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LUXEMBOURG

**Statement by H.E. Mrs. Marie-Josée Jacobs
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« Small States and their Role in International Relations »

Conference on Small States

organized by the
Forum of Small States
on the occasion of its 20th anniversary

New York, October 1st, 2012



Candidat au Conseil de sécurité
2013-2014
Candidate for the Security Council

Mr. Chairman,
Ministers, dear colleagues,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of Luxembourg, let me first of all congratulate Singapore as the chair of the Forum of Small States on their initiative to organize this first FOSS Conference on Small States during the UN General Assembly ministerial segment. This is certainly a fitting way to celebrate the 20th anniversary of our Forum!

I would also like to thank the distinguished panellists for sharing their perspectives on how Small States can contribute to global affairs, multilateral diplomacy and international security, including through the Security Council.

Let me share our perspective, the perspective of Luxembourg, on this topic.

We know what « small » means. History has shaped our geography in such a way that commentators sometimes even refer to Luxembourg as being « tiny » rather than small. In the media and public opinion, if you are small you face the risk of being even further downsized, meaning neglected or even ridiculed.

But here at the United Nations, we are convinced that size does not matter. In the General Assembly, all Member States are represented and each Member State has a vote, irrespective of its size, its population or its economic power. The Assembly reflects the principle of the sovereign equality of all Member States enshrined in the UN Charter.

Small States can, and regularly do make an outstanding contribution to global affairs, multilateral affairs and international security, just as larger States can. I would go even further: given our size and geography, we as Small States are in fact making a disproportionate contribution to multilateralism because we know that multilateralism is for us the only way to have our say and our voice heard in world affairs.

Take the case of our country. Luxembourg is proud to be a founding member of the United Nations. After the Second World War, Luxembourg found in the United Nations and multilateralism in general the ideal framework to flourish as an independent, sovereign State, free to choose for itself. Luxembourg was able to prosper thanks to the peace it has enjoyed since 1945. In return, we have resolutely committed ourselves in the United Nations to contribute to building peace and to promoting sustainable development for the greatest number.

Being a multicultural and multilingual State by its history, its geographical situation and the composition of its population, Luxembourg has often played a role of mediator between the interests of its large European neighbours and within the European Union. We have played this role *inter alia* when we were holding the rotating Presidency of the EU, which we have done 11 times to date, and if I may say so, rather successfully.

Luxembourg is also at the service of the United Nations when it comes to playing the role of an honest broker and to taking responsibility.

In 2009, Luxembourg has had the honour of chairing ECOSOC, the Economic and Social Council, at a crucial juncture, marked by the devastating effects of the global economic and financial crisis of 2008.

Our Permanent Representative also readily agreed when asked by the respective Presidents of the General Assembly to act as co-facilitator for the preparations of the High-level event on the

Implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Sustainable development of Small Island Developing States in 2010 and then again in 2011 for the High-level event on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), both times in cooperation with Permanent Representatives of other Member States of FOSS, Singapore and Jamaica. Her predecessor accepted similar responsibilities as co-facilitator in 2007-08 of the discussions on system-wide coherence within the UN system.

Luxembourg has also been very active in the UN Peacebuilding Commission since its creation in 2005. Since February 2011, Luxembourg is chairing the Guinea Configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Luxembourg's commitment to the Peacebuilding Commission reflects our conviction that in order effectively to maintain international peace and security, we need to recognise the intrinsic link between security and development.

The fight against poverty is a top priority for Luxembourg. Since the year 2000, Luxembourg has reached the objective set by the United Nations by dedicating at least 0.7% of its gross national income to official development assistance. In 2009 and 2010, this aid exceeded 1% of our gross national income. As Minister for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs, I can assure you that the Government of Luxembourg is determined to maintain this effort, despite budgetary constraints.

In terms of international security, Luxembourg participates regularly and actively in peacekeeping operations. Currently, Luxembourg troops are contributing to operations under UN mandate in Kosovo, Lebanon and Afghanistan. Through its contributions to EU missions, Luxembourg also takes its responsibilities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in the fight against piracy off the coast of Somalia, as well as in the Sahel region, where the international community must redouble its efforts to prevent terrorist groups linked to transnational organised crime from taking root.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Since 1945, Luxembourg's action in the United Nations can be summarised by three key words: commitment, solidarity and responsibility. However, if Luxembourg has consistently proved its solidarity and commitment and taken on responsibilities at the UN, it has never had the honour to serve on the UN Security Council. That is why, eleven years ago, we declared our candidature for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the period 2013-2014.

Luxembourg stands ready to share primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, which the Member States of the Organisation have conferred on the Security Council under the Charter. Before us, other Small States represented here have shown through their contribution to the work of the Security Council that size does not matter when it comes to the commitment to effective multilateralism.

During his official visit to Luxembourg on 17th April 2012, in his address to Parliament, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon had this eloquent phrase: « You have shown that it is not the size of a nation's territory that makes the difference. It is the size of a nation's heart. It is the breadth of a nation's vision. It is the depth of a nation's promise to the wider world ».

This recognition honours us. It has further strengthened Luxembourg's resolve to be up to the task and to serve the United Nations. We would be very grateful if our fellow Small States would support us and help us make our voice, the voice of the Small States, heard in the Security Council.

I thank you for your attention.