

Ms. Vasilika Hysi, Chair of Subcommittee for Human Rights, Parliament of Albania, Albania

Thank you Chairman,

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

Let me thank the OSCE/ODIHR for the legislative support given to Albanian Parliament in review the drafts of various pieces of legislations on human rights, but also on the field of rule of law, judiciary and electoral reforms, the increasing the transparency and access of media and public to the activities of the Albanian Parliament.

Coming from lawmaking area, I would like to emphasize the importance of the public consultation for drafting, review existing or draft legislation, etc.

The NGO-s and media play an important role on this process in Albania. There are no the representatives of Albanians NGO-s here, but I would like to gratitude for their involvement in various areas such as: legislative process, hearings at Parliament, addressing their concerns for laws and the implementation of the laws, aiming better protection of human rights and strengthening rule of law in my country.

Beside the good experience, there is a need for improvements on this process. This is the reason that the Albanian Government brought to the parliament the draft of new law '*On public consultation*' which is under the discussion at the Parliamentary Commissions of Albanian Parliament and will be adopted very soon.

This law will solve most of the concerns expressed by OSCE/ODIHR on the quality of the process of drafting new legislation or amending the existed one. The law has foreseen the procedures and the mechanisms for preparing, drafting, consulting and receiving opinions and comments from various stakeholders and public in general. The law regulates public debates and roundtable, involvement of the experts and practitioners, the procedures for reflecting the various opinions and recommendations on the draft law, as well as the obligation of the authorities to make public the draft law on electronic way or using also in addition to that media, newspapers, etc.

In addition to that, last week, Albanian Parliament approved a new law '*On access to information*', which replaced the law '*On access to official documents*'. The new one has foreseen the obligation of public authorities, public or private person, to provide information without request, or given any motive: the law foreseen clear procedure to access to information, produced or not by the public authorities, set up a Commissioner of the Right to information (the competences and the mandate of the Commissioner for Data Protection are enlarged). The law regulates the deadlines for public consultation, the right of appeal to the court and redress in case of the violation of the rights to information.

Coming from academic life as well as human right experience to the lawmaking position at the Parliament, I would like to emphasize the need for capacity building

of NGOs, media, public administration and parliament for using better the opportunities offering by the law '*On Public Consultation*' as well as the law '*On the Right to Information*'. OSCE/ODIHR, European Union and Council of Europe have great experience on these areas and their support is welcome in the Parliament of Albania. Thank you!