



**REGIERUNG DES FÜRSTENTUMS LIECHTENSTEIN**

**UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**10<sup>TH</sup> SESSION**

**ITEM 6: UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW**

**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**H.E. AMBASSADOR NORBERT FRICK,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS IN GENEVA**

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President

In her concluding remarks after the dialogue in the UPR working group, the Minister of Foreign Affairs announced that Liechtenstein will continue this dialogue with the Human Rights Council on the basis of the exchange which took place in the working group. It is therefore my pleasure to give you an update on the relevant developments that occurred during the three months since the adoption of the UPR report on Liechtenstein by the working group:

Already in December, Parliament approved the accession of Liechtenstein to the 1993 Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption. As a State party to that convention, Liechtenstein will be able to also ratify the second Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, i.e. the Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.

On 1 February, the new Children and Youth Act entered into force. Article 3 of that act stipulates, *inter alia*, that children and youth have the right to education free of violence, mentioning explicitly that any form of corporal punishment, emotional harm and other degrading measures are not tolerable. This provision complements the existing prohibition of corporal punishment at school and in public childcare institutions, extending it to all settings, including the family.

Also in February the Liechtenstein Government established an interdisciplinary working group with the specific mandate to examine any legislative and other measures required for the domestic implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol. In the same month, the Government approved a concept paper entitled "Persons with Disabilities in the Working Process" which had been prepared by a working group set up to analyse the current situation in Liechtenstein with regard to this more specific area. On the basis of this development, I can announce the voluntary commitment that Liechtenstein will intensify its examination of the necessary implementation measures with a view to a possible accession to that Convention and its Protocol. This commitment is made against the background of Liechtenstein's general policy with regard to international treaties, which consists in adapting the relevant national legislation before ratification in order to allow for immediate implementation thereafter.

Still in February, parliamentary elections took place in Liechtenstein. Among the 25 newly elected members of Parliament are six women, corresponding to about 24 per cent. This result corresponds to the one achieved in the parliamentary elections four years ago. It confirms the doubling of the number of seats obtained by women four years ago and constitutes a firm basis for Liechtenstein's continued commitment to pay particular attention to the promotion of women's participation at all levels and in all areas of public life. In this context, I can add that the new Government to be sworn in very soon will have a proportion of 40 per cent female ministers.

Liechtenstein makes this commitment regarding women's participation also as a reaction to the recommendations submitted during the session of the working group with regard to women's rights. I am pleased to announce that Liechtenstein can accept all of the recommendations in this area, partly by converting them into voluntary commitments.

The only recommendation with relevance to the situation of women that Liechtenstein could not accept concerns the call for an ex-officio prosecution in respect of all acts of domestic violence. In this context, the following information is of importance:

In 2007 the introduction of a new explicit criminal provision on stalking was approved by Parliament, thus making an explicit statement that this form of psychological pressure is not tolerated. By way of this new criminal offence such persistent harassment likely to infringe upon the private life of the victim is penalized. Accordingly, it is a criminal offence to harass a person persistently and for a prolonged period in a way that is likely to seriously disrupt her or his way of life. This new provision makes an important contribution to the prevention of violence against women since it enables the police to intervene already at a very early stage and to prevent the threatening behaviour from resulting in an act of violence. This criminal offence requires a complaint to be made by the victim for the prosecution to be initiated. The same is true for rape in marriage and partnership as well as other forms of domestic violence penalized under the Criminal Code. Since a procedural distinction between stalking and comparable forms of domestic violence would undermine the effectiveness of this new provision of the Criminal Code, the Liechtenstein authorities do not intend to establish ex-officio prosecution for all acts of domestic violence.

Liechtenstein can therefore not support this recommendation, as one of 8 recommendations which Liechtenstein cannot accept. 32 of the recommendations could, however, be accepted or were converted into voluntary commitments. This corresponds to a ratio between accepted and rejected recommendations of 4 to 1.

Mr. President

The Liechtenstein Government also continued to follow up on its commitment in respect of international cooperation despite the financial and economic crisis. Since last December, several decisions have been taken in this regard. I would like to mention just a few:

UNRWA was supported with 100'000 Swiss francs for its emergency relief in Gaza. The ICRC was supported with 200'000 Swiss francs for its activities in Uganda and the Philippines. Another support of 100'000 Swiss francs went to a basic health programme in Zimbabwe, and 100'000 Swiss francs were contributed to the Common Humanitarian Action Plan for Sri Lanka. Moreover, 100'000 Swiss francs went to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and 50'000 Swiss francs to the ICRC fund for mine victims.

This, Mr. President, brings me to the end of my introductory statement. Our written replies to the recommendations were submitted last month. Since they have already been published and put on the Internet several days ago, I will not read them out in order to save time for the dialogue. I am looking forward to continue engaging in this dialogue.

Thank you.