



**PERMANENT MISSION
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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, THIRD COMMITTEE

STATEMENT BY MANUEL FRICK, SECOND SECRETARY

ITEM 65: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

Mr. Chairman,

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon began his opening statement to this year's Assembly by referring to the birth of the seven billionth citizen of the earth. Assuming this child was a girl, he said, she would most likely be poor and might or might not grow up to be healthy and strong. If she was especially lucky, he added, she would be educated and go out into the world, full of hopes and dreams. Let us now assume that this child is a girl with disabilities. How likely is it that she will grow up to be healthy and strong? How likely is it that she will raise full of hopes and dreams?

Mr. Chairman,

The promotion and protection of human rights has always been a matter of priority of Liechtenstein's efforts at the United Nations, in particular the rights of the child. The child protection framework of the UN is one of its great success stories and an outstanding example for good coordination among various actors involved. We continue to fully support the Convention and the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Liechtenstein ratified the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and fully supports the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict and looks forward to its renewal in this year's Third Committee resolution of the rights of the child. As an active member of the Group of Friends of Children and Armed Conflict, we reiterate our support for Security Council Resolution 1998 and welcome the expansion of the trigger

of the monitoring and reporting mechanism of Security Council which now includes attacks of schools and hospitals in contravention of applicable international law. We would like to recall in this context the primary responsibility of States to prosecute those responsible for grave violations against children in armed conflicts as well as the complementary role of the International Criminal Court where States fail to fulfill this responsibility.

Liechtenstein welcomes and looks forward to the establishment of a complaint procedure for violations of rights of the child, as well as an inquiry procedure for grave or systematic violations, as foreseen in the draft text of the third Optional Protocol. In our view, the establishment of these procedures is a very important step to put children's rights at the same level as the rights enshrined in other conventions. We would have preferred no opt-out option in the context of the inquiry procedure. In addition, we would have preferred the establishment of collective complaints procedure as well. However, we welcome that – within the individual communications system – there are no restrictions on who can file a communication on behalf of a child or a group of children.

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome the focus of the Secretary-General's report on implementing the rights of children with disabilities. As highlighted in the report, children with disabilities are among the most marginalized, experiencing widespread violations of their rights. These violations dehumanize them, affect their dignity, their individuality, even their right to life. Children with disabilities live with discrimination in every aspect of their lives including social exclusion in poverty, social isolation, prejudice, ignorance and lack of services and support. This harmful impact is compounded for children experiencing multiple forms of discrimination, particularly girls with disabilities. Women and girls with disabilities are often at greater risk of violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation.

As the Secretary-General's report rightly points out, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 is linked to the fulfillment of the rights of children with disabilities. The Millennium Development Goals will not be achieved if the situation of people with disabilities is not mainstreamed in development policies, programs, in monitoring and evaluations. People with disabilities often lag well behind national averages of progress on MDG targets, and the denial of human rights, exclusion,

discrimination and a lack of accountability are barriers to the pursuit of human development and the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. Chairman,

We are looking forward to continuing our engagement on behalf of rights of children and to strengthen the corresponding legal framework.

I thank you.