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## **Statement at the 54<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council**

**Agenda item: 2 ID on OHCHR report on Sri Lanka**

**11 September 2023**

**H.E. Ambassador Kurt Jäger**

**Permanent Representative of the Principality of Liechtenstein**

Thank you, Mister President,

We thank the High Commissioner for the presentation of the report on the human rights situation in Sri Lanka.

We note the efforts made by the government towards justice, accountability and reconciliation including the latest proposed *National Unity and Reconciliation Office*. Nevertheless, past bodies, such as the *Office of Missing Persons*, have failed to gather the support of victims and ensure accountability.

Accountability is a crucial step towards sustainable peace and, in this regard, we are pleased to hear about progress made with the OHCHR's accountability project. At the same time, we urge the Government of Sri Lanka to step up to its responsibility to undertake credible investigations and prosecutions of human rights violations.

Moreover, we are concerned about the shrinking civic space, in particular the attacks on freedom of assembly, namely through arbitrary arrests of protesters and forceful crowd-control measures or harassment and intimidation preventing people from protesting.

We call on the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly as well as expression and to stop targeting journalist and human rights defenders.

I thank you, Mister President.