

Courtesy Translation

**SPEECH**  
**OF**  
**HIS SERENE HIGHNESS**  
**HEREDITARY PRINCE ALOIS OF LIECHTENSTEIN**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE**  
**NATIONAL DAY 2020**

**ON 15 August 2020**



Dear people of Liechtenstein

This year's national holiday is being celebrated in a special way because of the pandemic. We will refrain from the state ceremony in front of the castle, the public festival and the fireworks. Nevertheless, we want to celebrate today in a festive manner and reflect on both the past and the future.

Because of the pandemic, we have all experienced unusual restrictions on our freedom in recent months. Many of us have also experienced considerable additional stress at work or in caring for family members.

By international standards, we have been very successful in coping with the pandemic so far. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have made a special effort in recent months, especially those responsible in government and administration as well as in the health and care sector. I would also like to thank the many volunteers who have spontaneously helped - be it with shopping, childcare or financial support.

In addition to our good cooperation and great solidarity, we also benefited from our other strengths in overcoming the crisis: from our entrepreneurial spirit and our ability to innovate, as well as from the long-term and sustainable orientation of our state system with its stable political and economic framework, disciplined handling of the national budget and well-developed social system.

After a first phase of severe restrictions, many security measures were lifted in a second phase. However, the pandemic is not yet over. As long as medicines or vaccinations do not have the necessary effect, it will be crucial that we continue to adhere to safety regulations in a consistent and disciplined manner. Otherwise, relatively minor preventive restrictions will quickly turn back into drastic restrictions.

Many of us are concerned about our health, our training, our jobs or our company. Also worrying is an increased propensity to violence within various states and a rise in protectionism and power politics at international level. Many are also concerned that the pandemic will lead to a reorganisation of value chains and new pressure for tax harmonisation, with conditions that are disadvantageous for us.

Despite these concerns, we can face the challenges of the coming months with confidence. On the one hand, we have an enviable starting position by international comparison and, on the other, the pandemic is accelerating developments such as digitalisation and the emphasis on sustainability, which we can use to our advantage.

To do this, we should first evaluate what we know about the pandemic so far, so that we can learn from the crisis and prepare for possible further waves of the pandemic. However, we should not only deal with pandemics, but also think about other crisis scenarios, because often one is well prepared for the last but not for the next crisis.

The pandemic, for example, has clearly shown us how much we depend on a stable digital infrastructure and thus also on a secure electricity network today. We should therefore consider how we can make this infrastructure as crisis-proof as possible, including with regard to digital viruses and other digital attacks. In this way, we can further strengthen an important locational attractiveness, namely the great stability.

Thanks to our good education system and our highly developed economy, we should in principle benefit from the fact that the pandemic will accelerate digitisation. However, we will be able to make

even better use of the associated opportunities if we continue to optimize our education system in all areas, from early childhood care and schooling to continuing education in companies.

The pandemic is also likely to accelerate the trend towards sustainability. This trend was already significant before the pandemic. However, it has led to large aid packages with a strong emphasis on sustainability being put together quickly, especially in European countries. This, together with the changes in lifestyle triggered by the pandemic, should further increase the importance of sustainable development.

Liechtenstein is already very sustainable by international comparison: in economic terms, thanks to careful handling of the State's finances, in social terms, thanks to good education and social systems, and also in ecological terms, much has been achieved in recent years. However, in order to use the trend towards sustainability to our advantage as far as possible, we should intensify the orientation of our society towards sustainability in all areas of life. In this way, we can also ensure that the burden on future generations remains low.

In economic terms, we should take as our guideline the recommendations that the government formulated in its postulate response on the careful handling of public finances, which have met with a very positive response in the Landtag. According to these recommendations, we should invest in the future especially in the development of potential and in infrastructure, but we should be cautious about increases in current government expenditure.

Although very good by international comparison, there is still room for improvement in the financing of old-age provision, health care and nursing care. Investments in the future are also possible here if real system improvements are achieved through one-off expenditure.

We can increase social sustainability, for example, by optimising education and improving the compatibility of family and career. We should not only think about the state side, but also about how we can achieve improvements in the private sector and in civil society in an entrepreneurial and innovative way.

Progress in the areas of mobility and energy will be particularly important for environmental sustainability. We should therefore rapidly implement both the mobility concept and the energy strategy that will soon be available. We can also increase environmental sustainability by ensuring that our companies focus on sustainability in their products and services and by promoting this through conscious and local purchasing.

Dear people of Liechtenstein

In the final months of this legislative period, let us not only continue to resolutely meet the challenges of the pandemic, but also seize the opportunities it presents. If each of us does the best we can in our own field and if we make progress towards digitisation and sustainability in an entrepreneurial and innovative way, we will all benefit.

From the bottom of my heart I would like to thank all those who helped to organise the state holiday and wish you all a happy holiday and God's blessing.