



**Working session 10: Tolerance and non-discrimination I – Rights of persons
belonging to national minorities
Statement of the Republic of Slovenia
Warsaw, 18th September 2017**

Mr President,
Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We congratulate Mr Lamberto Zannier on his appointment for the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and wish him a lot of success in his new capacity in implementing his mandate and his predecessors' efforts to reduce tensions and prevent inter-ethnic conflicts.

Slovenia devotes great attention to the rights of national minorities. It is not coincidence that, after Bolzano/Bozen Recommendations on National Minorities in inter-State Relations from 2008, one set of guidelines of OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities from 2012 is titled "**The Ljubljana Guidelines on Integration of Diverse Societies**". Traditional national minorities, as well as the Roma Community, enjoy in Slovenia high legal protection, including collective rights. The Italian and Hungarian national minorities are directly represented in representative bodies of local self-government (municipal councils) and in the Slovenian National Assembly, each with one representative, and the Roma minority is represented in municipal councils of 19 local communities.

The Ljubljana Guidelines are today as topical as five years ago. The aim of the Ljubljana guidelines is to assist States by policies for integration of diverse societies and so help them to avoid ethnic tensions and conflicts, what result in security, stability and prosperity of States.

One of the basic principles in Ljubljana guidelines is a principle of "Good and democratic governance" that serves the needs and interests of entire State population, including minorities.

Diversity of societies is a fact in all OSCE participating States and must be as such recognised by the States. In this sense, States should adopt specific policies for effective participation in democratic decision-making and for adequate representation of diverse groups, including minorities, who should have influence on final policy.

State`s policies should also protect and promote linguistic diversity, including linguistic rights of minorities. Besides giving opportunity to all persons, belonging to national minorities, to learn good enough their minority language in schools, also signs, inscriptions, place names, street names, and other topographical indications in minority languages (or bilingually) are of great importance for the individual and collective identity of persons belonging to national minorities.

Mr President,

To conclude, I would like to confirm the goodwill of Slovenia for the promotion of minority rights in the framework of OSCE and its support for the work of the High Commissioner on National Minorities.

Thank you.