

## **National statement of Sweden: Working Session 1: Tolerance and Non-Discrimination I**

Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

While aligning fully with the statement by the European Union, I wish to add some words in a national capacity.

I would like, on behalf of my government as well as in my personal capacity, to warmly welcome Ms Astrid Thors as the new High Commissioner on National Minorities. You can count on Sweden's ongoing and active full support of your important endeavor. We trust you to perform the duties of the HCNM with the necessary integrity and judgment.

The comprehensive concept of security is the basis for our efforts to ensure peace and security in the OSCE area, and the cross-dimensional work of the office of the HCNM continues to play a key role in preventing conflict within and between countries in our region. Today,

when some of the basic principles of the comprehensive security concept are being challenged, the role of the HCNM remains of vital importance.

In this connection, I reiterate Sweden's full support for the mandate of the HCNM. The autonomy of the High Commissioner is a question of principle as well as a prerequisite for success, and we are committed to safeguarding this autonomy within the OSCE. It is important that the HCNM is able to fulfill her mandate with sufficient resources and without artificial limitations, geographic or otherwise. Any attempts to infringe on or limit the mandate of the HCNM are therefore a cause for concern.

The sensitive nature of the tasks of the HCNM calls for the use of discreet work methods and quiet diplomacy. This may not create headlines, but has proven to bring results. Sweden fully supports this approach.

To conclude, it is my pleasure to wish Ms Astrid Thors all success in her work.