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**STATEMENT BY  
H.E. AURELIA FRICK, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS,  
EDUCATION AND CULTURE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF  
LIECHTENSTEIN, AT THE TWENTY-THIRD MEETING  
OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Hamburg, 8 December 2016

Mr. Chairperson,  
Esteemed colleagues,

Practically all of the OSCE Foreign Ministers have accepted the invitation to Hamburg. This is an indication of the outstanding German hospitality for which I am sincerely grateful. It is also an expression of the great appreciation for the tireless commitment of the German Chairmanship to European security and the OSCE.

In spite of – or even because of – all of the challenges it faces, it is important for the OSCE to be able to count on such broad political support. Nevertheless, we must recognize that we are gathered here today above all because of our concern at the state of our European security project. We are meeting at a time of great geopolitical tensions.

The Ukraine conflict and its tragic impact on the civilian population persists. In spite of the great commitment on the part of the OSCE and the German Chairmanship, we have not made any decisive progress towards a solution. Many other processes within the OSCE are blocked, and very little consensus can be achieved at present on major issues within our Organization.

I therefore ask: do we all still share the same values? Or do we rather espouse competing values?

This last year again, the goal of comprehensive security in Europe appears to have receded further into the distance.

Mr. Chairperson,

The CSCE was created out of a situation like this. And the OSCE has devised instruments that could contribute to stability where comprehensive security is not achievable for the time being.

Liechtenstein would therefore welcome it if structured dialogue were conducted in the OSCE to defuse growing tensions and look for points of convergence. In that regard, I

believe that women have a special role to play. The OSCE should continue to address developments undermining social peace in our communities. I am referring here to the erosion of human rights and the rule of law and to disproportionate security measures.

Hate speech and intolerance foment violence and create instability. Public discussion in recent months has also seen a brutalization of language. Prejudices have been used and polarized all too often in political confrontations. I regard this with great concern. It endangers the cohesion of our societies.

We politicians in particular have the responsibility to stand up against such developments and to contribute in times of great challenges to objective and integrative discussion.

I hope that the OSCE can play a pioneering role here and welcome the fact that this matter will be addressed under Austria's leadership. Liechtenstein also offers Austria its full support for the coming year.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.