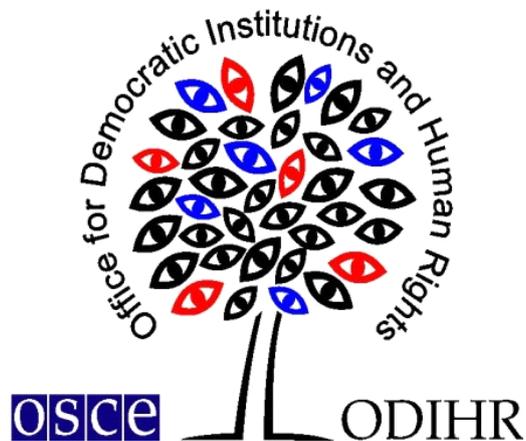


HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING

2 October 2015
Warsaw



Closing remarks by
Michael Georg Link

Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As another HDIM is coming to an end, I am happy to have this opportunity to share some preliminary reflections and findings with you. I do not see the HDIM as an end in itself. It should rather be seen as part of a continuous human dimension implementation review process. In this process, HDIM is the largest, regular stock-taking exercise.

Many efforts have been vested over the years to make HDIM a more effective forum for review of reform through dialogue. Issues such as a standing agenda, moving the dates of the HDIM to a more optimal time and ensuring a more interactive format should remain on the table for further discussions among the participating States. Meanwhile, in ODIHR, we continue to work hard on improving and modernizing HDIM within the existing modalities. Last year we introduced web streaming for the first time. Based on the feedback we got, we have expanded the use of this technology this year. We have

also introduced a Twitter Wall, which certainly seemed to have contributed to a more lively exchange both in and around HDIM. We will continue to explore such options in the future. Not least because if HDIM is to remain relevant for youth and future generations, we certainly also have to apply all relevant communication platforms.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Based on the discussions that have taken place over these two past weeks, both at plenary sessions and the many side events, there can be no question about the continued relevance of the issues discussed. The lasting relevance depends of course on the extent to which the recommendations are addressed, followed up and ultimately implemented.

The preliminary findings from the discussions having taken place are as always presented by the rapporteurs and shared. Once consolidated,

I also look forward to present the final report with recommendations to you at the Permanent Council on 29 October.

In line with the good practice established by my predecessors, allow me to share some statistical highlights from this year's HDIM:

This year, we could welcome 1383 representatives from governments, NGOs and civil society activists, coming from 54 of our participating States. 766 of these were representatives from NGOs and Civil Society.

The most popular session was the working session 15 on “Fundamental freedoms, including Freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief”. Here, we had an exceptionally intense discussion with an impressive number of 61 statements.

A remarkable number of 80 side events were organized on the margins of this HDIM, highlighting and addressing a wide range of human dimension topics. Let me encourage all of you to be even more

active in the future and help us make HDIM an even more vibrant, thought-provoking and interactive event.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I believe these numbers in themselves speak volumes about the continued relevance and importance not only of HDIM as the largest European stock-taking exercise, but more importantly about the human dimension of security.

Much has been said about the historical importance of the Helsinki Final Act 40 years, and rightly so. This year we are also marking the 25th anniversary of the perhaps equally monumental Copenhagen Document and the Charter of Paris. In a time of crisis and unresolved conflicts in our region, it is my firm conviction that these landmark documents remain as relevant as ever. The crises we have seen and continue to see over these past 25 years certainly are not due to the commitments made back then, but rather despite and because of lack of faithful implementation.

Looking ahead, next year we will mark another important 25th anniversary in the evolution of our Organization. I am here not so much thinking about ODIHR's anniversary as that of the seminal 1991 Moscow Meeting. Namely, it was in Moscow that the participating States (...) categorically and irrevocably declared that the commitments undertaken in the field of the human dimension of the OSCE are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned." I leave this as food for thought for how to build on that astonishing achievement as we soon will start preparing for the next HDIM, in light of Moscow+25.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me conclude by thanking our host country Poland, the Serbian OSCE Chairmanship, representatives of the Troika, all Delegations of our participating States and Partners for Co-operation, NGO

representatives, colleagues from the OSCE institutions and field operations as well as other international organizations for taking an active role in this year's Human Dimension Implementation meeting.

A very special thanks goes to the OSCE's Chairperson-in-Office, the Foreign Minister and First Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia, Mr. Ivica Dačić, as well as Mr. Grzegorz Schetyna, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of our host country Poland, for having honored us with their presence at the opening session last week, thereby underlining the high profile of this important event.

I would also like to thank all introducers, moderators and rapporteurs who participated in the sessions of the past weeks. Finally, I would like to thank the interpreters and, last but certainly not least, the excellent and dedicated team of professionals at ODIHR for the very hard work they have invested to make this meeting a great success.

I look forward to welcoming all of you to Warsaw next year!