



Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2016

Working Session 1: **Democratic Institutions**

Warsaw, 19 September 2016

Statement by the Delegation of Switzerland

Madam Moderator,

First, I would like to thank Director Link and Ambassador Leissner for their inspiring presentations. In this working session on democratic institutions, Switzerland's remarks will focus on elections. We commend ODIHR for the election observation missions carried out in 2016 and praise its professionalism, methodology and credibility. Switzerland supports ODIHR in these endeavors, including through the Election Observers Training Programme and through secondments of both long-term and short-term observers.

We thank ODIHR for its observation mission of the 2015 elections of the Federal Assembly in Switzerland and for its final report of 16 February 2016. Implementing the 1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit commitment to "follow up promptly the ODIHR election assessment and recommendations", the Swiss electoral authorities are working on ODIHR's recommendations, which mostly focus on electronic voting.

We are pleased to confirm that these recommendations are currently being addressed by federal authorities in cooperation with the cantonal authorities, a guarantee for effective implementation in our federal system. We thank ODIHR for the constructive exchanges during the observation mission and encourage all participating States to cooperate with ODIHR for a better implementation of the

commitments related to “periodic and genuine elections” adopted in the 1990 CSCE/OSCE Copenhagen Document.

Madam Moderator,

Switzerland notes with satisfaction the positive trend towards increased follow-up to the recommendations of ODIHR’s election observation missions by OSCE participating States. However, increased exchanges on how to cooperate with ODIHR should be encouraged, namely through reporting to the Human Dimension Committee. This is our first recommendation. As a second recommendation we think that a closer collaboration between ODIHR and other European institutions such as the Council of Europe should be set up. Indeed, exchanges between electoral management bodies of these two institutions should be more frequent. This would represent an important added value to our discussions in Vienna and help avoiding the situation of having two independent international European election monitoring mechanisms at risk of contradicting themselves when reporting on the process of any given election.

Thank you, Madam Moderator.