



CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY!

Statement by the Permanent Representation of Slovenia to the UN, OSCE and other International Organizations in Vienna, at the Third OSCE Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting (SHDM III) on "Digital Technologies and Human Rights – Opportunities and Challenges"

*Closing Session
Vienna, 13 July 2021*

Madame Moderator,

Slovenia wishes to thank the Swedish Chairpersonship and ODIHR for organizing the Third Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on the topic of Digital Technologies and Human Rights. The impact of new technologies and digitalization on human rights is becoming a topic that increasingly demands our full attention. The rapid development of break-through technologies and Artificial Intelligence present both many opportunities as well as a number of potential risks.

Allow me to contribute with presenting the commitments and practices Slovenia has undertaken in the field of digital technologies in regards to human rights.

On Artificial Intelligence, Slovenia supports, a future oriented digital policy and a human-centered approach with the need for Artificial Intelligence Governance, where the application and certification of Artificial Intelligence systems will be adequately supervised. Showcasing Slovenia's strong commitment to the introduction of advanced technologies, where Artificial Intelligence is of particular importance, our capital Ljubljana is hosting the International Research Centre on Artificial Intelligence under the auspices of UNESCO. Besides developing future solutions and tools in the field of Artificial Intelligence, the Centre will provide a transparent environment, research and discussion on Artificial Intelligence for public & political stakeholders around the world and assist drafting policies and action plans. The Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Education, Science and Sport, Public Administration and Justice and the Faculty of Law of the University of Ljubljana have launched a research programme on the topic of Artificial Intelligence and human rights. The conclusions of the research will feed into the positions and decisions of the government in the future.

Slovenia is also a founding member of the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence, a multi-stakeholder initiative, which aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice on Artificial Intelligence by supporting cutting-edge research and applied activities on Artificial Intelligence-related priorities.

Slovenia is convinced that through its intergovernmental structure the Council of Europe is a unique and well-placed organisation to establish standards for the challenges posed by new technologies. We welcome and support ongoing work in the Ad Hoc Committee on Artificial Intelligence chaired by a Slovenian – Mr Gregor Strojín.

We also welcome the engagement of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of Media on the use of Artificial Intelligence in the realm of freedom of expression.

We are aware of the gender digital divide and of the fact that women are underrepresented in almost all areas of ICT education, employment, entrepreneurship, and leadership. Empowering women with digital skills enables them to participate in active citizenship, democracy, education and business in the digital society. We support the use of gender sensitive strategies such as raising awareness, education and training, mentorship and networking to narrow the gender digital gap.

In conclusion, Slovenia is a supporter of responsible, human-centered and human rights-based development of digital technologies - society, as a whole must benefit from digitalization. Therefore, a fair, open, and secure online environment with legal clarity and certainty for all stakeholders must be created.

Thank you, Madame Moderator.