



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

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

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COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN, 56<sup>TH</sup> SESSION

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER**

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Chairperson,

We welcome the focus of this year's session on the situation of rural women. Their particular needs as well as the risks and challenges they face, including multiple forms of discrimination, must to be addressed urgently. Rural women encounter numerous challenges, for instance lack of access to services in areas such as education, health and the judiciary. Empowering rural women and girls is a key challenge on the agenda for the advancement of women as a whole. Gender equality, in turn, is a key enabler of sustainable and equitable economic growth and the overall development of a country. Studies have shown that the participation and active engagement of women in agriculture, politics, health and other sectors are directly linked to the economic performance, stability and well-being of a country.

In order to increase the economic empowerment and independence of rural women, the Liechtenstein Development Agency supports projects such as the Lupane Women's Centre for sustainable livelihoods for rural women in Zimbabwe. The Center helps rural women to get an income, support their families and decrease their dependence from subsistence economy through the manufacturing of baskets, goat breeding or creating vegetable gardens.

Chairperson,

Gender-based violence, in particular domestic and sexual violence as well as harmful practices such as Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting, violates fundamental human rights and is a major

obstacle to development. Ending discrimination and violence against women continues to be a priority for Liechtenstein and we remind States of their obligations under international law to end impunity for such violations and to ensure redress for victims. Rural women are particularly vulnerable in this regard. They often face even more restrictions in their access to judicial services than their urban counterparts. Ending impunity is crucial to avoid revictimization and future acts of violence and therefore necessary to end an ongoing vicious circle impacting many women on a daily basis. The collection of relevant data in this regard can support accountability and tailored protection policies. Women's representation in judiciary bodies has to be strengthened and gender-sensitive law reforms need to be promoted. Liechtenstein welcomes pioneer projects in this field, such as the UN Police Vulnerable Persons Unit in Timor-Leste.

Chairperson,

Rural women continue to be marginalized from the political sphere, particularly in political processes at the national level. States must do more to ensure that rural women's voices are carried to capitals. They should also ensure that women participate on equal terms throughout all phases of political transition, guarantee their right to speak their minds, and to assemble freely. The UN must support these efforts and, in this regard, we welcome UN Women's focus in 2012 on women's political participation.

Despite the significant progress made in the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda of the Security Council over the last years, mainstreaming the agenda in the country-specific work of the Council remains a challenge. Women continue to be underrepresented as stakeholders in peace processes, leading to a neglect of their rights in peace accords and institutional arrangements. Women should be involved in peace processes from the beginning. In addition, sexual violence must be addressed throughout all stages of conflict resolution processes, starting with ceasefire agreements, and the presence of adequate gender expertise at the peace table. Here, we believe that the Security Council has a crucial responsibility. To support the Council's efforts, the Liechtenstein delegation held a workshop, from 28 to 30 January 2012 in Liechtenstein on the implementation of the WPS agenda in Afghanistan.

We are happy that many delegations attended the briefing on the outcome of this workshop on 29 February. Also, the report of the workshop was today issued as an official UN document, and we hope that it will be of help to the Security Council.

Thank you.