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Statement at the 56. Session of the Human Rights Council

Agenda item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association

28 June 2024

H.E. Ambassador Kurt Jäger

Permanent Representative of the Principality of Liechtenstein

Thank you, Mister President,

Liechtenstein thanks the Special Rapporteur for the presentation of the report.

We commend the mandate's role in supporting the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association. We are very concerned about some of the findings in the report, including the trend to negatively portray peaceful protests as a threat and label civil society and protesters as “extremists”, “terrorists” or corrupt entities “promoting foreign agendas”.

Such characterizations are used to justify the erosion of safe spaces for discourse and dissent, thereby undermining the protection of rights and freedoms for all. The misuse of counter-terrorism, anti-money-laundering, and anti-drugs regulations, including in the digital realm, further exacerbate these issues.

Moreover, we are concerned by the rise in obstructions and repressions, whether they are legal or so-called extra-legal in nature, aimed at limiting, controlling or closing spaces for dissent. This trend disproportionately targets marginalized groups through the criminalization of activism, especially during electoral periods, as well as harmful narratives and the excessive use of force by law enforcement.

Special Rapporteur, how can the international community effectively counter these harmful narratives and support civil society and peaceful protestors globally in exercising their rights?

I thank you, Mister President.