

Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
Working Session 2
Challenges to the enjoyment of fundamental freedoms and human rights in the age of new
information and communication technologies, including the respect for privacy
Warsaw, 22 September 2015
Claudio Nardi, First Secretary, Office for Foreign Affairs

Mr. Chairman,

Information and communication technology innovations bring positive change by empowering individuals, advancing sustainable development and strengthening democracy. At the same time, these technologies pose serious challenges to our societies: Developments during the last years have shown the vulnerability of the internet to practices involving ill-intentioned interference and domestic and extraterritorial surveillance, both by states and private actors. Such practices threaten individual rights and inhibit the free functioning of a vibrant civil society. Thus, these practices have raised serious concerns regarding legal and policy implications. The concerns relate primarily to the right to privacy, though other fundamental rights - such as the right to freedom of expression and the right to non-discrimination - are also at stake, as are other norms of international law. Given the global nature of the internet and the increasing dependency of individuals on modern communication technology, it is of fundamental importance that the human right a person holds offline are also protected online.

Liechtenstein welcomes the efforts of the ODIHR in protecting fundamental freedoms online and sees potential for further strengthening this agenda in the OSCE. Today's discussion is an opportunity to explore avenues for future ODIHR engagement and to also take into consideration the work of other regional and international fora and to explore ways of cooperation, for example with the recently mandated UN Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy in the digital age, Mr. Joseph Cannataci. Both the OSCE and the Special Rapporteur could benefit from strong networks and give mutual impetus to future discussions with a view to strengthen the fundamental freedoms a person holds online.

I thank you!