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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE ARMS TRADE TREATY
FOURTH SESSION

STATEMENT BY JÖRN EIERMANN
ADVISOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. Chair,

I would like to use this opportunity to first of all reiterate my delegation’s satisfaction to see you once again presiding over this very important preparatory committee. We sincerely hope to see you again in this function in July.

After having listened carefully to delegations yesterday, we wish to address several procedural issues regarding the upcoming conference on the Arms Trade Treaty.

The key issue is the question of consensus, which in our view can only mean the absence of an objection on matters of substance. We do of course wish to see a treaty that will be as universal and effective as possible, and mutual trust among delegations is a key ingredient for such an outcome. But it is also clear that we must avoid planting the seeds for a deadlock. We welcome that the draft rules of procedure strongly emphasize the importance of striving for consensus, while allowing for voting on single matters, provided all other efforts have been exhausted.
Nevertheless, we have reservations regarding rule 33.3, which may ultimately set us up for failure.

The strong participation and input of a variety of NGOs has been a vital basis for the process up to this point and we think this should continue. Therefore, we join other delegations in their call to change the wording in rule 63.d from “one meeting” to “meetings”.

We are aware of the importance of this upcoming conference, of its uniqueness and its desirable global and long-lasting impact. Therefore, we should use the time allocated to us in July as effectively and efficiently as possible. Two main committees as well as simultaneous meetings should thus be possible, even for small delegations like ours. In this regard, we would support the proposal by CARICOM for a reporting mechanism.

Finally, we are looking forward to share Liechtenstein’s substantive comments on the content of the treaty during the second half of the week.

I thank you.