



Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2019

Opening Plenary Session

Statement of the Principality of Liechtenstein

Warsaw, 16 September 2019

Nuscha Wiczorek, Second Secretary

Madam Chair,

At the outset, let me take this opportunity to thank the Slovak Chairmanship and ODIHR for organising this year's HDIM and the Polish Government for its longstanding commitment to this important event as its generous host.

The HDIM provides a much-needed opportunity to discuss the successes, but also the challenges in implementing our human dimension commitments. This discussion is all the more important as 2018 has been yet another year in which human rights, the rule of law and democracy as core elements of the OSCE's comprehensive security concept have come under strain.

We welcome that this year's meeting can take place based on an agenda adopted by consensus. At the same time, we are concerned about how difficult it has become to agree on this agenda. The issue of civil society participation is very important and we are a strong supporter of interaction and cooperation with civil society. But we also have to counter the trend that this issue dominates and increasingly complicates our discussions not only regarding the human dimension, but sometimes even beyond. We hope that we will be able to improve this situation and ensure an earlier adoption of the HDIM agenda next year.

Madam Chairperson,

This year, Liechtenstein celebrates its 300th birthday. There are manifold reasons why a small state as ours was able to ensure its sovereignty over such a long time. In addition to the

close relationship to our neighbours, one important reason has been our membership in international organizations. Being a member of the international community has not only contributed to ensuring our sovereignty, but also actively shaped our understanding of statehood. Human rights, the rule of law and democracy are central pillars of our understanding of the state. They substantially contribute to stability and social peace in our country as well as within the international community. Celebrating our country's 300th anniversary therefore also means reaffirming our dedication to these fundamental values and principles and to all international organisations and multilateral processes that strengthen them worldwide. Against this backdrop we commend and support ODIHR's work and are highly committed to the implementation of our human dimension commitments.

We very much welcome the further development of our human dimension commitments on priority themes for Liechtenstein such as preventing and combatting violence against women and countering child trafficking.

To reinforce the protection of women against violence, the Liechtenstein Criminal Code has just been revised to increase sentences for offences against sexual self-determination and other sexual offences and to be generally compliant with the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. Additionally, our national police is currently actively reviewing its approach to interventions in situations of domestic violence to further strengthen the protection of victims.

With regard to countering child trafficking and human trafficking in general, we gladly announce that the Liechtenstein Initiative for a Financial Sector Commission on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking will release its final report on 27 September 2019 in New York during the 74th Session of the UN General Assembly. The report is a blueprint for accelerated action to put the financial sector at the heart of global efforts to tackle modern slavery and human trafficking and offers concrete tools that the financial sector can use. I am happy to share information on the initiative bilaterally in the margins of this conference.

We are also committed to the progressive evolution of human dimension commitments with regard to other priority themes of our foreign policy such as the prevention of torture. Against this backdrop we applaud the efforts undertaken so far by the OSCE in supporting participating States in implementing UN norms, principles and standards and the OSCE Human Dimension commitments in the fight against torture, including the work of OSCE field

missions and ODIHR. Nonetheless, torture still prevails in the OSCE region and there have been important new developments in the fight against it such as the Nelson Mandela Rules. We would therefore welcome an enhanced engagement of the OSCE on the implementation of this important human rights guarantee and be supportive of a Ministerial Council deliverable to update and reinforce the OSCE's agenda on this matter.

We welcome this year's priority themes of combating racism, xenophobia, discrimination and hate crime and will present an initiative of the Liechtenstein Violence Protection Commission and the Liechtenstein media on hate speech later during this conference.

For now we wish to reaffirm our full support to ODIHR and its programmes from a normative perspective as well as a donor state and hope that this year's HDIM will be but one more step in furthering the implementation of the OSCE's third dimension.

Thank you.