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REGIERUNG DES FÜRSTENTUMS LIECHTENSTEIN

OSZE 15. Ministerrat

**29.-30. November 2007
Madrid**

Delegation des Fürstentums Liechtenstein

Rede

**I.E. Rita Kieber-Beck
Außenministerin**

29. November 2007

15th OSCE-Ministerial Meeting, 29.-30. November 2007 in Madrid, Spanien
Statement by H.E. Mrs. Rita Kieber-Beck
Minister of Foreign Affairs

ENGLISH
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Courtesy translation

Mr Chairman
Ladies and gentlemen,

We all are happy that Madrid once again hosts an important meeting of our organisation. I want to remind you that the Follow-up Meeting to the CSCE in Madrid between 1980-1983 was able to agree on substantial results in the military and human dimension, despite the unfavourable starting position and dramatic events.

Since that Follow-up Meeting of 1983 in Madrid, the political map of our continent has changed fundamentally. Since then, reform movements have asserted themselves and have brought more political and economic freedom to men. At that time, decisions to the Stockholm negotiations about Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs) were taken. Henceforth, the arms control negotiations were brought into the CSCE which eventually led to the end of the partitioning of the European continent.

Then and now, the great talent of the Spanish diplomacy and the particular cordiality of the Spanish hospitality are again being displayed to the fullest extent.

You, Mr Chairman, as well as your capable team in Vienna as in Madrid have been successful in continuing the dialogue between the participating States which you led in a transparent manner and which you were able to broaden into new fields. You have included the OSCE partner States in our work more strongly. You opened and led a successful dialogue with Civil Society and the Private Sector with regard to the combat against terrorism. You also included the young generation in a forum to raise their awareness of and interest in our work. For all these efforts, I especially want to thank the Spanish chairmanship.

Mr Chairman,

This year, we in the OSCE have had a fundamental and difficult discussion about our common acquis. We found out that we have – partially important – differences about the interpretation of implementing our OSCE commitments, about the acquis itself and the further development of our organisation. King Juan Carlos stressed, just this past week, on the occasion of the opening of the new OSCE Secretariat in Vienna, that great objectives have been achieved, “we have the collective obligation to preserve them, and to go even further”. Liechtenstein can fully endorse this statement.

We now see it as a central obligation of the OSCE to implement the rich acquis and the effective and equal cooperation between the participating States. Most of the big issues in the OSCE space, like the settling of minority questions or the guaranteeing of the internal and international security, find answers and solutions in the Helsinki Final Act, the Paris Charta or the Copenhagen Document. What we need is an unequivocal and clear “recommitment”.

I am also convinced that our OSCE institutions do very valuable work. The autonomies granted to them were granted with purpose. They need to be preserved. In consequence, it is my request that the OSCE and its institutions receive the necessary financial means and therewith the ability to plan for the future.

Mr Chairman,

Even if I stressed the importance of implementation and the “recommitment” to our acquis, Liechtenstein is not opposed to continue to develop our organisation further. In this context, we see the necessity of the legal personality for the OSCE, in particular for the work of the OSCE in the field. Also, we are ready to start a dialogue about OSCE Statutes or an OSCE Charta. However, we are not yet quite convinced of the added value. Our preference is to finally conclude the reform debate in the OSCE and increase our devotion towards a co-operation in conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

Liechtenstein welcomes the efforts that the issue of the environment has entered the debate in the OSCE. Liechtenstein has learned to value the close co-operation among its neighbouring states in the alpine region. Just a few weeks ago, Liechtenstein was host to a successful Ministerial conference on the environment and sustainable development in the Caucasus region.

Mr Chairman,

Today, in particular the differences in our societies and between our states are the ones that cause friction and conflict. Among these are differences between rich and poor, majorities and minorities, big and small, powerful and weak, between different traditions, ethnicities and different religions. As a small state that, based on its economic and military situation, has confined means to push its interests, and a country that has a high proportion of foreigners, Liechtenstein has a particular sensitivity and experience with its dealings with others and its own diversity.

Freedom, democracy and tolerance bring this state of diversity to full fruition. However, they don't guarantee diversity in the long-term. One also needs respect, rule of law, and the possibility of equal participation by each individual and by each state. We continue to see this issue as an important challenge for the OSCE.

Equal participation and diversity in the OSCE also means that each and every participating State is entitled to take on the chairmanship in our Organization. Such a leadership role goes hand in hand with a special responsibility with regard to our common values and the implementation of our common commitments.

We look forward to welcoming Finland in the chair of the OSCE in the coming year with particular joy and great expectations.

Thank you for your attention.