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OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting Warsaw, 22 September - 3 October 2014

EU Statement for Working Session 18: Discussion on human dimension activities

Before I begin my statement, I would like to make the following recommendations on behalf of the EU:

- Participating States should take full advantage of the range of services offered by the OSCE in enhancing the implementation of commitments.
- Participating States should take account of and follow up on recommendations made by the OSCE Institutions and field operations.
- Executive Structures should continue to enhance cooperation and coordination to maximise the impact of their activities. As part of this, field operations should redouble their efforts to work closely with other field missions in their region.
- Executive Structures should continue to work closely with other relevant international and regional organisations, such as the Council of Europe and the UN, in order to learn from each other's experiences, bolster their impact and ultimately, help improve the implementation of our commitments.
- When designing projects and activities, Executive Structures should foster close collaboration with civil society. Participating States should ensure that civil society is given the necessary space to make their contribution.

Mr/Madam Chairperson,

The EU continues to attach the highest importance to the work of the OSCE in the Human Dimension. There is a clear and unquestionable link between the promotion



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and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the attainment and maintenance of true, long-lasting security. This is the very core of the comprehensive approach to security which is the hallmark of our organisation. We remain extremely concerned that the implementation of human dimension commitments in some parts of our region is getting worse and we have raised many issues of specific concern in the course of this implementation meeting. It is vital that participating States redouble their efforts to implement the commitments that each of us has voluntarily signed up to. The Helsinki plus 40 process provides us with an opportunity to do this.

The OSCE has established unique autonomous institutions, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the Representative on Freedom of the Media and the High Commissioner on National Minorities, to assist participating States to uphold their OSCE commitments. We strongly support their mandates and work, day in and day out, to provide support to the participating States, often with the valuable cooperation of the OSCE's field operations.

The institutions carry out a wide range of valuable activities and projects across the full breadth of human dimension activities. It would be impossible to mention them all now, but we would like to particularly welcome their crucial contribution to the OSCE's response to the Ukrainian crisis, including the human rights assessment mission and the initiative to bring together representatives of the journalists' unions of Russia and Ukraine to improve the situation of journalists in and around Ukraine.

In addition, we underline our support for ODIHR's work in the areas of elections and supporting human rights defenders. ODIHR's election observation is rightly called the international gold standard in this area and we reiterate our unwavering support for its methodology. We also congratulate ODIHR on the publication of the human rights defenders guidelines earlier this year, and welcome in particular the fact that they were developed in close collaboration with civil society. It is important that these guidelines are now operationalised throughout the OSCE.



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In the last 12 months, the Representative on Freedom of the Media has had to highlight all too frequently examples where participating States have failed to meet their commitments. In particular, her many press statements underline the urgent need for participating States to strengthen the safety of journalists and others who defend the rights to freedom of expression, both online and offline, including on social media.

We greatly value the work of the High Commissioner on National Minorities in helping to identify and address short-term triggers of inter-ethnic tension as well as long-term structural concerns. While much of the High Commissioner on National Minorities' work must by necessity take place using quiet diplomacy, this does not mean that it is any less important or relevant.

We also fully support the work of the OSCE field operations, which play an important role in assisting participating States to implement commitments and undertake reforms which benefit the host countries and their people.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the speakers from the institutions and field operations that come to Vienna to address us at the Human Dimension Committee. These remain valuable opportunities for the participating States to get a sense of the projects and activities that are being carried out on our behalf.

I would like to close with a question, Mr/Madam Chairperson. At this session last year, the first speaker said that the organisation will increasingly emphasise the cross-dimensional nature of human dimension projects. We would be grateful for information on how this issue has been tackled and whether there are any lessons that can be shared at this stage.

Thank you for your attention



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The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.