



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN  
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**Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**

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**LIECHTENSTEIN**

**Statement by**  
**Mr. Patrick Ritter**  
Deputy Permanent Representative

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Liechtenstein has been a regular cosponsor of the resolution on the strengthening of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme. We consider the activities of the Office on Drugs and Crime to be a crucial component of the overall UN action aimed at promoting the rule of law worldwide. The demand for technical assistance by the UNODC, in particular with regard to the implementation of the major international instruments in the field of drugs and crime, has been ever increasing over the last few years. We concur with the assessment in the report of the Secretary General that long-term, sustained assistance is necessary for strengthening the capacity of criminal justice systems to apply the instruments in full conformity with the rule of law and - we would like to add - in accordance with international human rights standards. Such assistance can go a long way towards consolidating the rule of law at the national level. It also plays an important role in upholding the rule of law at the international level, i.e. in international relations. Since international cooperation is at the heart of our fight against transnational organized crime and terrorism, ensuring the application of common standards for all States constitutes an indispensable prerequisite for the success of the relevant efforts of the international community. Strengthening the rule of law at the international level also implies that those standards are firmly anchored in applicable legal instruments. Only an approach which is based on the rule of law and the full respect for human rights can create the necessary trust at both the national and the international level, i.e. the trust of civil society and the private sector in the effectiveness of the counter-measures taken by State authorities and the mutual trust between authorities of different States for their cooperation against transnational crime and terrorism.

The vital importance of capacity-building has been affirmed in the chapter on transnational crime of the 2005 World Summit outcome document. The fact that there has been hardly any other chapter in that document where agreement could be reached at an earlier stage of negotiations is a clear sign that the international community is not only aware of the immense challenge posed by transnational crime in all its aspects, but also in agreement on the common strategy to successfully combat it. Liechtenstein has been supporting the capacity-building activities of UNODC on a regular basis. We have lent support through financial contributions as well as by providing expertise for training seminars. Liechtenstein welcomes the partnering of UNODC with other organizations that pursue similar objectives. Such cooperation has the potential of creating synergies, avoiding duplication of efforts and ensuring the targeted use of scarce resources. We commend UNODC for its cooperation with the World Bank in the implementation of the recently launched Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative. Assisting the asset recovery process and monitoring the use of recovered assets are two areas of this initiative where cooperation with the World Bank and its field presences will, without any doubt, be a major token for the success of the initiative. Another partner of UNODC for the implementation of this initiative is the International Center for Asset Recovery (ICAR). The Center provides training to officials from developing countries and equips them with effective information technology tools. Its activities are demand-driven and focused on the practical aspects of international cooperation. This year, the Center has convened an expert group meeting to explore, based on experience with concrete cases of asset recovery, the application of the relevant provisions of the UN Convention against Corruption and the legislative, institutional and capacity-building measures that might be required to ensure full implementation of the chapter on asset recovery in the Convention. Liechtenstein is one of the main donors of the ICAR and encourages other donors to also contribute. We are convinced that this kind of direct contacts and exchanges of practitioners from developing and developed countries are highly instrumental to putting the provisions of the Convention against Corruption, in particular those on asset recovery, into daily practice.

Since our last debate on this item a year ago, Liechtenstein has again taken a number of measures to further strengthen its preventive regime against the abuse of its financial center for criminal purposes. In May 2007, Parliament adopted adjustments to the Criminal Code, the Narcotics Act and the Mutual Legal Assistance Act in order to implement the second EU money laundering directive, the revised FATF recommendations and the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. The amendments provide, inter alia, that serious value added tax fraud qualifies as a predicate offence for money laundering and that legal assistance will be made possible with regard to value added tax fraud and certain customs offences. From 22 March to 4 April 2007, a delegation of the IMF visited Liechtenstein to review the regulatory and supervisory system of the financial centre for combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism. The assessment was based on the 40 revised and the nine special recommendations of the FATF. Publication of the report is expected by the end of November, after adoption by the competent IMF body. We are confident that the IMF will attest Liechtenstein's counter-measures a broad level of compliance with international standards, as it did in its first assessment report of 2003.