

Courtesy Translation

SPEECH

OF
HIS SERENE HIGHNESS
HEREDITARY PRINCE ALOIS OF LIECHTENSTEIN

ON THE OCCASION OF THE
NATIONAL DAY 2021

ON 15 August 2021



Dear people of Liechtenstein

This year's national day will again be celebrated in a special way because of the pandemic. Although the restrictions are less extensive than last year and we can at least celebrate together in the communities, unfortunately we still have to do without some things. Nevertheless, we can be grateful today that in an international comparison the pandemic has affected us less severely and that many people have once again done extraordinary things for the good of all of us in recent months.

We can also be grateful for our constitution, whose 100th anniversary we celebrate this year. Indeed, our constitution has been an important foundation for the so successful development of our country in recent decades. The unique combination of a parliamentary democracy with a strong monarchical element and a strong direct-democratic element has proved to be a stroke of luck. Our constitution thus ensures a broad political consensus. It gives great stability, continuity and a long-term orientation of politics. It leads to a pronounced closeness of politics to the citizens and it allows for quick action where the consensus for it is given. Thanks to these advantages of our constitution and our careful financial policy, we have acquired a special ability to act over decades. For a small state that has to react quickly to changing the international framework conditions repeatedly, this is of particular importance.

We should retain this special ability to act for the next 100 years. To this end, we must not stand still, but regularly deal with the challenges ahead, cultivate a broad exchange on these challenges within the population and then take the necessary measures.

A major challenge remains the pandemic and its various after-effects. Due to new mutations, there is unfortunately a risk that we will again be affected by restrictions in the coming months. Restrictions could affect us in Liechtenstein itself, but we also have to expect restrictions at the international level, especially with regard to travel and supply chains.

The pandemic has also caused enormous costs in many countries. This circumstance is also likely to lead to an increase in protectionism, and small states will increasingly have to adopt unattractive regulations. A recent example is the initiative for a global minimum tax on companies.

An international challenge is also the increasingly unstable geopolitics and an additional challenge could arise for us if the future regulations between Switzerland and the EU increasingly differ from ours, making it more difficult for our country to belong to the EEA and the Swiss Economic Area at the same time. Together with other challenges such as the effects of climate change, the technological and demographic developments, this will lead to considerable burdens for our national budget and our social insurances.

Each one of us can help to ensure that we cope well with these challenges and thereby also maintain our special capacity to act. Thus, with regard to the pandemic, it is crucial that as many of us as possible get vaccinated and that everyone adheres to the precautionary measures in a disciplined manner. We should do this not only to protect our own health and our health system, but it would also be beneficial for a healthy economy, which in turn is a prerequisite for a healthy national budget and sustainably financed social security.

However, the preservation of our special capacity to act still requires further steps. It would also be important to quickly implement the climate vision, the energy strategy and the mobility concept. Each of us can also make positive contributions to this.

Due to the technological development, which has accelerated further as a result of the pandemic, it will also be crucial to have the best educated population in digital terms as well as a stable and fast data infrastructure. In addition to the implementation of the education strategy, this will require major efforts in the area of cyber security and the securing of a stable electricity grid in the coming years.

Finally, we should also develop in broad consensus good strategies for old age, reconciliation of family and work, and land use planning and then implement them consistently.

Dear people of Liechtenstein

Not least thanks to our constitution, we have been able to acquire a special capacity to act over the past decades. Let us preserve this strength as well as the unity and agility associated with it for the future by, on the one hand, maintaining our tried and tested structures and, on the other hand, constantly achieving further improvements through targeted steps.

From the bottom of my heart, I thank all those who have contributed to the organisation of the national day and wish you all a beautiful festive day and God's blessings.