

Opening Statement by Domenik Wanger, Permanent Representative of the Permanent Representation of Liechtenstein to the Council of Europe

Opening Remarks at the CAHDI Seminar on the Special Tribunal of the Crime of Aggression

10 April 2024

Dear colleagues,

Good morning. I am happy to welcome you on behalf of the Liechtenstein presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe at this seminar. It is one of our presidency's priorities to follow-up to the Reykjavik Summit, including accountability for the most serious crimes in the war of aggression against Ukraine.

We were very happy to join the other co-sponsors of today's event: Ukraine and the Council of Europe, to explore the role the Council of Europe can play in establishing the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine.

The aggression against Ukraine was also an attack on the post-war international order, grounded in the Charter of the United Nations, and therefore is of truly global relevance. This is why Liechtenstein is committed to Ukraine's vision for comprehensive accountability, as expressed by President Zelensky on numerous occasions and accepted by more than 140 UN member states when they adopted the "Just Peace" resolution in the UN General

Assembly in February 2023. Ukraine's vision for comprehensive accountability includes two tracks: one track on retributive justice and another on reparative justice. To support the reparative justice track, we all worked together to establish the Register of Damages at the Fourth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe in Reykjavik last year as a first step to a compensation mechanism. And to support the retributive justice track, we have consistently backed Ukraine's call for a special international tribunal for the crime of aggression.

As a small State that relies on the international rule of law, we believe, to reinforce the international legal order that we all built together, we must hold the political and military leadership of Russia to account for the crime of aggression.

While establishing the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine through the UN General Assembly remains our preferred option, we are interested in exploring the role that the Council of Europe can play in the establishment of a tribunal that is based on international law and the internationally agreed definition of the crime of aggression.

The Council of Europe has already shown that it can play an important role in helping to ensure President Zelensky's vision of comprehensive and meaningful accountability for the aggression against Ukraine with the establishment of the Register of Damage. So, we hope today's seminar will provide important insight into how the Council of Europe can help ensure accountability for the original crime in this situation: the crime of aggressive war making.

Setting up a tribunal to prosecute the crime of aggression, as everyone in this room knows very well by now, is not easy. It requires determination to do what is right and to build a broad support base – also with States outside of the Council of Europe.

Ukraine can count on Liechtenstein's continued support to achieve President Zelensky's vision of comprehensive and meaningful accountability, both during the remainder of our Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and beyond.

I thank everyone again for attending this seminar today. We are joined by excellent speakers and panelists and wish you interesting discussions.