



## **Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2012**

**Warsaw, 24 September – 5 October 2012**

### **Statement by Liechtenstein**

**Working Session 14, 3 October 2012: Tolerance and Non-Discrimination II**

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Mr/Ms Chairperson,

For many years, the promotion and protection of human rights at the national and international level has been one of the priorities of the Liechtenstein Government. In this context, the combat of any forms of racism and xenophobia, right wing extremism as well as the promotion of tolerance is of the highest importance for Liechtenstein. Therefore, Liechtenstein strongly supports OHDIR's work in the field of tolerance and non-discrimination. Liechtenstein believes that tolerance and non-discrimination can only be achieved by a determined fight against racism and at the same time by genuine integration of foreigners into the local society.

The Liechtenstein Government has undertaken serious efforts during the last few years to combat racism, xenophobia and right-wing extremism. Based on the results of a survey on the root causes of "Right-Wing Extremism in Liechtenstein" carried out in 2008/2009, the Commission on the Prevention of Violence developed a measure catalogue for the years 2010 to 2015 to combat right-wing extremism. For instance, in 2010 the Commission carried out an awareness-raising campaign for the general public under the title "Facing Right-Wing Extremism Together". Other measures, such as trainings for the administration, police, schools or judges have either already been implemented or are to be implemented in the near future.

Since 2011 the Commission on the Prevention of Violence publishes a monitoring report on right-wing extremist violence. This report takes stock of all incidents of right-wing extremist violence on a yearly basis. While a number of incidents was reported in 2010, the report for the year 2011 did not register any incidents of right-wing extremist violence. This is an indication for the effectiveness of the measures taken by the Commission on the Prevention of Violence.

Mr/Ms Chairperson,

The genuine integration of foreigners as well as the mutual understanding and the combat of any forms of racism are vital for a peaceful and cohesive society. Genuine integration means that all the inhabitants regardless of their origins can equally participate in the economy, the labour market, education and the social security system. For this purpose, it is also essential that all foreigners are able to speak and understand the official language of our country.

The high importance attached by the Government to the integration of the foreign population is underlined by a number of measures taken in recent years. In 2008, the new Foreigners law, based on the principle of “demanding and promoting”, was adopted by Parliament. The law stipulates that foreigners have to acquire a basic knowledge of the German language but at the same time, German lessons are actively promoted and supported financially by the state. Also, the position of an Integration Officer was created. In 2010, the Government adopted a new integration concept based on the principle “Liechtenstein - Strength through Diversity” which puts emphasis on the benefits of diversity and multilingualism for the society in Liechtenstein. The concept defines a number of measures to be taken from 2011 to 2013 in order to enhance tolerance among different cultures and to deepen the integration of foreigners.

The integration of foreigners into the local society can be followed in the status report on the situation of human rights in Liechtenstein, which is published on a yearly basis. The report analyses various indicators linked to human rights. Among others, it covers also the category “Integration”. In general, the report shows that foreigners in Liechtenstein are well integrated in all sectors of public life. However, it also shows that there is further potential to improve integration, such as in the school system. Foreigners are clearly underrepresented at schools of higher education, such as grammar schools and universities. Recently, the Office of Education has started implementing a number of measures to improve the integration of foreigners in the school system and to increase the share of foreigners within schools of higher education.

Thank you for your attention.