

MC.DEL/4/18
6 December 2018

ENGLISH
Original: GERMAN

**STATEMENT BY
H.E. AURELIA FRICK, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
EDUCATION AND CULTURE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF
LIECHTENSTEIN, AT THE TWENTY-FIFTH MEETING
OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Milan, 6 December 2018

Mr. Chairperson,
Dear colleagues,

It is my pleasure to thank and congratulate the Italian OSCE Chairmanship.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted 70 years ago. Within the OSCE, we have consolidated these principles and those of the Charter of the United Nations. We have undertaken to live according to these principles and to ensure that they are upheld.

It is for me a happy coincidence that my country was drawn first on the list of speakers for today. This procedure reflects the sovereign equality of the OSCE participating States.

Next year, Liechtenstein will celebrate its 300th anniversary. It has lived unscathed through 300 years of eventful European history and as such can testify to the importance of respect by the international community for the sovereignty and integrity of every State. Liechtenstein has benefited from its long-standing friendly relations with Switzerland and Austria and is grateful to our two neighbours for their exemplary partnership.

The actively experienced sovereignty of a State depends not only on its recognition by the international community. It also requires sovereignty experienced from within and active self-determination.

This applies particularly to small States. Liechtenstein's support for State sovereignty is backed by its tradition of direct democracy. This strong identification with the country and its form of government protected Liechtenstein from being taken over by Hitler's Germany.

Liechtenstein is a staunch advocate of effective multilateralism as a solution to the challenges of our time. Global problems require global solutions. We regard nationalism and protectionism as a threat to freedom and prosperity.

Despite the OSCE's clear principles and its crisis-tested regulatory framework, and despite the best efforts of the Italian Chairmanship, a review of the past year is sobering.

We all know about the unresolved conflicts in the OSCE area. Recalling the triggers of the First World War, we should be aware of how quickly incidents can get out of control. The conflict in and around Ukraine must be resolved quickly on the basis of our principles. We all have a responsibility in this regard, particularly a humanitarian one.

The OSCE's work has been under pressure for years. We may have to accept that the willingness to compromise so as to further develop the Organization and resolve conflicts is not present at the moment. However, we must not accept violations of the principles that we have achieved in consensus. Particularly in times of tension, the OSCE must remain a platform for dialogue.

The Structured Dialogue is a good example of this. In spite of the sometimes fundamentally opposing positions, the dialogue continues and areas for progress are sounded out. That is worth something in itself.

I wish the Slovak Chairmanship good luck and success in the coming year.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.