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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

TWENTY-FIRST SPECIAL SESSION OF
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS
FOR THE OVERALL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

STATEMENT

BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,

The Cairo Conference has caused a significant change in the approaches to both population and health issues by emphasizing that policies on population and reproductive health should be based on the rights of the individual. This rights-based approach is the major achievement of the Cairo Conference, and respect for the human dignity of each individual is the legacy of this conference for future generations.

Mr. President,
We would like to express our gratitude to all those who have significantly contributed to the preparations of this review exercise, in particular UNFPA under the guidance of Dr. Nafis Sadik and Ambassador Chowdhury, who has been a very able leader throughout the lengthy and difficult negotiations on the key future actions for further implementation.

Mr. President,
Investing in health care and education is a key element of addressing population issues, a worthy investment in the future of all of us. Education enables the individual to make informed and responsible decisions, which is a prerequisite for the implementation of the rights-based approach and leads to the "expansion of people's choices", a core element of the definition of human development. Education of girls in particular is a crucial contribution to the implementation of the contents of the Cairo Programme of Action, in that it enables them to exercise better control over their lives. This is especially true for the area of sexual and reproductive health, where avoidance of unwanted pregnancies and protection against sexually transmitted diseases, in particular HIV/AIDS, remain the most formidable challenge.

Liechtenstein has been no exception to the mainstream in our region, where campaigns focused on information and sexual education and targeted at preventing the further spread of the pandemic HIV/AIDS have been relatively successful. More determined and concerted global action is urgently needed, as AIDS continues to have devastating effects in many parts of the world. We have to realize, however, that as in many other areas not only action by Governments is required, but that the role of civil society is of great importance. Many NGO's having already made valuable contributions in the field of education and awareness-building, will continue to complement activities by Governments and international organizations. Overcoming the threat of HIV/AIDS will only be possible through a change towards responsible sexual behaviour, based on respect for sexual and reproductive health.

Mr. President,

It is clear to us that the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action is intrinsically linked with the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The relevant parts of the key future actions before us are certainly a step into the right direction. The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing took the outcome of the Cairo Conference as a basis for further developing women's rights. It is of crucial importance that we continue the integrated approach in the follow-up to the major UN conferences. One important point in case is the issue of gender-based domestic and sexual violence, a complex, widespread and multifaceted phenomenon, which continues to have detrimental effects for women worldwide. The Government of Liechtenstein has stepped up its efforts to combat this phenomenon. •

Mr. President,

The key future actions which will be adopted at the end of the Special Session will strengthen the political will to implement the Cairo Programme of Action, serve as a basis for achieving its goals and thus positively affect the quality of life of future generations.