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OFFICE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN

Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2018

Opening Plenary Session

Statement of the Principality of Liechtenstein

Warsaw, 10 September 2018**Martin Hasler, First Secretary**

Chair,

At the outset, I would like to thank the Italian Chairmanship and ODIHR for organising this year's HDIM and the Polish Government for the continuous hospitality it extends to the participants of this important meeting.

In many OSCE participating States, sustained pressure on human rights and fundamental freedoms persists. Particularly worrying is the threat to basic rights in areas of conflict. We would like to commend ODIHR for its important work and its support to participating States in strengthening and furthering democracy and the rule of law across the OSCE region. In the challenging current environment, it is essential that the participating States support ODIHR's work, also by taking timely decisions on its budget.

Liechtenstein has been consistently assisting ODIHR through voluntary contributions to the Human Rights and Terrorism Programme and the Legislative Review Fund. Liechtenstein has also supported the new HDIM registration system. This was necessary to allow ODIHR provide a more user-friendly system that contributes to a more orderly and transparent participation while maintaining the meeting's nature as a platform for dialogue and networking.

For some time now, the work on the OSCE's human dimension and HDIM in particular has been influenced and hampered by the discussion on the participation of civil society organisations in OSCE events. We welcome the efforts of the Austrian and Italian Chairmanships to

address this issue. Clearly, CSOs should be prevented from abusing or contravening OSCE human dimension meetings. However, limitations to their engagement have to be kept in line with the defined rules. Liechtenstein is concerned about the growing use of hate speech by individuals, but also by CSOs throughout the OSCE area. This threat to democracy and social peace needs to be addressed with resolve by the OSCE community.

Chair,

Strengthening human rights in Liechtenstein is a priority of the Government. The annual dialogues with civil society and their inclusion in the Universal Periodic Review report, the establishment of a National Human Rights Institution, as well as efforts to better integrate migrants and asylum-seekers are mechanisms that have been put into place by the Liechtenstein Government in order to continuously further human rights. In order to empower asylum-seekers and refugees to learn German and thus to promote their integration, Liechtenstein has developed a tailor-made language scheme called “Liechtenstein Languages”, which is being successfully implemented in all German speaking countries. In Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Liechtenstein, more than 10’000 asylum-seekers and refugees have been able so far to acquire basic German skills in only four weeks.

Chair,

Human trafficking and modern slavery are among the biggest human rights scandals of our time. Combatting these crimes is as a major global challenge, with particular relevance in the OSCE area. That is why Liechtenstein has initiated, together with international partners, an international multi-stakeholder commission that will elaborate a set of measures to target financial flows associated with human trafficking and modern slavery in order to fight impunity for and end these crimes. The so-called Financial Sector Commission will officially be launched later this month in New York.

In a climate where human rights and multilateral diplomacy are under growing pressure, Liechtenstein highly appreciates and supports the work of ODIHR and the OSCE.

We look forward to a constructive HDIM 2018 with valuable contributions and insights.

Thank you.