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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**WORKSHOP ON RATIFICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE KAMPALA AMENDMENTS TO THE
ROME STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT
STATEMENT BY H.E. MS. AURELIA FRICK, FOREIGN MINISTER OF LIECHTENSTEIN**

Mr. President,

Distinguished Ministers and Attorneys-General,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to be with you today on my first trip to this beautiful country, Botswana, and I am honored to speak on this high-level panel. I wish to thank his Excellency Lieutenant General Seretse Khama Ian Khama, President of the Republic of Botswana, for his inspiring opening address, and for his unwavering support for international criminal justice. Indeed it was Botswana's outstanding commitment to the ICC that led my country, Liechtenstein, to embark upon the joint organization of this workshop. I would like to thank Botswana for making this project a reality and for convening, for what I believe is the first time ever, a meeting of African States Parties to the Rome Statute on African soil. I would also like to thank the Global Institute for the Prevention of Aggression, in particular Donald Ferencz, for the cooperation and support without which we would not be here today.

You may ask yourselves, why is a small European country like Liechtenstein contributing to an African workshop on the Kampala amendments to the Rome Statute of the ICC? Many of you will know about Liechtenstein's role in negotiating the amendments, a process that took place under the leadership of our Ambassador to the United Nations, Christian Wenaweser. Liechtenstein was also the first ICC State Party to ratify the amendments, on 8 May 2012. For us, ratifying the Kampala amendments is the ultimate expression of our commitment to the rule of law at the national and international levels. And since then, we have started a global campaign to promote ratification and implementation of the amendments, together with the Global Institute for the Prevention of Aggression. With Botswana we have found a strong partner to promote this objective on the African continent.

So what is the objective of our campaign? Ultimately, it is ending impunity and bringing justice to victims for what has been called the "supreme crime" under international law: the crime of aggression. With the consensus reached in Kampala, we have all taken a major step toward this goal – a step that was long overdue. Aggression was already prohibited under the UN Charter and thus has been illegal under international law for decades. At the Nuremberg trials, some 65 years ago, twelve leading Nazi officers were convicted of "crimes against peace". Since then, no other international criminal tribunal has had the competence to hold individuals accountable for the crime of aggression. We did not even have an internationally accepted definition of the crime of aggression. Instead, we had more wars, more aggression - and impunity. Much of this violence took place in Africa. Many of the victims were Africans. Yet none of the perpetrators of aggression had to explain themselves in front of a court.

But times have changed. At the 2010 Review Conference in Kampala, States Parties of the International Criminal Court agreed, by consensus, upon a definition of the crime of aggression. They also agreed that after 1 January 2017, the ICC should have the power to prosecute leaders of States that are responsible for the most serious cases of the illegal use of force against another State. This was a historic decision. The Rome Statute now contains a clear definition of the crime of aggression. Therefore, for the first time in history, the prohibition of the illegal use

of force can also be enforced through individual criminal justice at the international level, through the ICC.

In order to seize this opportunity, we need to do two things:

First, ensure that 30 States ratify the Kampala amendments within the coming years, in order to enable the activation of the jurisdiction of the ICC with respect to the crime of aggression.

Second, we must facilitate the dissemination and understanding of the provisions on the crime of aggression. This is why we are here today.

With more States Parties to the Rome Statute than any other region of the world, African ratifications alone would be sufficient to activate the Court's jurisdiction on the crime of aggression. African States Parties have the opportunity to fill the Kampala consensus with life. I invite you to join Liechtenstein and the four other States that have already ratified, in opening a new chapter in international law.

International law and international justice move slowly, notoriously so, but they move steadily. Now is the time to add a new dimension to the commitment by all of us to effectively outlaw the illegal use of force. Now is the time to clearly signal to leaders of States that they have to consider and be aware of the legality of their actions and the possible consequences these decisions might entail. For this, we need a strong International Criminal Court, ownership by the States Parties and an international community that finally lives up to the promise of "never again."

I thank you.