

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF SERBIA AMBASSADOR VUK ŽUGIĆ AT THE OPENING  
PLENARY SESSION OF THE HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION  
MEETING

22 September, Warsaw

Mr. Chairperson,

We would like to thank ODIHR and the Swiss OSCE Chairmanship for organizing this year's Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, as well as to our Polish hosts for their hospitality.

We believe that Human Dimension Implementation Meeting is a great opportunity for having an open and frank dialogue, to discuss the key topics and challenges we are facing in the area of implementation of our HD commitments, which definitely have an impact on the security in the OSCE area.

In the Astana Commemorative Declaration, the participating States recalled a common vision that comprehensive and lasting security is not possible without respect for human rights and democratic standards. Therefore the commitments relating to the human dimension have to be safeguarded, strengthened and greater efforts need to be undertaken to promote them.

During this year our Organization has been faced with one of the biggest crises in its history. We support the activities of all OSCE institutions and structures in that regard. It is necessary to invest all possible efforts to find a peaceful solution and to rebuild trust and confidence within entire OSCE region.

Recognizing that the inherent dignity of the individual is at the core of the OSCE comprehensive security, in the Joint Work Plan of Swiss and Serbian Chairmanships we agreed on further updating and strengthening the implementation of all OSCE human dimension commitments. In order to improve the work of the Organization, we should implement our commitments within human dimension. In that regard, we call upon participating states to work towards that goal.

We believe that additional efforts should be invested as well in implementation of the human dimension commitments in many areas, such as the rule of law, freedom of expression and freedom of the media, including protection of journalists, freedom of assembly and association, protection of rights of persons belonging to national minorities, tolerance and non-discrimination, to name a few that will be highly on the priority list of Serbian Chairmanship next year. We also see the value in strengthening national institutions for protection of human rights, thus ensuring progress towards better implementation of our commitments. Our side event on our priorities will be on September 30 evening.

Role of the civil society is very high on the list of priorities during our two Swiss and Serbian consecutive Chairmanships. We consider that strengthening the links with civil society and promotion of its active involvement would contribute to further implementation of OSCE commitments in this dimension.

We believe that cross dimensionality is key strength and comparative advantage of our Organization. In that context, we believe that we have to pay much more attention to our youth, their needs and strivings. Therefore, during next year we will propose to work on an Action Plan on Youth and Security from cross

dimensional perspective, thus putting the youth highly on the OSCE agenda, including at HD events.

As incoming Chairmanship we will continue to work on human dimension events review. In the previous period the OSCE Participating States have expressed their interest in improving modalities of the human dimension events with the view to making them more effective and focused. Let's hope that we might see each other next year earlier than it is now envisage. In that context, we would like to encourage all Participating states to have a constructive debate on this very important issues in order to achieve concrete results. In addition, timely adoption of necessary decisions in this dimension will immensely contribute towards improving of our work and effectiveness of the Organization as well.

Next year it will be 40 years from adopting the Helsinki Final Act. During the past we have been facing many challenges, but we managed to respond in appropriate manner. Therefore, today's crisis creates for us both challenge and opportunity to jointly enhance our cooperation and security. Recognizing the importance of Helsinki Plus 40 Process, we believe that this is an opportunity to reconfirm our commitments and to build upon the OSCE achievements across all three dimensions.

Mr. Chairperson,

Before closing, allow me to take this opportunity to underline the role of OSCE institutions in assisting participating States in implementation of their commitments. We would like to emphasize in particular synergy between ODIHR, Representative on Freedom of Media and High Commissioner for National Minorities. Their role is indispensable and therefore we must create the necessary conditions for them to carry their mandates. In these challenging times, only

strong, independent and professional institutions, with sound financial and human resources, can help us properly address these issues. Taking into account divergent views on the work of some OSCE institutions, we have to work jointly towards overcoming divisions and mistrust.

Finally, we would like to call upon all participants at this meeting to contribute to constructive dialogue and provide concrete recommendations