

**HEAD OF PRESENCE'S REMARKS AT THE INAGURATION
OF THE ELECTRONIC MONITORING ROOM**

20 November 2012

Minister Halimi,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a special moment for my team and myself to be present at this inauguration at the presence of so many judges, prosecutors, I see also the general Director of the State police among the audience and international friends that have contributed to this very challenging and very important new step bringing the probation system to another level, a very modern one and an excellent one. We see these project as part of the overall justice reform, which is clearly part of the mandate of the OSCE Presence here in Albania. Last week, together with you Mr. Halimi and the Minister the Minister of the Interior, at an event on the Probation Service, I commended the Justice Ministry's outstanding, ground-breaking steps in reforming Albania's justice system.

The opening of this Electronic Monitoring Operation Room signals commitment to put words and legal concepts into action.

These efforts must be commended. They show that Albanian government can accomplish when there is real will to work together to solve problems and advance reforms.

It also signals the importance of inter-institutional partnerships to advance the reform agenda. The Working Group created for this purpose in January, is an example of that.

Success in countering crime is a must for all countries. Guaranteeing the security of citizens is a fundamental task for every state, every government – and for sure not an easy one.

Yet for this task to be accomplished, it is equally important that the human rights of those offenders who enter into the criminal justice system are fully observed.

The introduction of the new probation system has contributed to reducing overcrowding in prisons and can facilitate reintegration into society.

The electronic tagging and monitoring of offenders, recognised in many European countries as an alternative solution to imprisonment, builds on a similar spirit. Namely, that modern, effective criminal justice systems and human rights are not in opposition. They can go hand-in-hand.

Minister Halimi,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Electronic monitoring is a modern concept. Albania can take credit for being the first country in the region to adopt this system.

After the encouraging joint experience of the working group, I am convinced that you will keep up the good work!

Pride is a big thing, so it can be shared. Let me join you in the pride this time, Minister Halimi, on the basis of my teams contribution. I wish the justice system, the police and the Minister of Justice a lot of success with this new system.

Thank you very much.

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