacts. The world has seen wide-ranging human rights restrictions and increased risks

of mass poverty and hunger, massive negative impact on education, raising inequality and heightened social tensions. For this reason, Liechtenstein appreciates that you have chosen to look at COVID-19 through the lens of sustaining peace. In this way, the Council has an opportunity to embrace and build on the work of other organs and agencies of the UN. The exceptionalism often displayed by the Security Council is as much outdated as its restrictive agenda setting. Both need to change if the Council is to retain relevance and legitimacy in light of the present security threats. Formats for cooperation across the UN system should be expanded, and some already exist, most notably the Peacebuilding Commission. The Security Council could contribute constructively to the work of the Commission in helping to reassess the criteria to establish configurations. It should also have an interest to introduce a clear justice component into the PBC's work – an omission that has prevented the Commission to exhaust its potential since its inception and that should be rectified also in light of the parameters for sustainable peace given in the 2030 Agenda.

Mr. President,

In the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, the international community has agreed on the most ambitious and most comprehensive human development programme, and indeed human security programme, ever devised. They include a clear acknowledgement of the need to sustain peace based on international law, in particular human rights, cooperation, solidarity and multilateralism. They would indeed have provided a model to significantly limit the pandemic's impact, had there been better progress towards their achievement before the outbreak of COVID-19. But the SDGs are also the blueprint for how to 'build back better' in a way that remedies vulnerabilities in our current system. The Security Council and its peace operations can play a key role in that regard. Human rights and rule of law components of peace operations can help lay the foundations for more accountable institutions, enhancing inclusion, strengthening democratic processes and the fight against corruption, in accordance with SDG 16. Accordingly, the mandates of all UN peace operations should systematically include strong and effective human rights and rule of law components. While standards in this respect vary significantly within the different peace operations, Liechtenstein sees room for improvement across the board. Moreover, Liechtenstein is concerned at sustained efforts to weaken this dimension of peace operations by certain States, including regularly during budget negotiations.

Mr. President,

Where the Security Council takes a broader and deeper look at security it can have positive impact, such as with its current thematic agendas. The Council should draw the right conclusions

from that and ensure it contributes to system-wide discussions on negative security impacts of the pandemic, including, but not limited to the areas of climate and biodiversity, poverty and hunger, health, education, gender, freedom of expression and information and privacy. The Council has laid a foundation on a limited number of these issues, including through its Women, Peace and Security as well as Climate and Security agendas. These should be expanded and complemented by similar engagement in all other security relevant areas. A more open attitude by the Council towards the work and expertise of the rest of the UN system is a necessary first step in this regard, and would be a welcome sign that the Security Council understands itself as an integral part of the UN that contributes to the overall goals and purposes that the international community has given itself through the Charter and countless important agreements developed on its basis.

I thank you.