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**Statement of H.E. Ms. Aurelia Frick,
Minister for Foreign Affairs, Education and Culture**

**World Humanitarian Summit
23 - 24 May 2016 in Istanbul**

Mr. Secretary General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I wish to thank Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for the initiative to hold the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit. The moment to discuss all dimensions of humanitarian work is certainly well chosen. We hope that our discussions at the summit will be translated into concrete follow-up action. We appreciate the work gone into the preparation of the summit. The Secretary General's report "One Humanity: Shared Responsibility" offers both an excellent overview of the state of play and a basis for advancing the agenda over the next few years. Linking up this discussion with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development will be one element needed for success. The connection between humanitarian and development work is obvious – especially but not only in cases of long-term displacement.

Humanitarian assistance is a key function of the United Nations. A wide range of other players, from the International Committee of the Red Cross to civil society organizations play a crucial role as well. Having all these players gathered at the same table is therefore of particular importance. Humanitarian work is based on the concept of international

solidarity, one of the pillars of Liechtenstein's foreign policy. Accordingly, we have consistently made contributions to humanitarian work, which are per capita among the highest in the international community. The Government of Liechtenstein remains committed to its policy in this respect. We will also continue paying particular importance to so-called forgotten crises, where humanitarian assistance tends to be dramatically underfunded. If solidarity is key, especially at a time when we see many of our core values under attack, we are also looking at our humanitarian engagement from the perspective of enlightened self-interest: Humanitarian crises have been among the key drivers of large scale displacement of populations, which has led to a number of challenges. Some States, many of them developing countries, have been put under particular strain. Assisting displaced people in such situations is also a contribution to managing the capacity of large scale movements. Much complementary work of course needs to be done, in particular to address the root causes and drivers, from armed conflict to climate change. We should make a step in the right direction at this Summit. This will make it easier to follow-up with another one at the Summit meeting on migration and refugee movements in New York later this year.

I wish to comment on two specific aspects of the complex agenda we have in front of us at this meeting – international humanitarian law and gender: In the area of armed conflict it is the very worrisome state of international humanitarian law. The Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols in particular stand out as landmark achievements in the history of international law, both in content and acceptance. But the lack of compliance with its provisions has reached unprecedented and alarming levels: Attacks on medical facilities and staff, routine denial of humanitarian access and even deliberate attacks on displaced civilians are hallmarks of current conflicts – from Syria to Yemen and Afghanistan. We look forward to progress in the discussions of a compliance initiative underway in Geneva. But complementary and additional steps are needed. We very much hope that this summit will generate collective political will to do better.

War crimes, along with genocide and crimes against humanity cause immense human suffering and force many people to leave their homes. Calls for more decisive action by

the UN Security Council to end such crimes, in Syria and elsewhere, have had little result. This is a frustrating state of affairs that reflects poorly on all of us, Council members and otherwise – and it certainly undermines the standing of the United Nations. We have therefore come together with other like-minded countries and agreed on a Code of Conduct for States who serve on the Security Council: These States – currently 111 – have made a public commitment to take action to end and prevent atrocity crimes as part of their engagement as Security Council members and also not to vote against credible proposals put before the Council to this end. As part of our contribution to a successful World Humanitarian Summit, we have reached out to the membership to ensure that additional States join this pledge. I wish to take this opportunity to call on everyone in this room who has not already done so, to join the Code of Conduct.

Women's rights and empowerment are issues especially close to my heart. The necessity of including women in peace processes, one would think, should be a matter of simple logic: we cannot exclude half the population when trying to shape a peaceful future for all. Especially during armed conflict, women and girls are exposed to a higher level of gender-based violence, often escalating to the point where it amounts to war crimes or crimes against humanity. Besides protection, it is essential to stop stereotyping women as victims. To this end, we need to combat any form of discrimination against women and empower them to claim their rights to justice, to sexual and reproductive health and to their full and equal participation at all levels of decision making, as outlined partially in resolution 1325 and most recently also in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I thank you