

Launch of the OSCE Security Sector Governance and Reform Guidelines

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Speech by
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Check against delivery!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to discuss with you today the OSCE internal Guidelines on security sector governance and reform (SSGR) and their practical implications.

Almost exactly one year ago, the then OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Ivica Dačić opened the Conference on Security Sector Governance and Reform in Belgrade. In his opening remarks, he stressed the key objective of the security sector reform: to establish and develop a security system that would enable peace, stability, development and prosperity of a state and its citizens, and guarantee the respect of human rights and the rule of law. With the looming security challenges of today, this is indeed imperative. There's the threat of terrorism casting a shadow over us at home. There's the continuous conflict in and around Ukraine. There's the unprecedented flow of desperate refugees and migrants taking dangerous routes in the hope of reaching Europe. The security challenges we face today are large

and many. But I remain confident that we will be able to effectively meet them.

The Swiss – Serbian Common Work Plan for their consecutive OSCE Chairmanships included the theme of security sector governance and reform among their priorities. Slovakia as the Chair of the informal Group of Friends of Security Sector Governance and Reform, and other members of the group have also worked diligently to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the OSCE approach to SSGR. Today's launch of the OSCE internal Guidelines is a fruit of these commitments and an important milestone towards our own SSGR approach. I attach high importance to these Guidelines and their practical implications for addressing the challenges of our current security environment.

I am proud that the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has contributed to the development of the guidelines. In doing so, we applied a human dimension perspective which particularly emphasizes gender and human rights.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

OSCE participating States have agreed that the role of the security sector is not only to defend state interests but to also protect its citizens and address threats to human security. Upholding human rights and fundamental freedoms, on which democratic societies are based, makes for more effective, responsive, accountable and transparent security sector institutions. The participating States have also acknowledged that equal rights for women and men and the protection of all human rights are essential to sustainable peace and security. A security sector that is gender balanced and diverse can better meet the needs of the community it serves.

In reflecting the OSCE comprehensive concept of security, ODIHR has long been engaged in SSG/R-related activities, from police and judicial reform to civil society oversight of the security sector, as well as SSG/R in the broader context of combating trafficking and anti-corruption and anti-terrorism efforts. The Guidelines launched today state that “a cross-dimensional approach should be promoted and pro-

actively sought in all OSCE activities”. Let me reaffirm here that ODIHR is committed to continue working with all members of the security sector in OSCE participating States as well as local and international partners and non-governmental organizations, OSCE field operations, the Transnational Threats Department and the Gender Section of the OSCE Secretariat.

I firmly believe that implementation of security sector governance and reform agendas is the best way to demonstrate that the Guidelines work and bring real benefits to all. ODIHR is committed to apply the new Guidelines in its work in practice.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

ODIHR is well known for its election monitoring work, and a well-functioning and accountable security sector is a precondition to ensure that electoral processes are administered in a way that respects fundamental freedoms and the principles of equality, universality, political pluralism, confidence, transparency and accountability.

In our work to combat intolerance and hate crimes, or to promote the rights of Roma and Sinti, we rely on cooperation with, and provide support to, important elements of the security sector - such as police services.

SSG/R, in particular, is of central importance in ODIHR's work on human rights and security, the key topics of which include:

Promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism. ODIHR strives to ensure that a cross-dimensional approach is applied to dealing with anti-terrorism issues within the OSCE. It is among the few regional and international entities that focus exclusively on human rights in the anti-terrorism context. Capacity building activities include the development of tools and training programs for law enforcement officers, in particular counter-terrorism police officers to increase their operational effectiveness through the respect and protection of human rights when combating terrorism (e.g., manual on Countering Terrorism, Protecting Human Rights, 2013-2015 training curriculum,

ODIHR/OSCE Secretariat Transnational Threats Department/Strategic Police Matters Unit (TNTD/SPMU) manual on Human Rights in Counter-Terrorism Investigations).

Human rights compliance and gender balance in the security sector. Since 2005, ODIHR has been assisting OSCE pS in mainstreaming human rights and achieving gender equality in the security sector as well as meeting their commitments to the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325). This included: advice on the development of national policies to increase the number of women in the security sector and to address security concerns of women, support in drafting and updating of National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325 implementation, as well as capacity building for all security sector actors, parliamentarians and civil society, on human rights and gender in the security sector.

Promotion and protection of the fundamental freedom to assemble peacefully. ODIHR is the only international human rights body with a specific expertise in monitoring the freedom of peaceful

assembly through direct observations. ODIHR together with the Council of Europe's Venice Commission developed the Guidelines on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly, a key benchmark and reference point to assess compliance with international human rights standards. Since 2011, ODIHR monitored public assemblies in 25 participating States across the OSCE area (The key findings and recommendations of the first two assembly monitoring cycles were published in two thematic reports: November 2012 and December 2014). Building on this work, ODIHR has also engaged in follow-up activities involving legislative reviews and capacity building for the police and the security sector. In collaboration with the SPMU, ODIHR has developed (2014-2015) the Human Rights Training Guide to Policing Assemblies: a handbook and a training manual for law enforcement officials in management and command positions, police trainers and policymakers, and delivered two pilot training sessions (Poland and Kyrgyzstan).

Prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment: ODIHR's work on torture prevention, which is being reactivated this year through the creation of a new

seconded position covering this portfolio, will include policy guidance and assistance to law enforcement and other criminal justice actors in mainstreaming human rights and the prevention of torture and other ill-treatment into their activities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

ODIHR follows a holistic approach to SSG/R, by promoting the integration of a human rights and gender-sensitive perspective in security sector institutions. We apply our human rights expertise across the OSCE region, and assists national defence and police institutions to mainstream human rights and gender standards in their curricula. We review new or existing legislation, regulations and codes of conduct that govern the activities of the security sector to ensure that a human rights and gender perspective is incorporated into their work. We also advocate that all members of the armed forces, police and similar security sector institutions be able to exercise their civil, political, social and economic rights. When the human rights and fundamental freedoms of security sector personnel are protected, they

will be more likely to uphold and respect the rights and freedoms of others when carrying out their duties.

The development of SSG/R concepts was fuelled by new thinking on security, which stimulated a paradigm shift from state-centered to people-centered approaches, encapsulated by the term human security. When people are asked to rank what is most important to them, they respond that personal safety and security, and trust in those providing that security are the highest priorities. Today, we recognize this fact with the launch of the internal OSCE guidelines on security sector governance and reform. ODIHR has been, and remains committed to doing its utmost towards the practical application of these Guidelines in all its security-related work. At this unprecedented period of change, we need to work together and support each other. Our challenge now will be taking steps toward securing proper resources for the implementation of these ambitious Guidelines.