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## **35<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council**

**6 June 2017**

**Interactive Dialogue with the**

**Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**

Intervention by H.E. Mr. Peter Matt,

Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Principality of Liechtenstein

Mr. President

We commend the Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity for his outstanding presentation and welcome his first report on “diversity in humanity, humanity in diversity”. Let me also re-iterate our full support for his mandate. We agree with the Independent Expert that everyone has some form of sexual orientation and gender identity. It is also our firm believe that violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity affects everyone and all of us as well as the society as whole. Only by fighting such violence and discrimination can a society tap its full potential. This is the only way to make sure that no one is left behind – a commitment we all agreed to in the Agenda 2030. It is therefore of critical importance to refrain from ideological debates and discuss the simple facts: Individuals, in all regions of the world, are subject to acts of violence and discrimination because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. It is of utmost importance that all states ensure improved protection from violence and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Against the backdrop that members of the Council shall uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights we are worried by attempts of some members of the Council to challenge well established terminology and concepts. We are also worried that members of the Council have openly expressed their intentions to not cooperate with the Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. We call on all members and observers to cooperate constructively with the Independent Expert. We would like to ask the Independent Expert the following: How does the Independent Expert plan to overcome the ideological barrier in order to foster dialogue and cooperation amongst all members of the Human Rights Council?

I thank you!