

Check against delivery



Remarks by Ms. Jelena Pajovic van Reijn, Office for Cooperation with Civil Society,
Government of the Republic of Serbia

Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

Working session 4: Fundamental freedoms I including: Freedom of peaceful assembly and
association, National human rights institutions and the Role of civil society in the protection
of human rights, Human rights education

Warsaw, 23 September 2015

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some of the experiences and practices related to functioning of civil society in Serbia, that could be interesting or useful for participating States. Legal framework enables associations to register in speedy and simple manner. Registration process can be finalized in 5 days and all the necessary documents and forms are available online. In addition, the process of applying for state funding was further simplified by reducing the range of documentation needed in the application procedure.

When it comes to budget planning and allocation of resources, the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society prepares Annual summary reports on budget resources allocated to the associations and civil society organizations from the budget of the Republic of Serbia in order to improve regular budget planning and expenditure.

Regarding other activities of the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society, let me briefly mention just a few: the Office supported the inclusion of civil society organisations in the law-making process by preparing relevant Guidelines which were later adopted by the Government. These Guidelines, as well as the first National Strategy for Creation of Enabling Environment for the Civil Society Development which is to be adopted soon, represent a step towards a systematic regulation of cooperation between state authorities and civil society organizations. Furthermore, the Strategy partly deals with human rights education by envisaging further improvement of education system and the role of CSOs in this process.

At the end, I would like to emphasize the importance of the establishment of the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society in 2010, as an important step towards a more structural cooperation between the government and civil society. We believe that communication, interaction and cooperation between civil and public sectors are essential for the development and progress of any society.

Thank you for your attention.