



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

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY, THIRD COMMITTEE  
10 OCTOBER 2012

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

ITEMS 103: CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

**STATEMENT BY GEORG SPARBER, FIRST SECRETARY**

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. Chairman,

We have started this session of the General Assembly with a focus on the rule of law at the national and international levels. The rule of law is fundamental for all three pillars of the United Nations – peace and security, development and human rights. Today, we will focus on the human rights dimension of the rule of law, in particular the dimensions of accountability, prevention, the administration of justice as well as the eroding effect of corruption on the full enjoyment of human rights. At the same time, we hope that the General Assembly will fully embrace the cross-cutting nature of the rule of law, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

Criminal justice systems, both at the national and international level, are only functional and effective if they ensure accountability for crimes committed. Accountability is particularly important where fundamental rights and freedoms are violated, in particular those enshrined in international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international criminal law. And it is indispensable where violations are committed in a systematic way or on a large scale. In the civil war in Syria we are confronted with overwhelming evidence to that effect. This

Committee should therefore send a loud and clear message that the ongoing violations by the parties to the conflict, in particular by the Syrian authorities, cannot go unpunished. We commend the important work done by the Commission of Inquiry of the Human Rights Council in collecting evidence to be further processed in a judicial framework. We cannot allow ourselves to shy away from ensuring jurisdiction for these crimes and therefore join others in the call on the Security Council to refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court and to ensure full cooperation and resourcing for the ensuing procedures of the Court.

Mr. Chairman,

Situations in which authorities are unwilling to ensure accountability are the exception rather than the rule. States often meet a variety of challenges in establishing and securing the rule of law, in particular those that find themselves in transition or post-conflict situations. We therefore commend the focus of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme on capacity-building in domestic criminal justice systems and on the strengthening of international cooperation. We have been a long-standing supporter of the Programme and of the efforts of this Committee devoted to its strengthening. Technical assistance and capacity-building efforts by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other parts of the UN system should be stepped up as they make an invaluable contribution to fair, transparent and rules-based criminal justice systems both at the national and international level. We continue to believe that particular emphasis should be given to strengthening domestic capacity in prosecuting the most serious crimes under international law, given that States have the primary responsibility for the prosecution of such crimes. The preventive dimension of such efforts is often underestimated.

Mr. Chairman,

The Committee will have before it a number of important agreements from the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice that will contribute to improve standards in the administration of criminal justice. Liechtenstein attaches particular importance to the access to legal aid in criminal justice systems and we therefore welcome the adoption of principles and

guidelines in that regard. We also welcome the opportunity to strengthen the human rights dimension in the administration of justice under the leadership of Austria, in particular for those most in need of protection such as children in the context of juvenile justice. All these efforts are directly aimed at strengthening the resilience of criminal justice systems. These systems face a variety of eroding factors that prevent them from delivering justice in a fair and effective manner. The scourge of corruption figures among the most significant challenges as it is a global phenomenon affecting the delivery of justice on all scales and levels.

Mr. Chairman,

There is an important international dimension to our efforts to combat corruption and Liechtenstein fully implements relevant international standards, in particular those set out in the UN Convention against Corruption. We have made the fight against corruption and international cooperation in that respect one of our development assistance priorities in cooperation with UNODC, UNDP, the Worldbank and the International Center for Asset Recovery (ICAR) at the Basel Institute on Governance. In order to give comprehensive attention to corrupt practices as an obstacle to the enjoyment of human rights, we need to focus on combatting corruption where it affects people most directly. We therefore support a more systematic look at the intergovernmental level at the phenomenon of so-called “petty” corruption, by which millions of people are affected in their everyday lives. Among the serious human rights consequences figure infringements on the right to non-discrimination, the right to health and the right to full political participation to name but a few. It goes without saying that the consequences are most felt by the most vulnerable and those already socially marginalized. We are therefore looking forward to an opportunity to comprehensively address the human rights dimension of the crime of corruption in the Third Committee.