



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

NEW YORK, 22 NOVEMBER 2021

HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE APPRAISAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL PLAN OF
ACTION TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

PLENARY DEBATE REMARKS BY H.E. DOMINIQUE HASLER
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, EDUCATION AND SPORT

Mr. President,

Liechtenstein is happy to take part in this important appraisal of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. Human trafficking and modern slavery are defining human rights challenges of our time. They are global – affecting all regions of the world. They thrive in conditions conducive to vulnerability, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. They are the most extreme expression of economic inequality. And they disproportionately affect women and girls. These crimes are of enormous and gruesome proportions, and they undermine our efforts to achieve sustainable development. In shaping our response and strategy to take action, victims and survivors must have a strong voice.

Mr. President,

The international community agreed, long ago, on the universal abolition of slavery in all its forms. And yet, to this day, modern slavery and human trafficking persist around the world, with shocking levels of impunity. Ending human trafficking and modern slavery is a priority for Liechtenstein, in line with the 2030 Agenda which provides us with a framework to make the world socially, economically and environmentally more sustainable – the fight against modern slavery and human trafficking is a key component of this agenda.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a call on all our societies to build back better. This must include redoubling our efforts to end trafficking and modern slavery. Leveraging the essential role of the financial sector in ending human trafficking must be a crucial part of this effort. We welcome that this year's Political Declaration on Trafficking in Persons clearly references the need of public-private partnerships to prevent and detect human trafficking, and the recognition of the important role played by financial institutions and initiatives of Member States to contribute to ending trafficking in persons. In this regard, we are happy to recall Liechtenstein's flagship SDG initiative FAST (Finance Against Slavery and Trafficking), a public-private partnership embedded in the UN system. FAST places financial institutions at the heart

of the fight against human trafficking and modern slavery by outlining action in the areas of compliance, responsible investment and financial innovation. It is supported by Australia, the Netherlands, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation as well as various private sector partners and carried out by the United Nations University Centre for Policy Research. FAST is expanding its reach and making progress in its dissemination and implementation efforts. Enhancing partnerships for FAST will remain a key objective of Liechtenstein's engagement on the 2030 agenda, in particular in meeting Target 8.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals, but also Goals 5, 8, 16 and 17. Sustainable finance, meaning increased attention to environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors, can create new pathways for investment that are key in helping us achieve the SDG's. It is of essential importance that we treat the ESG framework in a holistic manner, as it was conceived for the 2030 Agenda. The "S" or "Social" components of ESG are among least measured factors in corporate sustainability despite being among the most impactful. We need to do more to amplify the "S" in ESG, in particular in the context of ending human trafficking and modern slavery. This is as much a policy issue as it is a national commitment for Liechtenstein. I look forward to the discussions during this important appraisal and invite all of you to approach us if you would like to join forces on the FAST Initiative.

I thank you.