



United States Mission to the OSCE

Follow-up Statement on ODIHR Report

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
November 7, 2013

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I apologize for taking the floor a second time, but a point was raised multiple times about so-called “naming and shaming” at the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, and I felt compelled to respond.

Although I have the deepest respect for my colleague from Switzerland, I am disappointed to hear him once again criticizing the so-called “practice of naming and shaming.” What I said in an informal meeting last week bears repeating here, which is that the term “naming and shaming” is often used by those who have less-than-perfect records to say, “Please don’t talk about our less-than-perfect records,” and, to me, much of what gets called “naming and shaming” is actually fact-based analysis.

When we are talking about an implementation meeting, it absolutely makes no sense not to talk about the facts; we have to talk about real places. In that respect, the interventions by many participating States and groups of participating States at HDIM were very disappointing. There were long interventions about thematic ideas without mentioning any specific place where those thematic ideas are under threat.

We will not get any better as a group at implementing our commitments if we can’t talk about where the gaps in that implementation exist on the ground, where they affect real people. And it does a disrespect to the members of civil society who work so hard to bring to our attention the areas where those gaps exist when we pretend we can’t hear them, or we’re too afraid to speak up because we’re too afraid of offending. It shouldn’t be seen as offensive, it should be seen as constructive. We should be unafraid and courageous when dealing with the facts, not cowardly, and not hide behind the false argument that it is inappropriate to “name and shame.”

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.