

Statement by

**the Republic of Slovenia**

at the

**53rd Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council**

**Item 2: General Debate on High Commissioner's oral update**

Geneva, 20 June 2023

Mr President,

Slovenia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the EU and would like to deliver the following remarks in our national capacity.

Mr High Commissioner,

We thank you for your efforts to strengthen the Office as the key UN Human Rights body at the centre of the international human rights ecosystem. A functioning, well-structured and sufficiently-resourced Office is indeed a global public good. As such, it also contributes to the early identification of risks and more effective prevention of wider conflicts and humanitarian crises.

We heard your call to step up the treaty body strengthening process and its gender balance. We stand ready to contribute to the process in Geneva and New York.

Mr High Commissioner,

your concern about the increasingly shrinking civic space, crack downs on peaceful assembly, attacks and reprisals, both online and offline, against those cooperating with the UN, resonated loudly yesterday in the Council. Civil society representatives, human rights defenders, including women-, environment- and child- human rights defenders, journalists, legal representatives are the bedrock of the human rights advancement and accountability for human rights violations. We strongly condemn any unacceptable measures against them.

Finally, let us bring your attention a new milestone in the international efforts to strengthen international legal cooperation in criminal matters and strengthen the fight against impunity.

Twelve years into the process that became known as the MLA Initiative, led by six States, namely Slovenia, the Netherlands, Belgium, Argentina, Mongolia and Senegal, a diplomatic conference in Ljubljana last month led to the adoption of the Convention on International Cooperation in the Investigation and Prosecution of the Crime of Genocide, Crimes against Humanity, War Crimes and other International Crimes, now known as **Ljubljana - the Hague Convention**.

The convention leads to practical and necessary effects in the fight against the gravest international crimes, therefore all states are invited to sign and ratify it. The signing ceremony will take place in the first quarter of 2024.

I thank you.