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## Conseil des droits de l'homme

40<sup>ème</sup> session ordinaire

### Mainstreaming Panel

25 février 2019

Déclaration du Groupe quadrilatéral composé de l'Autriche, du Liechtenstein, de la Slovénie et de la Suisse

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Mr. President,

The Universal Declaration on Human Rights provides, in its Article 28, that “*Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.*” In other words, the rights enshrined in the UDHR require a well-functioning multilateral system in order to be meaningful. [Indeed, why design and adopt international norms and standards without foreseeing a central role for the international system with regard to their respect and implementation?] This is, in essence, why the UN and its institutions were created.

Multilateralism is not an end in itself but rather a means to an end. In the international context of human rights, multilateralism is a sheer necessity [for achieving the common goal of promoting and ensuring respect for international obligations and commitments.] Effective multilateralism in the field of human rights requires not only the political will for cooperation, but also hinges on the existence of strong UN mechanisms vested with the ability to monitor and document the respect of such norms in a universal, impartial and objective manner.

For small countries like my own and the ones I have the honor to speak on behalf of today, Liechtenstein, Slovenia and Switzerland, an international rules-based regime is simply vital. I am convinced that the overwhelming majority of States share the conviction that we need an international system in which the power of the law prevails over the law of the powerful.

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The Human Rights Council undoubtedly occupies a pivotal role with regard to a broad range of both ongoing and emerging global developments and challenges. [It offers a platform for frank exchange, dialogue and meaningful decision-making.] Migration, climate change, digitalization are all issues that require a collective approach and joint problem-solving – how else are we supposed to address them, if not collectively? [And what other fora if not the UN and this Council do unite all States and relevant stakeholders to develop common responses to such fundamental tasks?]

We would like to submit the following questions to the panel, in particular to the UN representatives on the podium:

- How do you assess the Human Rights Council's action in your respective fields?
- To what extent do you believe it is complementary to your own efforts? Does the Council need to do more?
- From your perspective, why is it fundamental to approach these issues from a rights-based perspective?

[The UN and this Council have been created to find solutions to global problems that no nation alone can resolve. We fundamentally believe that this finding is as valid today as it was 7 decades ago when the UN was created.]

[I thank the panelists for the truly insightful views offered today and I look forward to the remainder of the debate.]

I thank you.