



Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2019

Warsaw Poland, 16 - 27 September 2019

SCHEDULE AND OVERVIEW

OF SIDE EVENTS

as submitted by the organizers

The Helsinki Document of 1992 (Chapter IV) called for increasing the openness of OSCE activities and expanding the role of NGOs. In particular, in paragraph (15) of Chapter IV the participating States decided to facilitate during CSCE meetings informal discussion meetings between representatives of participating States and of NGOs, and to provide encouragement to NGOs organizing seminars on CSCE-related issues. In line with this decision, governments, civil society and other participants are encouraged to organize side meetings at the Review Conference on relevant issues of their choice.

The side events below have been organized and scheduled exclusively at the request of participants of the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. The below descriptions have been provided by the organizers and the language in the description is the responsibility of the organizers, including editing for style and grammar. Responsibility for the content remains with the organizers. Neither the text below nor the events themselves necessarily reflect the views of the OSCE.

Monday, 16 September

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Our Right to Participation – Promoting the Participation of Persons with Disabilities in Political and Public Life
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Participation of persons with disabilities in political and public life remains limited across the OSCE region. Traditionally persons with disabilities are excluded from decision-making process and are perceived as patients and social service receivers, rather than active and empowered members of the society. The discussion will focus on the experiences of ODIHR and its partners working on this topic as part of the ExB project “Our Right to Participate- Promoting the Participation of Persons with Disabilities in Political and Public Life” as well as launch the final outcome of the project, the Guidelines on Promoting the Political Participation of Persons with disabilities. Participants of the

meeting will be invited to discuss on the need to continue increasing awareness and ensure stronger disability mainstreaming within the OSCE executive structures.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: EPDE New Database on Citizen Election Observation Recommendations
Convenor: European Exchange
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: In line with an electoral cycle approach and in recognition of the fact that elections are not a one-day event, a majority of citizen observer organizations in the EU-Eastern neighborhood actively engage in follow-up activities regarding the implementation of recommendations and lobby for electoral reforms. To support the efforts of citizen observer organizations in tracking the implementation of recommendations, EPDE has developed an open source multi-national online recommendations database. To date, the database contains over 490 recommendations pertaining to elections held between 2012 and 2018 in the target countries and assesses the implementation of recommendations related to the most recent elections. 56 of these recommendations are related specifically to the conditions and challenges of citizen election observation. In its first cross-country analysis based on the collected data, EPDE aims to draw the attention of stakeholders in the respective countries and internationally to the existing barriers to citizen election observation. It is an appeal to legislators and authorities to review the existing legal frameworks, to eliminate remaining restrictions on activities of civil society organizations, and to nurture an environment of openness, transparency and inclusion.

Refreshments will not be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Enforced disappearances in Turkmenistan: Strong multilateral action is urgently needed to respond to a breakdown after limited progress in 2018. Briefing of the “Prove They Are Alive!” campaign
Convenor: Centre for the Development of Democracy and Human Rights; Crude Accountability; Human Rights Center "Memorial"; Human Rights Watch
Working language: English

Summary: Enforced disappearances in Turkmenistan’s prisons is a well-documented crime whose scale continues to grow. The Prove They Are Alive! campaign has documented more than 120 cases of people held in full isolation in Turkmenistan’s prisons, many of them for almost 17 years. This is not a historic crime; the most recent documented cases occurred in autumn 2018. The total number of people who have been forcibly disappeared is believed to be in hundreds but it is difficult to determine due to the government’s severe reprisals against relatives and denial of access to the country for international observers. At least 27 people from the campaign’s list have died in custody. Such a deadly pattern, coupled with the government’s failure to carry out investigations into the deaths, may constitute extrajudicial executions. For years, Turkmen authorities responded to international pressure on this issue with vague promises and incomplete information and avoided taking any real steps. Last year, international pressure mounted, including in the OSCE, the UN, and the EU, and finally brought limited initial progress. In spring and summer of 2018, the Turkmen authorities allowed

unprecedented visits for relatives of over a dozen recently convicted prisoners held in the notorious Ovadan Depe prison; publicly committed to discussing a possible first visit by the UN Working Group on Enforced Disappearances to the country; and accepted almost all UPR recommendations on enforced disappearances and related issues. These developments demonstrated the effectiveness of international pressure. However, since September 2018, this trend reversed when quiet diplomatic dialogue replaced public pressure and the Turkmen government re-entrenched its position. It has abruptly ended its dialogue with UN WGEID about a possible first country visit, stopped replying to its new inquiries, has not included implementation of UPR recommendations on disappearances and related issues in its draft work plan, and has said it may not release disappeared prisoners whose terms expire due to “security considerations”. With 14 detainees from the Prove! campaign’s list of the disappeared with expired terms or scheduled for release in 2019-2020, international pressure on Turkmenistan is more important than ever. Strong and consistent multilateral pressure on the Turkmen authorities must be renewed, coordinated among delegations to OSCE, UN human rights bodies, the EU, and capitals of concerned states.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:30-14:30**
Venue: **Plenary Hall**
Title: Launch of the OSCE Thematic Report: Well-being and Safety of Women: Experiences of disadvantaged women
Convenor: OSCE Secretariat
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: The OSCE-led Survey on the Well-being and Safety of women concluded that all women can experience violence, but that some groups of women are at a higher risk. This includes women from disadvantaged groups. The thematic report, which complements the Main Results Report of the survey, focused on disadvantaged groups in terms of: education level, income status, employment status, residential area, disability, age, choice in marriage, age at the time of marriage, ethnic or religious minority status, being a refugee or displaced person and returnees or former displaced person. The Side-Event will launch the Thematic Report on the Well-being and Safety of Women: Experiences of Disadvantaged Women to raise awareness of the particular situation of women from disadvantaged groups and provide information on the report’s conclusions and recommendations. The discussion between different stakeholders will allow representatives of certain disadvantaged groups to present their views on the report and issues at hand and allow for an exchange between them and OSCE stakeholders, further informing the OSCE’s future work in this area. After some opening remarks by the OSCE Secretary General, an interactive discussion will take place between the panellists that will allow for an exchange between representatives of the OSCE and its Institutions and NGOs and activists representing women from disadvantaged groups. This will be followed by a question and answer session for all the participants.

Refreshments will be provided

Tuesday, 17 September

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**

Title: Assault on the legal profession – persecution of human rights lawyers in the OSCE region
Convenor: International Partnership for Human Rights
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Human rights lawyers working with victims of rights violations play a vital role in ensuring respect to minimum fair trial guarantees and securing access to justice even in some of the most repressive environments. Nonetheless, the lawyers themselves are increasingly becoming the target of repressive policies that restrict their ability to practice law and act on behalf of victims. This deteriorating situation of the independence of legal profession can be observed in a number of OSCE participating states. A notable example is Azerbaijan where since 2005, at least 20 human rights lawyers have been targeted as a direct result of their human rights work: over 10 human rights lawyers have been disbarred, leaving them completely unable to practise as lawyers before domestic courts in Azerbaijan for an indefinite period; and a number of lawyers have been criminally prosecuted or had their licence suspended. Attempts to increase regulation and control of the legal profession affect other countries of the FSU region as well. This event will provide an overview of the ongoing challenges human rights lawyers in the OSCE region are facing in their daily work and will offer possibility for discussing how these challenges can be addressed practically and what the OSCE participating states and institutions can do to reinforce the independence of practicing lawyers as a guarantee of the promotion and defence of the fundamental freedoms recognised in OSCE human dimension commitments.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Youth Political Participation in Efforts to Combat Climate Change
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights; Permanent Representation of Spain to the OSCE; Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic; Personal Representative of the Chairperson in Office on Youth and Security; Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania to the International Organizations in Vienna
Working language: English

Summary: ‘Our house is on fire’, the well-known quote by Greta Thunberg, mobilizes youth around the globe as it captures the urgency to act on climate change. As pressing as the issues related to climate change are according to scientists, politicians are not responding sufficiently according to the Fridays for Future movement. This movement is calling on all youth around the globe to protest every Friday in front of their parliaments and local city halls to make their voices heard. Combatting climate change is turning into one of the world’s biggest youth movements, activating them to be engaged with, and make their voices heard in, politics. This movement creates opportunities for the international community to support the role of young people as catalysts for change on combatting climate change. During the latest OSCE PA annual session, resulting in the Luxembourg Declaration, the ‘Resolution on the Integration of Gender and Youth Perspectives in Efforts to Combat Climate Change’ incorporated this global trend and calls on further improvement on the inclusion of youth in the political arena regarding climate change. The OSCE has and will continue to regard environmental issues as part of their comprehensive approach to security, considering environmental challenges as risks to security. Therefore, this side event will be dedicated to the current developments of youth political participation in efforts to combat climate change. This side event touches upon the importance to include youth perspectives on the topic of combatting climate change and discusses the development of youth-responsive climate change policies among its participating States. Examples of

how the Organization supports the development of youth political participation through its institutions and field presence will also be mentioned during this side event. Many initiatives have been taking shape throughout the OSCE of which the creation of Youth Advisory Groups, the establishment of the Central Asian Youth Network, and youth summer schools promoting dialogue and mutual understanding are just some examples. A key role to ensure the continuity and sustainability in these efforts is played by the Special Representatives on Youth and Security.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Priority human rights recommendations from OSCE parliamentarians
Convenor: OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
Working language: English

Summary: The OSCE PA brings together more than 300 members of OSCE parliaments to debate topical issues. Democracy, human rights and humanitarian questions are top priorities for the parliamentarians, who pass a Declaration each year with a range of recommendations directed at OSCE Ministers and others. Leading OSCE PA Members will take the opportunity of the HDIM to brief OSCE diplomats and civil society actors on the primary recommendations in the human dimension from the July 2019 Luxembourg Declaration, and seek feedback and input particularly from representatives of civil society.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Azerbaijan: Genuine Reforms or Fine-Tuning the Status Quo?
Convenor: Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights; People in Need
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Amid low crude oil prices in global markets, flattening oil production at home and rising social discontent, Azerbaijani authorities have vowed sweeping reforms. Over the last two years, the government has eased the environment for doing business, overhauled the tax code and is attempting to reduce the shadow economy. But beyond the economic area, corruption is still rampant and critics of the government remain under pressure from legal restrictions and politically-motivated persecution. Is oil-rich Azerbaijan ready for genuine, comprehensive reform in the judiciary and political spheres? If not, can economic reform succeed without a more open political environment? Speakers: Natig Jafarli, Economist, Executive Secretary of the Republican Alternative party (REAL) Mehman Aliyev, Director of the Turan Press Agency Bakhtiyar Hajiyev, Activist and Blogger Moderator: Anna Zamejc, International Advocacy Officer, People in Need

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Presentation of the ODIHR Handbook for the Observation of Election Dispute Resolution

Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
Working language: English

Summary: As tasked by the OSCE participating States (Ministerial Council Decision 19/06), ODIHR continuously strives to maintain its professionalism and further improve its methodology by developing handbooks on specialized aspects of elections. During 2017 ODIHR has finalized the development of the Handbook for the Observation of Election Dispute Resolution (EDR), which will be presented at this side event. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights guarantee to all citizens the right to participate in the government directly or through freely chosen representatives. In line with these provisions, the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document identifies a number of commitments for genuine democratic elections. In order to guarantee the respect for human rights and ensure legal integrity, participating States committed themselves to make sure that “everyone will have an effective means of redress against administrative decisions”. Furthermore, “administrative decisions against a person must be fully justifiable and must as a rule indicate the usual remedies available”. In the context of elections, all stages of the electoral process should be regulated by a set of rules and procedures guiding the behavior of actors involved. Electoral stakeholders should have the possibility to challenge violations of legal provisions before an effective system of complaints and appeals. A possibility of legal redress during the electoral process increases public trust in the way elections are administered and contributes to the legitimacy of the government in place. The handbook further enhances election observation methodology in this area and gives guidance on the observation of two important elements: mechanisms that ensure access to remedies for the violations of citizens’ electoral rights, including possibility for a judicial review, as well as existing mechanisms for handling election-related complaints and appeals, including with regard to timeframes and guarantees for efficient dispute resolution. Ultimately, the Handbook contributes to ensuring better protection of electors, candidates and political parties from violations, errors and/or omissions in the context of elections. Speakers will include representatives of civic observers organisations and competent bodies dealing with EDR as well as contributors to the handbook.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:30-14:30**
Venue: **Plenary Hall**
Title: Building resilience to overcome vulnerabilities generated by the misuse of information in democratic societies
Convenor: Permanent Mission of Romania to the International Organizations; Permanent Delegation of Finland to the OSCE; OSCE Representative for Freedom of the Media; Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
Working language: English

Summary: Large scale disinformation, manipulation of information, malinformation, incitement to hate, outright false information are all increasingly and overwhelmingly affecting democratic societies and the citizens’ ability to form their own views and take informed decisions, without any undue interferences and to express their choice, including through free and fair elections. These new challenges weaken democratic processes and institutions, affect the cohesion of democratic societies, erode the trust of citizens in democratic institutions and ultimately, raise concerns related to our common security. Therefore, we need to build our resilience by harnessing the instruments we already have and by preparing together for the already existing but also potential threats of tomorrow. The Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union (1 Semester 2019) and the current Finnish Presidency set among their priorities monitoring of possible threats to democratic processes in order to

enhance resilience and counter hybrid threats. In this context, attention is paid to institutional and societal strengths in the face of these challenges to democratic societies. Through education, increase of media literacy, awareness raising campaigns, including at local level, individuals, and especially vulnerable groups, such as young people learn to identify defective or fabricated information, strengthen their civic trust and build their individual resilience but at the same time resilience of our societies as a whole to such threats. This event will allow participants to engage in a substantial and practical exchange of views on the most effective methods and strategies for tackling these threats and new ways and tools to respond to multifaceted trends in a changing environment for ensuring more cohesive and safer societies. Keynote speaker: Harlem Jean – Philippe DÉSIR, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Freedom of Speech Online: Social Media and Modern Censorship?
Convenor: Ordo Iuris Institute for Legal Culture
Working language: English, Polish

Summary: The meeting will be a discussion on the increasingly common problem of content removal, equal access to it and differentiation of content coverage by social media monopolies, based on case-study analysis from Poland and other countries. The main subject will be a legal reaction in OSCE countries as well as prospects for legal changes and applicable regulations. The panel will combine an academic perspective, victims' perspective and the perspective of litigation against entrepreneurs with a dominant position on the media market in Poland and worldwide.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Journalism behind bars in Turkey
Convenor: ARTICLE 19; Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media
Working language: English

Summary: Turkey is the OSCE participating State with the highest number of journalists in prison. The majority of those imprisoned are facing anti-state charges, such as belonging to or aiding groups deemed by the authorities to be terrorist organizations. Furthermore, since the July 2016 failed coup attempt, hundreds of press cards and many journalists' passports have been revoked; hundreds of journalists still await trial and face long prison sentences if convicted. Thousands of websites have also been blocked in the country, including Wikipedia. Moreover, despite the two-year long state of emergency coming to an end in July 2018, the government has introduced a series of laws that have a detrimental effect on media freedom in the country. In light of these staggering statistics, there is an urgent need to reform the laws that allow for the criminalization of journalistic work, and also to fundamentally rethink the way these laws are being implemented by Turkish courts. The side event will explore the situation of imprisoned journalists and try to explain why this is the case from a legal point of view, by looking at the current media laws and existing legal safeguards used to protect journalists in the country. Furthermore, it will provide an opportunity for panellists and guests to share their personal experiences and the challenges they face in their work. In addition, the speakers will provide a detailed expert review on the proposed judicial reforms and discuss in what ways such

reforms can contribute to the improvement of the current situation in Turkey. One of the key issues to address would also be how to ensure respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, co-operation between the authorities and civil society, as well as stronger engagement by international and non-governmental organizations. The side event will be in English only.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Plenary Hall**
Title: “Hype as a means of shaping public opinion and mobilizing mass consciousness”
Convenor: Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: The Round table is aimed to reveal the concept of modern phenomenon of Hype and its influence on public opinion. In the framework of the Round table it is planned to discuss following questions: 1) Hype as a means of manipulation on a global scale: selective accentuation of topics in the context of world politics; 2) The problem of information awareness: the culture of presenting/spreading information and the culture of information consumption; 3) The degradation of professional rigorous journalism in relation to the demand-oriented media content production; 4) The use of media in the informational war and propaganda, decline of public trust to mass media.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Persecution of Crimean human rights defenders: crack down on lawyers, civic journalists and activists
Convenor: International Partnership for Human Rights
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Since the annexation of Crimea, human rights lawyers have been continuously targeted by the occupying authorities for defending rights of political prisoners in Russian show trials and openly speaking about the widespread lawlessness at international fora. Russian authorities use their “anti-extremism” and “anti-terrorism” legislation as a lever to obstruct lawyers’ work. A prominent Crimean lawyer, Emil Kurbedinov, was placed under detention twice on trumped-up administrative charges. The occupying authorities attempted to use these detentions as precondition to expel Mr. Kurbedinov from Crimean Bar Association which could have led to his disbarment. Other prominent lawyers such as Edem Semedlyayev and Lilia Gemedzhy were threatened with official notices from enforcement agents warning them against violating anti-extremism law. Such persecutory policy is targeting not only professional lawyers but also activists who financially, morally or in other way support victims of human rights abuses in Crimea. In a more recent case two Crimean Tatar activists Mumine Salieva and Lutfie Zudieva were subject to detention and fined by the Crimean de facto courts for “extremist” posts in social network. Another target for persecution are civic journalists. Civic journalism as a phenomenon has emerged in Crimea after the occupying authorities had completely suppressed professional independent journalism in the peninsula by 2016-2017. Being deprived of the access to objective information via official media, human rights activists and ordinary committed individuals started performing reporters’ functions: they highlighted political news, searches and raids, trials over political prisoners in social networks. In fact, the information provided by these individuals became the only source of Russian propaganda-free political news about Crimea

for both the local inhabitants, citizens from mainland Ukraine as well as international community. Having realized this, the occupying authorities unleashed a campaign of persecution against civic journalists. In the course of their fight against uncontrolled and uncensored information, the Russian authorities use various instruments including intimidating raids and searches, unlawful detention, administrative and criminal persecution and other forms of intimidation.

Refreshments will be provided

Wednesday, 18 September

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: How to build digital safety for journalism? Best practices and next steps.
#DigiSafe #JournoSafe #SOFJO
Convenor: Permanent Representation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the OSCE
Working language: English

Summary: Freedom of expression and free flow of information are cornerstones of public debate and democracy. Safety for journalists and other media actors is therefore vital for open, dynamic democratic societies. With the rise of digital platforms, ensuring the safety for journalists, as well as their families and sources, has become even more complex. While digital innovations have increased access to information and provided platforms for everyone to contribute to public debate, these technologies can also be used to attack and threaten journalists in new ways. Digital safety, a topic which is highlighted in the 2018 OSCE Milan Decision on Safety of Journalists, can include the risks of becoming targets of hacking, unlawful or arbitrary surveillance, interception of communication or online harassment and intimidation, which can deter journalists and other media actors from continuing their work or lead to self-censorship. This side event will focus on how to increase digital safety for journalists and other media actors, with specific emphasis on sharing best practices and practical recommendations for further action. During the side event, participants are asked to actively engage in the discussion by providing workable solutions on how to build digital safety for all people working in the field of journalism, including people who are sources for journalists as well as human rights defenders. The following questions may be addressed: What can journalists and civil society organisations do to increase their digital safety? What steps can States take to improve digital safety? What role is gender playing when using new digital technologies and what can be done to address the specific threats faced by women journalists? The UNESCO survey "Building Digital Safety for Journalism: a survey of selected issues" can be used as a starting point for the discussions.

The discussion will introduced by an expert panel: Mr. Harlem Desir, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Mr. Andrea Cairola, Programme Specialist in the Division for Freedom of Expression and Media Development, Communication and Information (CI) Sector, UNESCO, Ms. Jessikka Aro, Investigative Reporter, Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE Moderator: Deniz Yazici, senior adviser to the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Tajikistan's Prisons: Nests of Corruptions, Tortures and Deaths
Convenor: Tajik Center for Human Rights
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: During last 12 months alone, almost 100 prisoners died in various prisons in Tajikistan, because the regime abandoned them and violated human rights. In November 2018, a riot claimed by IS left 26 people dead in Khujand, a city of 700,000 people in the northeast of the country. Initial reports varied, as typically happens with breaking news events, with the casualty number ranging from 13 inmates to more than 25, before skyrocketing in the days that followed. According to Eurasianet, some independent media outlets had reported as many as 50 deaths. In May 2019, three guards and 29 inmates were killed in an outbreak of violence involving Islamic State militants at a high-security prison in Tajikistan. On July 7, Tajikistan has opened a criminal investigation after 14 prison inmates died of food poisoning while being transferred from Tajikistan's northern Sogd region to prisons in Dushanbe, Norak, and Yovon in southern Tajikistan. It's unlikely a clear narrative about the prison riot will be made public. The Tajik government does not have a reassuring history of being straight with the facts, and the pieces of this puzzle — extremism and human rights — are about as sensitive as it gets. Following ban of the Islamic Revival Party of Tajikistan (IRPT) in September 2015, more than 200 of its leading members have been arrested and sentenced to long prison sentences in unfair, politically-motivated trials with no judicial or legal rights. Previously, many other activists and political figures, such as Zaid Saidov, Muhammadruzi Iskandarov, Maksud Ibrohimov, Shuhrat Qudratov and many other activists were sentenced to long-term imprisonment. Expected Outcome The event will raise awareness about the situation facing political prisoners, their problems and the problems facing their families in Tajikistan. The event furthermore aims to present and discuss concrete examples of violations of political prisoners' basic rights, including unfair trials, denial of legal rights, torture, harassment and pressure on their family members from state agents.

Refreshments will not be provided

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Suppressing Civil Society in China: Role Model for OSCE Authoritarian Members?
Convenor: Federazione Italiana Diritti Umani (Italian Federation for Human Rights) - (FIDU)
Working language: English

Summary: This summer's large-scale protests in Hong Kong have been obsessing Chinese authorities, whose attempts to suppress them, actively employing their ambassadors to obtain condemnation of the protests from the European side, have shown once again their hostility towards civil activism. The controversial extradition law alarmed Hong Kong's society. Given China's consistent abuse of mutual legal assistance mechanisms and INTERPOL's Red Notices to persecute dissidents, this comes as no surprise. Chinese policy of suppressing dissent has impacted also OSCE participating States. Some of them, primarily Russia and Kazakhstan, are not immune to similar forms of repression against anti-government demonstrations and seem to follow China's worst practices. Their authorities' ignorance of resolutions and recommendations of international organisations, including the OSCE itself, jeopardises existing human rights protection frameworks and the credibility of the international order. The leaderships of Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Turkey are focused on preserving the political status quo at all costs, leading to the disregard of international commitments and undermining of human rights mechanisms. How can civil society shape the implementation policy of human rights

bodies and hold autocratic states accountable? To what extent may OSCE's democratic members enhance the effectiveness of rights protection frameworks and enforce the rules of the organisation? During the discussion, civil society representatives and human rights experts from various OSCE countries will analyse the nature of China's fight with civil society and its spreading influence as well as present their ideas for a more effective cooperation in protecting fundamental freedoms.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Fighting Impunity for Human Rights Violations and Abuses in Chechnya (Russia): An effective multi-stakeholder response
Convenor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark; Permanent Delegation of Sweden to the OSCE; Delegation of Canada to the OSCE; United States Mission to the OSCE; United Kingdom Delegation to the OSCE; Permanent Mission of the Republic of Lithuania to the International Organizations in Vienna
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: When human rights violators are granted impunity for their actions, victims' rights are doubly violated. In addition, the signal this sends to civil society, law enforcement, and government officials is that illegal actions against certain groups or individuals will be tolerated, thereby increasing their likelihood and perpetuating a vicious cycle of continuous abuse. International and OSCE commitments require states to take appropriate action against those implicated in severe human rights violations and abuses. Without such action, trust between government and civil society is likely to erode and this can even threaten security in and between States. Since 2017, credible reports of serious human rights violations and abuses in Chechnya continue to emerge via multiple sources, including victim accounts, media reporting, multilateral organizations, and human rights organizations. The victims include, but are not limited to, LGBTI persons, human right defenders, lawyers, independent media, and civil society organizations. Furthermore, law enforcement and government officials appear to have enjoyed almost total impunity for their actions. Despite calls for the Russian Federation to conduct effective and thorough investigations into these credible reports, there has, as yet, been no substantive response. Chechnya seems to be treated as a special case, where impunity is tolerated for the sake of stability. This side-event will provide an opportunity to review the response of the international community in the area of addressing impunity for human rights violations and abuses in Chechnya, and will also look to how international stakeholders can increase cooperation to combat this damaging phenomena. The side-event is organized by the Permanent Missions of Canada, Denmark, Lithuania, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States of America to the OSCE.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Foreign funding of politics: a threat to democracy?
Convenor: Transparency International e.V.
Working language: English

Summary: While resources are necessary for vigorous political party activities and election campaigns, money may corrupt the political process and undermine democratic accountability. Consequently,

Member States of Council of Europe and OSCE participating States have adopted at least some regulations in this area. Specifically, majority of countries have introduced a ban on foreign donations, in the attempt to limit improper influence on their national political processes. This remains in line with the Committee of Ministers Recommendation 2003/4 of the Council of Europe, which recommends that ‘States should specifically limit, prohibit or otherwise regulate donations from foreign donors’. As proven by recent scandals in a number of OSCE countries, foreign influence of politics through the illegal funding of political parties remains a considerable challenge to our democratic processes. Using recent cases from a number of countries, the discussion will analyse the ability of financial oversight regulators and the public to control these illicit channels of political funding. The discussion will offer the experience of Transparency International (TI), the Group of States Against Corruption (GRECO) of the Council of Europe, and ODIHR in analysing the main challenges posed by foreign funding of national politics and political parties. The discussion will take into account the importance of transparency and the role new technologies can play in reference to these dynamics. Together TI, GRECO and ODIHR have more than a decade of experience in assisting participating States with matters of political party regulations and finance. GRECO has conducted a comprehensive Third Evaluation Round on the issue of party finance. ODIHR has developed, jointly with the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, the Guidelines on Political Party Regulations.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Freedom of Expression
Convenor: Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media
Working language: English

Summary: Artificial Intelligence (AI) increasingly affects our daily lives and has an impact on how we access information, how we share personal information and how we interact with one another. Machine-learning technologies are increasingly becoming the main tool to shape and arbitrate online information. If implemented responsibly, AI can benefit society and revolutionize societies in various positive ways. However, as is the case with most emerging technologies, there is a genuine risk that commercial, political or state use has a detrimental impact on human rights. It is therefore essential to fully understand the policies and practices in the development and use of AI and their potential and potentially profound impact on the future of internet freedom and the realisation of human rights, particularly freedom of expression and freedom of the media online. This session will focus on the impact of AI on freedom of expression, for good and for bad. During the panel, the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media will introduce its newly launched project on the impact of AI on freedom of expression and outline the activities planned to achieve a clearer understanding, aiming at promoting such clearer understanding, among all stakeholders, and identifying the key challenges. The project’s objective is to develop policy recommendations on most effective ways to safeguard freedom of expression and media pluralism when using AI (and other advanced machine learning technologies). A special focus will be given to four main areas of concern: security, hate speech, media pluralism and surveillance.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:30-14:30**
Venue: **Plenary Hall**
Title: Role of NGOs in strengthening of Democracy in CIS countries
Convenor: Association of Visegrad Scholarship Programme Alumni’s in Poland

Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Non-Governmental Organizations play an important role for the strengthening of Democracy and Human Rights. The side event will be a presentation and round-table on this topic.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**

Venue: **Plenary Hall**

Title: The Belarusian view on the Eastern European issues: a buffer zone or a bridge between Russia and the West?

Convenor: Information and Educational Institution "Relevant Concept"

Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Eastern Europe has not become a region of stable development after the collapse of the socialist system, since it remains to be a battleground between superpowers as well as a field where nationalist and extremist ideologies are spread wide. The enlargement of the EU and NATO to the East, as well as the adoption of the Eastern Partnership program for the post-Soviet republics did not bring stability to the region. Contrary to it, these processes have led to the increased turbulence and the appearance of local conflicts, which is most clearly seen in Ukraine. Meanwhile, Eastern Europe should neither be a buffer nor a sanitary cordon between the West and Russia, since it is capable of serving as a link for dialogue between countries, business, civil society organizations and ordinary people. If we abandon the destructive principle of “either or”, then the EU membership will not contradict partnerships with Russia, and vice versa, an alliance with Russia will not become an obstacle to the contacts with the European Union. The general situation in the region, the local conflict in the Donbas, the threat of nationalism and militarization are proposed to be discussed at the meeting The Belarusian view on the Eastern European issues: a buffer zone or a bridge between Russia and the West?

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**

Venue: **Meeting Room 1**

Title: Journalism is not a crime: ensuring the legal safety of journalists

Convenor: United Kingdom Delegation to the OSCE

Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Being a journalist is not a crime, and journalists should not face arrest or detention for their work. However, outdated or poorly drafted legislation can restrict journalists' ability to perform their work independently and without undue interference. Even well intentioned and well-drafted legislation might not offer protection for journalists if those within the judicial system do not understand or implement it effectively. Legal protection for journalists was identified as a concern in the landmark OSCE decision on Safety of Journalists, adopted by consensus by OSCE participating States in Milan in December 2018. As well as addressing physical aspects of safety, such as harassment, threats and attacks, the decision called on states to review, and amend or repeal, laws that limit journalists' ability to work independently. Legal safety has also been recognised as a serious concern by the Governments of the UK and Canada, who co-organised the Global Conference on Media Freedom in London in July, and subsequently convened the High Level Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom. The High Level Panel is an independent body chaired by Lord Neuberger, former

President of the UK Supreme Court, with Amal Clooney as Deputy Chair of the Panel. The independent High Level Panel of Legal Experts will examine legal and policy initiatives that states can adopt to improve media freedom. This side event, organised by the UK and Canada, will bring together legal experts with journalists, civil society and governments to discuss the importance of ensuring journalists legal safety and identify areas for future collaboration.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Belarus: The Role of Free Media in Building Resilience in the Society
Convenor: Prospect Foundation / iSANS – The International Strategic Action Network for Security
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Russia is applying active, serious and growing pressure on Belarusian social and media space through various instruments of influence. Russian state-controlled, quasi-private and non-governmental initiatives form a wide system of interference, aimed at a “deep integration” of Belarus with Russia — effectively at coercing Belarus to give up its political, cultural and linguistic sovereignty. Starting with the second half of 2018, the wave of propaganda and development of influence networks has drastically increased. While in 2014-2016 the situation in Belarus was commonly viewed in the Russian public sphere in the context of the Ukrainian agenda, in the last two years Belarus became a separate target for Russian political, financial and media actors. Instruments of hybrid war – fake news, disinformation and propaganda, aimed at splitting and brainwashing Belarusian society – are applied. Russian influence operation aimed at coercing Belarus to a “deep integration” has created a multilevel network of influence in and around Belarus, comprised of state-controlled, private “patriotic”, quasi-Belarusian media outlets, pro-Russian groups and actors with far-right background and quasi-NGOs. Advancement of the “integration project” is supported by websites disguised as local and international news outlets of varying calibre and popularity, echoed and enhanced by the social media. The speakers at the side-event will present their findings on the uncovered influence network, main tropes and narratives, as well as propose the way to strengthen the resilience of the Belarusian society in the face of massive propaganda and disinformation wave.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Turkmenistan
Convenor: Rights and Freedoms of Turkmenistan Citizens
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Violation of the human right in prison. Violation of the prisoners' rights as far as the rights of their relatives

Refreshments will not be provided

Thursday, 19 September

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Religious freedom in the Ukrainian territories of Crimea and Donbas occupied by Russian Federation
Convenor: Center for Civil Liberties
Working language: English, Russian, Ukraine

Summary: The annexation of Crimea led to numerous violations of religious freedom. The forcibly imposed Russian legislation is widely used to persecute religious communities and individual believers. There have been documented a lot of cases of punishment for “reading the Bible and prayers”, “distributing leaflets with an invitation to a prayer house”, “religious songs” and other activities that are equated with the missionary ones held outside the designated places. Under the pretext of searching for extremist materials, representatives of law enforcement agencies in Crimea are constantly conducting searches in libraries, prayer houses, Muslims schools (madrassas, mosques), as well as at lawyers, journalists and public activists. At least 16 cases of attempted arson, robbery, desecration of mosques were documented, while only in one of them they managed to find a guilty person. In mosques, cameras are installed to monitor Muslims. The number of criminal cases for membership in religious organizations recognized in the Russian Federation as the terrorist or extremist ones is growing, although they freely carry out their activities in Ukraine. Russia’s so-called anti-extremist legislation contravenes international standards and is used for groundless accusations and persecutions of believers and religious communities. Even worse is the situation with the observance of freedom of religion in the occupied part of Donetsk and Luhansk regions (Donbas) in eastern Ukraine. Since the beginning of the war, the illegal armed formations created by the direct participation of the Russian Federation proclaimed the Orthodoxy of the Moscow Patriarchate as the main religion of the region and began the persecution of other religious denominations. Dozens of temples, prayer houses and places of worship have been captured and are now under the control of armed formations. The practice of abduction, torture and extrajudicial executions of clerics and believers of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (formerly the UOC of the Kyiv Patriarchate), the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and a number of Evangelical Protestant churches is widespread. In the framework of the Side Event, representatives of religious communities, human rights defenders and lawyers working in the occupied territories will introduce you to the current situation of religious freedom in the occupied territories of Ukraine and provide recommendations for OSCE structures and the world community on how to improve it.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Russian political prisoners in 2019 and the role for the OSCE
Convenor: Human Rights Center "Memorial"
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: According to Memorial, Russia’s most respected human rights organization, there are more than 300 political prisoners in the country. The estimate is conservative and based on the strict Council of Europe definition of a political prisoner – but it already rivals the late Soviet period. The Kremlin’s prisoners include opposition activists, peaceful protesters, human rights campaigners, journalists, Ukrainian military officers, adherents of religious groups deemed “extremist”, and many others. Their continued incarceration violates not only Russia’s Constitution, but the country’s obligations under the OSCE Vienna Concluding Document, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International

Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the European Convention of Human Rights, as well as numerous decisions by the European Court of Human Rights, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, and other multilateral bodies – and should be a matter for involvement by the international community. Just as in the Soviet era, international attention is crucial for defending political prisoners. In the 1970s and 1980s, sustained global advocacy helped secure the release of some of the most prominent prisoners of conscience in the USSR. While the numbers – and the Kremlin’s abuse of the law – are becoming comparable, the issue of Russian political prisoners seems to be largely absent from the international agenda. This needs to change. Please join us at the OSCE HDIM side event on 19 September at 8:15 am in Meeting Room 3 for a discussion of political and religious imprisonment in present-day Russia, and ways in which the OSCE and its Participating States can respond to this shameful practice. Speakers: Sergei Davidis Head of Political Prisoner Support Programme, Memorial Human Rights Centre Natalia Arno President, Free Russia Foundation Vladimir Kara-Murza Chairman, Boris Nemtsov Foundation for Freedom Alexei Kozlov Editor of Article20.org, expert of the Moscow Helsinki Group on the freedom of assembly

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Media Freedom and Tolerance and Non-Discrimination
Convenor: Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media
Working language: English

Summary: Democracy and protection of human rights, including freedom of expression and media freedom are essential safeguards of tolerance and non-discrimination, and constitute important factors for security, co-operation and peaceful development. Tolerance and non-discrimination are imperative elements in the promotion of human rights (MC.DEC/6/02). OSCE participating States acknowledge the positive function the media can play in promoting tolerance and understanding among religions and cultures, and committed themselves to encourage promotion of tolerance through the Media, including the Internet (MC.DEC/Charter on Preventing and Combating Terrorism/02 and MC.DEC/12/04). According to the European Court of Human Rights, democratic societies must accept being shocked, disturbed and, at times, even offended. National laws often incorporate a range of instruments and measures to deal with certain forms of intolerant or discriminatory speech, often referred to as ‘hate speech’ regulations. While manifestations of intolerance must be addressed, intolerance cannot be fought by limiting free speech. Yet, some types of speech, such as incitement to violence, harassment or other forms of harmful behaviour against communities or certain parts of society, are not acceptable (MC.DEC/12/04, MC.DOC/1/16). It is vital to discuss when speech becomes intolerant and discriminatory, and which speech is ‘unlawful’ and ‘harmful’, and best practices to address such speech. A robust public debate in society carried by the media both on- and offline is an important means to promote tolerance and non-discrimination and support universal respect for freedom of expression. OSCE participating States have sought to develop measures to counter intolerance and discrimination in the media, which do not endanger freedom of information and expression and encourage media literacy (MC.DEC/10/05). This side event, co-organised by the OSCE Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM) and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) will provide a platform to raise awareness and share good practices on how the human rights and fundamental freedoms that underpin media freedom, and tolerance and non-discrimination have the potential to be complimentary. Independent and pluralistic media are essential to a free and open society (Budapest Summit 1994 and PC.DEC/193).

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Challenges of Democracy in modern Europe
Convenor: Society of Friends of "l'Humanite"
Working language: English, French

Summary: The wave of protest in Western and Eastern Europe has become a reaction to social and economic problems. But they are also casted light on problems related to the lack of trust in relations between people and government. The reaction of some governments to the public protests increase the public resentment: police violence and repressions, prepossession of justice and power toward protesters, media biasing, bias in media coverage of protest. This authoritarian trend is widely adopted by east European countries and the consequences of it can be fatal in global scale.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Addressing challenges and trends relating to freedom of assembly in the OSCE region: presentation of new ODIHR publications
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: The right to freedom of peaceful assembly has been recognised as one of the foundations of a democratic, tolerant and pluralist society in which individuals and groups with different backgrounds and beliefs can interact peacefully with one another, thus helping give voice to minority opinions and bring visibility to under-represented groups. At a time when worrying patterns continue to narrow the civic space across the OSCE region, ODIHR 4th Report on Monitoring of Freedom of Peaceful Assembly in Selected OSCE Participating States and the upcoming 3rd edition of the Joint ODIHR-Venice Commission Guidelines on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly aim to identify and address challenges and trends relating to the exercise of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly across the OSCE region. The two publications to be discussed by ODIHR come to reinforce the guidance and tools developed by other actors to ensure full compliance with the right to freedom of peaceful assembly. That includes the ongoing work of the UN Human Right Committee on General Comment no. 37 on Article 21 of the ICCPR and the most recent reports of UN Special Rapporteurs on women human rights defenders and on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association in the digital age. The side event will inform the audience about the ongoing work of ODIHR and its Panel with respect to freedom of peaceful assembly and its future plans. In particular, the event will elaborate on how the new ODIHR publications identify and address, challenges and provide guidance regarding e.g., the monitoring of assemblies, the use of new technologies, new forms of assemblies and the integration of a gender and diversity perspective into States' efforts to create a safe and enabling environment for the exercise of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly. The side event will seek to raise awareness on how these guidelines and recommendations can be taken into account by OSCE participating States to legislate on freedom of assembly-related matters and to ensure the proper management of assemblies in a manner that is compliant with international human rights standards and OSCE commitments. In addition, the event will seek to explore how these tools and recommendations can be used by human rights defenders and civil society to support advocacy in this field of human rights law.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Inter-Mechanism
Convenor: OMCT World Organisation Against Torture, Brussels Office
Working language: English, French, Russian, Spanish

Summary: In many countries around the world, instead of being seen as legitimate actors of change and partners, human rights defenders are increasingly treated as threats and criminals by their respective governments – and perceived as such by their public opinions. Since 2008, the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (FIDH-OMCT) has been organising “inter-mechanisms” meetings, aimed to facilitate interaction between intergovernmental institutions equipped with mechanisms or tools dedicated to the protection of human rights defenders, so as to provide a concerted response to the main challenges faced by civil society around the world. The “inter-mechanisms” side-event will represent an opportunity for international and regional human rights defenders-protection mechanisms to explore avenues for strengthened cooperation, notably to tackle the impact of national security and counter-terrorism laws/policies on the protection of human rights defenders, address the issue of restrictions to – and reprisals against – civil society participation in the works of intergovernmental organisations, and more broadly reassert and support the legitimacy, achievements and positive role of human rights defenders worldwide. The side-event will also make it possible for civil society stakeholders attending the HDIM to directly interact with human rights defenders-protection mechanisms.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:30-14:30**
Venue: **Plenary Hall**
Title: Migrant Integration – Engaging Young Migrants Through Participation in Political and Public Life
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
Working language: English

Summary: According to statistics, 38% of the population in the OSCE region is under thirty years of age, and recent survey findings suggest that today's youth – the largest young generation ever by numbers – are less engaged in political processes than previous generations and are beginning to disengage from democratic institutions. This phenomenon is most starkly observed in political party membership that is as low as 2% among young people, as well as low youth voter turnout in elections across the OSCE region. Recommendations to mitigate or remove institutional barriers include the adoption of legal and policy mechanisms – legislative quotas for youth, lowered voting and candidacy age, and youth parliaments, among others – as avenues for increased youth engagement. Evidence suggests that societies in the OSCE region are becoming increasingly diverse as a result of migration movements, and that until recently migrants were not expected nor encouraged to take an active role in political life by the receiving societies. Though contemporary focus on holistic migrant integration policies have led to an increased focus on political engagement both within and with these communities. Considering this evidence, the assumption is that young people (first and second generation) have directly or indirectly experienced limitations to full participation in society. Through the discussion, expert panellists will explore barriers preventing young people with a

migration background from engaging in political and public life in their communities, and effective methods to support engagement, by seeking to address the following questions: • How do young people with a migration background experience barriers to political participation? How are these barriers different from those experienced by their peers? • Are there effective strategies used to mitigate/address these barriers? • When legal frameworks impact on the ability to engage with formal democratic structures, i.e. voter registration laws; do alternative modes of engagement become more attractive?

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**

Venue: **Meeting Room 3**

Title: Problems of performance by Kazakhstan of obligations on protection of fundamental laws of the person against illegal activity of the separate religious minority

Convenor: Center for Human Rights Studies Akjayik

Working language: English, Russian

Summary: From non-governmental organisations and independent mass-media, it is known, that for Kazakhstan and other countries in the Central Asia region, the problem is how to separate ideological postulates of the religious organisation “Witnesses of Iegovy” (which is contradicting the interests of the secular state, its legislation and the rights of local population). Also the sensitive subject of “Witnesses of Iegovy” persuasive presence in public places, destructions of marriages, provoking family conflicts on religious grounds and involving minors without the permission of one of the parents will be raised. Development of measures on dialogue with religious organization “Witnesses of Iegovy”, about respecting human rights under the condition of non-interference of the authorities will be also discussed.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**

Venue: **Meeting Room 2**

Title: Political Repressions in the Baltics and Ukraine: Export of Pseudo-European Practices of Interacting with Civic Society

Convenor: Center of Socio-Political Sciences "Russian Baltic"; Baltic Media Research Center (BMRC)

Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Political repressions against dissent and the existence of political prisoners are a sad reality for modern Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The Baltics prosecute people for disagreeing with the government on history, the secret services persecute dissidents and declare minority rights’ activists a threat to state security. On the OSCE platform in Warsaw, experts from Russia and EU will discuss examples of punitive justice over historic events and why the Baltics ignore human rights, and how the actual history of these countries clashes with the officially approved and “the only correct” interpretation. The lies about the past and present of the Baltic republics are the foundation of their political regimes’ legitimacy, so they fight dissidents who are unafraid to speak the truth with all of the might of the state enforcement tools. Lithuania and Latvia have criminalized the denial of “Soviet Occupation” which can lead to multiple years in prison. In Lithuania, most cases where someone was imprisoned for denying this “occupation” are tied to attempts to review the official version of events for 13 January 1991 at the Vilnius TV Tower, which were a provocation by those in favour of

independence from USSR. The trial of the Soviet troops on “13 January Case” is abuse of the law, aimed at confirming the official Lithuanian mythology about the 1991 events in Vilnius. The Baltics’ special role in the EU Eastern Partnership program is one of the reasons why these anti-European practices of political repressions, suppression freedom of press, persecuting journalists, etc. have spread to and flourished in other former Soviet republics in recent years. In a deformed way, they also appear in Ukraine today. “The European Choice” made by Ukraine and the other Eastern Partnership countries was false, instead of exporting European values, this export just included Russophobia from the anti-Russian bloc in Eastern Europe. Issues to discuss: 1. Persecution of dissidents in the Baltic countries: punitive justice over history; 2. Abusing the Freedom of Speech in the Baltics: fighting unwanted media and journalists; 3. Lithuania’s political prisoners: criminal charges against Yuri Mel and Algirdas Paleckis; 4. The Baltics’ bad example: political repressions in Ukraine after the “European Choice” won.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Plenary Hall**
Title: Launch of ODIHR’s publication *Freedom of Religion or Belief and Security: Policy Guidance*
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is publishing *Freedom of Religion or Belief and Security: Policy Guidance* in order to clarify the interrelationship between freedom of religion or belief and security in light of significant restrictions on freedom of religion or belief as a result of laws, policies and practices enacted in the name of “security” in the OSCE region. As well as examining the interrelationship between freedom of religion or belief and security, the document provides guiding principles, practical guidance and recommendations to address a number of issues of note at the intersection of freedom of religion or belief and security in the OSCE region. While the publication is primarily addressed to policymakers tasked with developing and implementing laws, policies and strategies in the area of security, it will also be of great interest to civil society, religious or belief communities, and the media (to whom recommendations are also addressed) given the important role that non-state actors play in efforts to advance both freedom of religion or belief and security. Speakers: Katarzyna Gardapkhadze, ODIHR First Deputy Director, Dr Kishan Manocha, Senior Adviser on Freedom of Religion or Belief, ODIHR, Dr Ahmed Shaheed, UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, Mariam Gavtadze, Director of Strategic Litigation, Tolerance and Diversity Institute

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Improving communication and raising awareness about the defense of human rights
Convenor: Netherlands Helsinki Committee
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Human rights as a concept are increasingly under fire in the public and political domain. At the same time many human rights NGOs, as the main defenders and proponents of human rights, have

embarked on a mostly legalistic approach to and presentation of the concept. This does not produce the public messaging that wins the hearts and minds of large sectors of the population, For proper promotion of human rights, communication and constituency-building strategies should be devised and implemented that capture and convince mainstream audiences. The human rights community has started to realize this, and interesting communication initiatives have taken shape over the past years. The side event will present and discuss recent experiences in developing human rights communication from different parts of the OSCE area.

Refreshments will be provided

Friday, 20 September

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Prostitution Policies in Switzerland – A Critical Analysis and a Survivor’s Story
Convenor: Talita
Working language: English

Summary: After a short introduction (3 min) we will start with a video (7 minutes) with the testimony of a survivor of prostitution. Then, Corinne Isler, a Swiss sociologist will present her work on how policies on prostitution come about in the Canton of Zürich. (40 min) We leave 7 min for questions to the presenter and 3 min to close the event. Handout on the situation in CH will be made available.

Refreshments will not be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Criminalization of Solidarity – Intimidation, Threats, and Legal Harassment against Migrant Human Rights Defenders in the EU and USA
Convenor: Amnesty International - U.S.A.
Working language: English

Summary: In 2019, there are more refugees, asylum seekers, and other displaced people in need of international protection than at any time since World War Two, following which United Nations member States developed international legal frameworks to ensure the protection of human rights and refugees, even in times of crisis such as now. Those binding legal obligations are reflected and included in OSCE commitments. Yet instead of guaranteeing the right to life, access to asylum procedures, and other human rights of people in need, the governments of the United States of America (USA) and some European Union (EU) participating States have targeted Human Rights Defenders with unlawful restrictions and legal harassment, simply for providing life-saving assistance to refugees and asylum seekers whom those governments have failed to protect. Amnesty International has extensively documented and reported on the targeting of migrant Human Rights Defenders in the USA and the EU, and will be issuing a new regional report on this pattern of human rights violations by several OSCE participating States in Europe at the end of 2019. In this panel discussion, two Amnesty International researchers and two migrant Human Rights Defenders will

highlight the range of such restrictions and violations being experienced in the USA and EU participating States, and will present concrete recommendations to halt those abuses and close those protection gaps. (Q & A discussion will follow.)

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Preventing and combating violence against women
Convenor: Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: In 2018 Ministerial Council in Milan adopted decision No. 4/18 on preventing and combating violence against women. This side event provides unique opportunity to take stock of current Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe activities and of those of participating states. It also can bring some new or fresh ideas on further follow up to this important decision.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Threats for Human Dimension Issues in Maritime Sector: Ukrainian Examples
Convenor: Crimean Tatar Resource Center, Ukrainian Independent Maritime Trade Union
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: The humanitarian problems and challenges, connected with the modern retrogression of the maritime legal standards will be reflected on example of Ukrainian maritime sector and level on its governing. Consequences of the Russian aggression, reflected in the occupation of Crimea, militarisation of Black Sea and blockade of the Ukrainian Azov ports, in the repressions against Ukrainian fishermen will be pointed. Relevant threat to the rights of the Ukrainian seafarers, as a special kind of the labour migrants will be shown; the challenges to the safety and sustainable development of Ukrainian riparian communities will be discussed.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:30-14:30**
Venue: **Plenary Hall**
Title: Cross-border Childhood: the rights of migrant children in Eastern Europe and Central Asia
Convenor: Anti-Discrimination Centre "Memorial"
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Millions migrate in the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Children coming with their parents and unaccompanied minors traveling in groups or alone are among them. Council of Europe and UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recognize that children migrants are a very vulnerable group at high risk of exploitation, detention, violence. CIS countries lack agreements and policies that specifically provide for the rights of children in migration. In CIS states' migration policies often violate rights of the children and lead to the detention of children, separation of families,

denial of right to education and others. ADC Memorial started a campaign #Crossborderchildhood in order to support creating new modern regulations to protect migrant children rights in these countries. Special treaties between the countries are to be based on the positions of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and the UN Committee on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families concerning the rights of children in migration. Most important principles regulating the rights of children in migration should be: a ban on the criminalization and immigration-related detention of children, a ban on the separation of children from their parents solely due to the migration status of the children and/or their parents, transfer of the topic of “children in migration” from the police sphere to the social protection/educational sphere, a guarantee of the right to education of migrant children.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: 18:15-19:45

Venue: Plenary Hall

Title: When peaceful becomes non-peaceful? The role of the authorities, civil society and international community in preventing and investigating acts of violence at public assemblies

Convenor: SOLIDARUS e.V.; Moscow Helsinki Group

Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Recent years were marked by mass protests in many parts of the world, including Western and Eastern Europe (notably in Belarus on December 2010, Russia in May 2012, Ukraine in November 2013 – March 2014, most recently - France and Russia). Separate episodes of violence (committed either by participants of the protest or by provocateurs) are often used by the authorities to present the whole event as non-peaceful and on these grounds to deny their positive obligations on protecting assemblies and to legitimate forceful dispersal of these manifestations and legal persecution of their participants. Such isolated episodes or individual acts of violence are at times described by the authorities as “mass riots” (or “mass disorder”), challenge the very concepts of “peaceful assembly” and “peaceful protest” and pose a number of questions related to obligations of the states under the international human rights law and the balance between guarantees of the right to freedom of assembly and those of public order. For instance, this is the case in Russia where 15 people already are charged with participation in “mass riots”, after recent protests around the elections, while violence came mostly from the side of the law-enforcement officials. In order to prevent and investigate acts of violence and disproportionate use of force during the protests, universal approaches to such situations should be formulated, and more rapid and efficient mechanisms should be developed at both national and international levels. In the absence of effective official international investigations civil society groups sometimes take an initiative to carry out human rights assessment of these events by independent experts with regard to international standards on freedom of assembly and police conduct [as was the case in Belarus and Russia and partly in Ukraine]. The participants of the side-event, who took an active part in these civil society efforts, will discuss the conditions upon which an initially peaceful assembly may be considered as becoming non-peaceful, the threshold for defining “mass riots” and the steps to be taken by the state authorities, civil society and the international community in such situations. **Speakers:** Alexey Kozlov (SOLIDARUS e.V. www.article20.org) - Germany Dmitriy Makarov (International Youth Human Rights Movement) - Russia Svetlana Astrakhantseva (Moscow Helsinki Group) - Russia Olexandra Romantsova (Center for Civil Liberties) - Ukraine

Refreshments will be provided

Time: 18:15-19:45

Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: The use of technology by non-governmental organizations to fight trafficking in human beings
Convenor: OSCE Secretariat; Office of the Special Representative/Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: The development of technology has had an important influence on the crime of trafficking in human beings, presenting both challenges and opportunities. While technology is frequently misused to facilitate human trafficking, its positive use can also help practitioners combat trafficking, such as by assisting in identifying victims, investigating and prosecuting perpetrators, raising awareness, providing services to victims, and shedding new light on the make-up and operation of trafficking networks. Research and direct evidence show that technology is being misused by human traffickers during all the stages of the crime, including the recruitment and exploitation of victims by traffickers. An analysis of cases in the 2018 UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons shows how perpetrators sequence their actions by identifying potential victims on social media, establishing a relationship of trust, and subsequently entrapping them in exploitative situations. Technology also helps traffickers in facilitating transactions, accessing new venues, and expanding illicit marketplaces. Large online platforms hosting advertisements for sexual services provide traffickers the means to attract customers and, in turn, to sexually exploit victims. The increasing misuse of the publicly accessible open web by criminals to recruit, advertise and exploit victims of human trafficking raises the legitimate question of what role NGOs can and should play in combating technology-facilitated human trafficking. If, for example, NGOs traditionally focused their resources on victim assistance and awareness raising, the shift of the human trafficking criminal “industry” to online platforms creates a good opportunity for NGOs to diversify their services and pro-actively look for human trafficking cases online in order to identify victims. Good examples of NGOs successfully using cutting edge technology to combat human trafficking already exist. Some organizations are using facial recognition software to identify possible human trafficking victims, including minors, on websites for escort and sexual services advertisements. A number of NGOs use big data analysis tools to identify human trafficking patterns and predict the increase of trafficking cases in a certain area. Other NGOs are monitoring social media platforms and websites to identify possible fraudulent labour offers targeting the recruitment of victims for labour exploitation. The side event will consider the intersection of technology and trafficking from the perspective of its impact on civil society, and will discuss some of the good practices in this space and how NGOs can play a more active role in the use of technology to combat human trafficking.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Challenging gender discrimination in the post-Soviet space: from inequality in the workplace to domestic violence
Convenor: International Federation for Human Rights, Anti-Discrimination Centre “Memorial”
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Today, over 25 years after the fall of the Soviet regimes, many challenges faced by women across the post-Soviet states have a common ground. Though each country has formally expressed its commitment to the promotion of equal rights and elimination of discrimination against women and LGBT+, persistent gender imbalances remain, particularly in access to employment, career

opportunities and salary wages. High levels of violence against women and LGBT+ individuals pose another great obstacle to gender equality in most countries of the post-Soviet space. Recent years were marked by the adoption of law decriminalizing domestic violence and “crusades” against gay men and women in Chechnya in Russia, which holds sway in the region’s values agenda. Rights of the LGBT+ continue to be curtailed in all countries of the region, and activists that defend LGBT rights are facing a rise in hostility in parts of the former URSS, fueled by discrimination and homophobia.

The event will gather experts on gender issues from around the region, who will share their experiences in fighting gender discrimination in Russia, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and other countries of the region. Speakers will also address challenges faced by human rights defenders working on gender issues, including the rights of women and LGBT+ persons in particularly unsafe political environments.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Presentation of the electoral recommendations database for the Western Balkans
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
Working language: English

Summary: The importance of follow-up to electoral recommendations has been repeatedly acknowledged by OSCE participating States. At the 1999 Istanbul Summit, for example, they committed themselves to “follow up promptly the ODIHR’s election assessment and recommendations” and recognized “the assistance the ODIHR can provide to participating State[s] in developing and implementing electoral legislation”. ODIHR has a long history of working with states on the follow-up of electoral recommendations. In June 2017, ODIHR started the project “Support to Elections in the Western Balkans”, funded by the European Union and the Austrian Development Agency. The three-year project supports election-management bodies and related institutions in the region in their efforts to follow up on election observation recommendations in areas related to election management, voter registration and the conduct of the media during election campaigns. ODIHR covers the thematic areas outside the project through its regular activities, so that all electoral recommendations are considered in the follow-up process. As one of its activities, the project developed a system (database) to collect recommendations to serve as a baseline for activities and to track the follow-up to recommendations. A detailed methodology for tracking the follow-up of recommendations took into account ongoing activities towards implementation of the recommendations, with the recognition that the ultimate evaluation of implementation of recommendations is conducted by the subsequent election observation missions. The database was made available at <https://paragraph25.odihr.pl> for stakeholders in the electoral processes, as well as interested members of the public to serve as an important tool for assessing progress of the implementation of recommendations. The database also serves as a useful co-ordination instrument when engaging with the international community working on electoral support and in deciding on which areas to focus.

Refreshments will be provided

Monday, 23 September

Time: **08:15-09:45**

Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Belarus and Belarusian civil society before Parliamentary and Presidential electoral campaigns
Convenor: Belarusian House Foundation
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Side-event aims to discuss by Belarusian, Polish and international experts the current situation in Belarus before parliamentary and presidential elections in Belarus. Especially the situation of free media, including the impact of the blogosphere, NGOs, politicians on Belarusian society and the initiation of discussions on the state of democracy and human rights in Belarus

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Russian (s)elections under police control: arrested candidates, repressed protests, misuse of anti-extremism
Convenor: SOVA Center for Information and Analysis; Public Verdict Foundation
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Immediately upon its return to PACE, Russia plunged into another crisis in terms of fundamental rights and freedoms. While the amendments were introduced to anti-extremist laws at the end of 2018 giving rise to some optimism, they were counterbalanced by new repressive provisions early in 2019. Since then, dozens, both civic activists and members of religious minorities, faced arbitrary prosecutions. The situation deteriorated dramatically over the 2019 Moscow City Duma pre-election campaigning. Almost all the independent candidates were prevented from participation in the elections of September 8 without due legal grounds. In the same manner, the authorities refused to agree on the place and time of the subsequent protest actions. As a result, about 1400 protesters, a record number for Russia, were detained, often with excessive use of force, during the completely peaceful protest of July 27. During the next weeks, the authorities continued mass detentions at peaceful rallies, still with excessive use of force, hundreds of people detained being punished with rude violations of legal procedures. Over a dozen people faced criminal prosecution, they were charged with taking part in fake mass disorder. Other doubtful criminal charges were also pronounced in connection with these protests. At the same time, many opposition leaders and candidates deprived of registration faced a series of administrative arrests in order to rule out their involvement in the social life. Four Russian organizations – OVD-Info Project, the Public Verdict Foundation, SOVA Center for Information and Analysis and Golos Movement – will provide further details, as well as a brief analysis of the current situation, and propose measures to prevent the escalation.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Judicial Independence in Poland
Convenor: Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights; Amnesty International – Poland, American Bar Association Center for Human Rights
Working language: English

Summary: In the last several years, the government of Poland has taken several troubling steps that have affected the independence of the Judiciary. Even though the Polish Constitution provides for an independent judiciary, these government actions had a negative impact on people's perceptions of the state of the rule of law and have drawn concern from local civil society and the international community. One of these measures was the amendment to the law on the Supreme Court lowering the mandatory retirement age for judges, ultimately impacting 40% of justices on the Supreme Court at the time. Another measure included changes in the disciplinary regime against judges and the creation of a new "Disciplinary Office" that was headed by a Disciplinary Officer for Common Court Judges, also sometimes called a Disciplinary Prosecutor. It is believed that this office is using frivolous disciplinary proceedings against individual judges who stand up for the rule of law. The range of punishments under these proceedings include warnings, reductions of salary, and even dishonorable discharge from the bench. There are many other measures were taken to seemingly undermine judicial independence. These steps are part of a wider trend of governments attempting to undermine the independence of judicial branches and ultimately to attack the rule of law. Examining the steps taken in Poland and the effects on the Judiciary will help present a roadmap to address these issues not only in Poland but in other countries facing similar situations. This panel will focus on specific issues in the current environment. The discussion will not only be on steps taken by the Polish government, but also on effective responses by lawyers, civil society, and international organizations.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Preventing and Addressing SGBV in Places of Deprivation of Liberty
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Talking about sexual and gender-based violence in places of deprivation of liberty continues to be a taboo in many countries, as much as it is a reality. While sexual violence is under-reported in all settings and affects women, men, and juveniles alike, similarly to conflict-related sexual violence, the realities and the experiences of those who have suffered are hidden because of, among other things, a culture of silence and acceptance of violence as "collateral damage", the lack of appropriate protection measures, power imbalances, fear of further punishment and the overarching stigma attached to it. In 2019 ODIHR released a publication which analyses the problem and provides guidance to practitioners working in criminal justice facilities as well as to law and policy makers, civil society and international organizations on the range of safeguards to effectively prevent such violence. The side event aims at presenting the publication, which is based –among others- on a questionnaire for OSCE participating States, trigger a debate on an under-researched topic and inspire further action at the national and international levels.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Fundamental Freedoms on Trial: The Human Rights Impact of Overly Broad Counter Terrorism and Anti-Extremism Legislation
Convenor: Fair Trials
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Over the past two decades, states across the OSCE have adopted laws that greatly broaden the scope of counter terrorism and anti-extremism laws. While many of these laws respond to legitimate security threats, they often create gaps and ambiguities that have serious implications for human rights across the OSCE. The Civic Solidarity Platform's Working Group on Counter-Terrorism, Anti-Extremism and Human Rights will hold a panel discussion, led by Fair Trials, SOVA Center and Article 19, on the impact of overly broad legislation on fundamental rights and freedoms in the OSCE. This side event will feature 'on the ground' experiences from civil society organisations in states with repressive and overly broad counter terrorism and anti-extremism laws, and will hear from experts on new legislative developments as well as best and worst practices from across the OSCE region on respecting fundamental rights whilst countering terrorism.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Democratic backsliding in Poland and Hungary: Current state of affairs
Convenor: Hungarian Helsinki Committee; Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights
Working language: English

Summary: After several years of systemic changes, Poland and Hungary are nearing irreversible steps of democratic backsliding. The changes introduced in Poland and Hungary affected the standing and operation of all independent institutions – including courts, media and civil society organizations. For example, In Poland, the judges who speak up in defense of the Constitution and courts' independence face the risk of attacks and disciplinary proceedings against them. In Hungary, in turn, the governing majority adopted legal changes threatening the works of civil society organizations and academia, while judicial independence has also come under serious pressure as judges' self-governance cannot effectively counterbalance politically driven influence. The introduced changes are usually accompanied by aggressive narratives targeting specific professional groups (such as lawyers, civil society actors or judges) or groups prone to discrimination (such as migrants or LGBTIQI persons). The continuing attempts to widen political control over these institutions raised concerns among the international community, including the European Union. Despite the growing concerns about the protection of core democratic values, the governing majorities in both countries are carrying on with the changes limiting the fundamental rights and freedoms and creating the system of "illiberal democracy". The invited speakers will discuss recent changes in Poland and Hungary. The discussion will focus on the potential new developments which may emerge with the parliamentary elections in Poland in 2019 and the potential changes in the Hungarian administrative justice system. The speakers will also explain possible methods to counter the erosion of the rule of law.

Refreshments will not be provided

Time: **13:30-14:30**
Venue: **Plenary Hall**
Title: Human Rights Violations in Northern Caucasus
Convenor: Committee Against Torture
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Russian human rights organizations have been documenting human rights violations in the North Caucasus region for many years have witnessed how the personalities of the perpetrator have changed from federal law enforcement and military to local authorities of all kinds. There is

extremely little accountability for such violent abuses as extra-judicial executions, enforced disappearances, torture and cruel and degrading treatment. Lasting impunity has served to perpetuate these abuses. It has also contributed to the gradual loss of trust in domestic and international law by victimized local communities. A group of Russian and international NGOs will be speaking about recent violations of human rights in the regions of Russia's North Caucasus.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Fight against torture and ill-treatment in Ukraine
Convenor: Center for Civil Liberties
Working language: English

Summary: Four Ukrainian human rights NGOs will present results of analysis of actual situation of torture and ill-treatment in Ukraine wherever they are used. Results of the legal analysis, national sociological polls, monitoring the penitentiary institutions, legal, social, psychological aid and rehabilitation of torture victims/will be presented. Torture of political prisoners in Russia, Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk regions will be considered separately. Yevgeniy Zakharov (KHPG). Review of problems of torture in Ukraine on the basis of shadow report to the Seventh periodic report of the state on its fulfilment of the UN Convention against torture Sasha Romantsova (CCL). Torture of Ukrainians, political prisoners, in the Russia, Crimea, and Donbas Gennadiy Tokarev (KHPG). Inadequate medical care in the penitentiary institutions in Ukraine Andriy Chernousov (KHISR). Assessment of the extent of illicit use of force by the police in 2004-2018 Yuliia Honchar (Forpost). Rehabilitation of torture victims Questions and answers, discussion Concluding remarks

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Evidence-based approach in combating tortures: Ukrainian experience
Convenor: Association of Ukrainian Human Rights Monitors on Law -Enforcement (UMDPL)
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: An evidence-based approach for the development of system solutions enables them to be sustainable and efficient. Systematic efforts based on empirical evidence and proven procedures make it possible in more efficient way to prevent torture and minimize its consequences. During a side event, Ukrainian experts will explain how an evidence-based approach works by creating efficient safeguards against torture and preventive mechanisms (NPM, custody records, Investigative interview etc.). During the event experts will focus on following mechanisms: 1. Custody records in National police activity. A system for documenting all actions taken with police detainees. It consists of a separate post of an officer, an electronic system of recording all actions concerning the detained person, conducting interviews with them and the latest video surveillance system. 2. An Investigative interview. A method of gathering the evidence required for an inquiry based on research in the field of psychology and communication theory. It involves interviews with victims, witnesses and suspects without pressure and threats, which provides in result more reliable information. 3. National preventive mechanism. System of regular monitoring visits to places of liberty without warning. In Ukraine, the NPM has a strategic development plan, based on the assessment of national and international experts, and takes into account the recommendations of the European Committee for the

Prevention of Torture and the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture. Speakers: Ukrainian experts, tbc

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Plenary Hall**
Title: The Catalonia Referendum Trial: Justice or Repression?
Convenor: Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization
Working language: English

Summary: With judgment due at any moment in the prosecution of the Catalan politicians and civil society leaders for participation in the 1 October 2017 independence referendum, this event will present the findings of the various national and international observers of the trial. While the Spanish authorities did not permit a formal international observer mission, journalists, civil society and international organizations have sought to assess the extent to which the trial accords with international standards. Assessments of the trial have included the reports of the International Trial Watch civil society process (<https://internationaltrialwatch.org/en/homepage/>), a documentary commissioned by Al Jazeera (<https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/peopleandpower/2019/06/catalonia-trial-justice-vengeance-190619145151807.html>), and a report by the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (<https://unpo.org/article/21525>). These assessments have been recently consolidated by Assemblée Nacional Catalana and the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization into a submission to the UN OHCHR as part of the upcoming Universal Periodic Review of the Kingdom of Spain (<https://unpo.org/downloads/2562.pdf>), which will be presented during this session with the participation of experts who have been engaged in the process of assessing the fairness of the trial. Organizers: Assemblée Nacional Catalana & Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization

Refreshments will not be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: “Effective Multilateralism in the Fight against Torture: The role of civil society”
Convenor: Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the OSCE; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark; Permanent Mission of Austria to the OSCE
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: At this side-event, the organisers will present the compilation of recommendations made by the participants at the recent international conference in Vienna, “Effective Multilateralism in the Fight against Torture: Trends in the OSCE region and the way forward”, which can serve as inspiration for further dialogue and possible action. The side-event will also provide a platform for participants to continue the fruitful discussion from the international conference in Vienna on how to increase targeted cooperation between participating States, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and other relevant stakeholders in the joint fight against torture and other ill-treatment and what role the OSCE could play in this regard. While States have the legal obligation to prevent and combat torture and other ill-treatment, many activities in the fight against torture would simply be impossible without CSOs’ significant expertise and tireless efforts. In many OSCE participating States, CSOs carry out visits to places of detention, either to provide various services or to assess the treatment of detainees. They also assist victims of torture and their relatives in ensuring their right to rehabilitation, and they provide a voice for individuals in their pursuit of justice by documenting, reporting on and providing legal support in cases of torture and other ill-treatment. Increased cooperation and coordination

between OSCE participating States and the wide range of experts from civil society will allow us to go one step further in the fight against torture in the OSCE region. The side-event is organised by the Permanent Representations of Denmark, Switzerland and Austria to the OSCE, in close cooperation with the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship and OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

Refreshments will be provided

Tuesday, 24 September

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Jewish Property Restitution and the Holocaust in Eastern Europe: the 10th Anniversary of the Terezin Declaration
Convenor: Historical Memory Foundation
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Back on June 20, 2009, 46 countries, including almost all Eastern European states, signed the Terezin Declaration claiming the need for restitution of the former property of Jewish communities, as well as the private property of Holocaust and other Nazi crimes victims confiscated by the Nazis and their collaborators. How the principles of the Terezin Declaration were implemented in the countries of Eastern Europe and is it still possible to achieve justice for the victims of Nazi crimes? These issues will be discussed at the round table Jewish Property Restitution and the Holocaust in Eastern Europe: the 10th Anniversary of the Terezin Declaration organized by the “Historical Memory” Foundation with the participation of the Foundation for the Support and Development of Jewish Culture, Traditions, Education and Science.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: The Activities of the Albanian-Udi Christian Community in Azerbaijan to Restore the Autocephalous Status of the Albanian Apostolic Church
Convenor: Alban-Udi Christian Religious Community
Working language: Russian

Summary: The Udis are one of the ancient native people of the Caucasus. They are one of the national minorities living in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Their number in Azerbaijan exceeds four thousand people, which is almost 40 percent of all Udis in the world. Furthermore, the Udis are the religious successors of the Albanian Autocephalous Apostolic Church, which came in to existence in the 1-st - 2-nd centuries. The Albanian Autocephalous Apostolic Church is one of the most ancient church institutions in the world and belongs to the ancient Eastern churches. Today, the Albanian-Udi Christian community in Azerbaijan is active in the revival and preservation of the ancient religious traditions of the Udis. The purpose of the side event is to familiarize participants with the rich and interesting history of the ancient Albanian Church, as well as with activities that are carried out to restore Autocephalous status of the Albanian Apostolic Church in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Practical Tools to Combat Anti-Semitism
Convenor: United States Mission to the OSCE
Working language: English

Summary: With the re-emerging threat of anti-Semitism in some parts of the OSCE region, and in recognition of the fifteenth anniversary of the OSCE's adoption of the Berlin Declaration presenting the first steps to fight anti-Semitism, 2019 is the right time to refocus our efforts. This side event will focus on lessons learned and practical measures that can and should be taken by governments to successfully defeat it.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Presentation of European Islamophobia Report 2018
Convenor: Georgetown University, The Bridge Initiative
Working language: English

Summary: The recent wave of hostile, xenophobic, discriminatory and racist discourse and actions against Muslims in the European countries have been alarming following the so called "Syrian refugee crisis" in Europe and emergence of DAESH attacks throughout Europe. Hence, Islamophobia became an acute risk and a threat to European peace and stability. To increase the awareness towards Islamophobia, in 2016 SETA started to publish an annual report, namely "European Islamophobia Report", which covers the Islamophobia and related events in approximately 35 European countries. In this direction SETA will organize a side-event on the issue of "Presentation of European Islamophobia Report 2018" in Warsaw/ Poland during the "Human Dimension Implementation Meeting" organized by OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). In this side-event, the findings of the past year's report and the events related to Islamophobia happened so far in European countries will be discussed. For the event we are planning to invite Dr. Enes Bayraklı (SETA Brussels Coordinator and co-editor of European Islamophobia Report), Dr. Farid Hafez (co-editor of European Islamophobia Report), Gabi Göbl (Author of Hungarian Islamophobia Report) and Enrique Tessieri (Author of Finn Islamophobia Report).

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Addressing anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance and discrimination through education and in education
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Education is a powerful resource in both preventing and combatting anti-Semitism, as well as other forms of intolerance and discrimination, in societies across the OSCE region. The OSCE has

acknowledged this in the 2014 Basel Declaration on Enhancing Efforts to Combat Anti-Semitism, calling upon participating States to “promote educational programmes for combatting anti-Semitism and provide young people with opportunities for human rights education including on the subject of anti-Semitism”. By addressing prejudice both in and through education systems, education policy makers, professionals and learners themselves can bring about more tolerant and peaceful societies. Also in Basel in 2014, ODIHR was mandated to “facilitate the exchange of best practices among participating States on educational initiatives and other measures to raise awareness of anti-Semitism and overcome challenges to Holocaust education”. To this end, ODIHR has been creating a set of materials to support schools in this endeavour based on the principles of human rights and global citizenship education. In 2018, ODIHR and UNESCO co-published *Addressing Anti-Semitism Through Education – Guidelines for Policymakers*, presented at HDIM in 2018. As well as policy tools, ODIHR and UNESCO have worked on teacher training curricula, drafted by UCL, to equip educators and school directors with the knowledge and skills to address and teach about anti-Semitism in schools. Additionally, ODIHR will publish a set of teaching aids, tools which explain to teachers how to answer difficult questions in the classroom. Four educational videos to support lesson plans on prejudice, anti-Semitism and the Holocaust will complement these. This toolkit was conceived under the first phase of the Words into Action project. ODIHR will also take the opportunity to present progress on forthcoming teaching materials that address intolerance against Muslims. This side event will present drafts of these new and exciting resources and create dialogue about their implementation across the OSCE region, raising awareness of the availability of the tools and ODIHR’s capacity to help participating States to implement these resources. Feedback on the final publications will be welcome as well as good practices and advice on disseminating these resources in different national contexts.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Gay Yesterday: recognising changing identities and once-gay realities
Convenor: Core Issues Trust
Working language: English

Summary: Radical sexual politics and LGBT+ activism promotes sexual identities as categories of existence that are inborn and unchangeable. But the experience of many indicates that sexual identities do change as do behaviours and feelings. The session will examine the role of the “orientation” narrative in denying the existence of those formerly gay, in the context of a range of European countries.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:30-14:30**
Venue: **Plenary Hall**
Title: Vulnerable groups and Hate crimes
Convenor: Emisco - European Muslim Initiative for Social Cohesion; European Yozgat Federation
Working language: English, French, Turkish

Summary: Discussion about hate crimes and vulnerable groups.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Religious Freedom in Russian Federation
Convenor: Coordination des Associations et des Particuliers pour la Liberté de Conscience
Working language: English

Summary: Religious descrimination toward religious miniroties, antisemitism

Refreshments will not be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Crimea Tatars: Curent situation and perspectives
Convenor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Representation of Crimea Tatars

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Trends of oppression, trends of resistance. Shrinking space and the response of the civil society in Poland, Hungary and Russia
Convenor: Amnesty International - Belgium
Working language: English

Summary: In the last few years civil society organizations and human rights defenders across the world have been increasingly targeted by the state for speaking out against unjust laws and government practices, challenging those in power, demanding justice, equality, dignity and freedoms. Groups working to promote or defend human rights have been threatened, harassed, stigmatized and put under surveillance. Scores of laws have been introduced specifically to hamper their human rights work. Some states have discriminatorily targeted organizations by limiting access to funding, in particular if it comes from abroad. Organizations and activists who call for government accountability or those who express views which are at odds with the dominant political, social or cultural discourse are especially at risk. These measures have a chilling effect on the civil society as a whole and may lead to reduction in the services the organizations and activists provide. Despite this, civil society groups and HRDs in countries such as Poland, Hungary and Russia, have used creative ways of responding to state repression and cuts in public funding. The session will not only seek to identify the common trends of repression but also explore the inspirational resilience and coping mechanisms the CSOs have developed, and propose recommendations as the way forward.

Refreshments will not be provided

Wednesday, 25 September

Time: 08:15-09:45
Venue: Meeting Room 2
Title: Addressing hate crimes and victims' needs through effective cooperation with civil society
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
Working language: English

Summary: The event presents interim findings and an overview of available hate crime data for 2018 from across the OSCE region and discusses the situation of victims of hate crime in light of hate incidents reported to ODIHR. Organizations representing victims from various groups will explain specific aspects of hate crime victimization and the impact hate crimes have on the victim. ODIHR presents its ongoing and planned work to assist participating States in supporting victims of hate crime, including practical tools, which will be developed through a forthcoming two-year project Enhancing Stakeholder Awareness and Resources for Hate Crime Victim Support (EStAR), funded by the European Commission and the Government of Germany.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: 08:15-09:45
Venue: Meeting Room 3
Title: The diversity in Europe: the protection of fundamental rights
Convenor: Cojep International
Working language: English, French

Summary: The event is about the analysis of the protection of fundamental rights today in Europe. The evolution and impact of different crisis. The event presents indeed several particular examples in the presence of experts.

Refreshments will not be provided

Time: 08:15-09:45
Venue: Meeting Room 1
Title: Criminalization of "parental kidnappings" in some European countries and human rights to respect for private and family life
Convenor: Pantarey Foundation
Working language: English, French, German, Italian, Polish

Summary: In some European countries in the European Union, the so-called "parental kidnapping" is criminalized in national criminal systems. At the seminar we will learn about some stories of women accused of kidnapping of their own child in situations where they had full parental rights. The discussion and conclusions will concern whether the criminalization of such such parental kidnappings should be abolished in these countries due to Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Refreshments will not be provided

Time: 13:15-14:45

Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Impact of the conflict on civilians – OSCE Special Monitoring Mission To Ukraine
Convenor: OSCE SMM Ukraine
Working language: English

Summary: The Human Dimension Unit will present an overview of the impact of the conflict on civilians in Eastern Ukraine, in accordance with the mandate of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM). This will include reporting facts on civilian casualties, damage to properties and civilian infrastructure, restrictions on freedom of movement, the effect of displacement and the limits to access social and economic rights. Further to this, the SMM will also brief on other issues that HDU is currently working on.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Combating hate crime in the Republic of Serbia
Convenor: OSCE Mission to Serbia
Working language: English

Summary: At this side event representatives of the Republic Public Prosecutor's, Office, Judicial Academy and OSCE Mission to Serbia will present the efforts of Republic of Serbia to respond to hate crime cases. The presentation will include an overview of the recently adopted legal framework providing protection against hate crime, and mechanism in place to combat hate crime that have been developed and implemented during the past two years. Additionally, representatives of Serbian Judicial Academy will present their efforts to build the capacities of the Serbian judiciary to provide more effective juridical protection in cases of hate crime and evaluation of the 2018/2019 hate crime training.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: A Call for International Human Rights Monitoring in Crimea
Convenor: U.S. Department of State
Working language: English, Ukrainian

Summary: This will be an open discussion with civil society organizations to discuss the human rights situation in Crimea and to call for international human rights monitoring on the ground.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:30-14:30**
Venue: **Plenary Hall**
Title: #GlobalNations App, the launch of the Diaspora & Migrants Platform for More Democracy & Meritocracy in Post-soviet Origin Countries
Convenor: Global Ukraine Foundation

Working language: English

Summary: During the last years, we saw different diaspora initiatives trying to help their original countries: diaspora protest manifestations in Bucarest and Chisinau, #Global Ukrainians – a Ukrainian expatriates' network that was initiated after the EuroMaidan Revolution in Ukraine, etc. We created the first #SmartNations global community management and sharing ideas platform, under the name of #GlobalNations (with an iOS, Android & web interface) and we want to present it during the HDIM meeting. Our vision and mission are very clear - we need to strengthen our diaspora global cooperation for democracy & meritocracy in our origin countries. 1. Dr Violeta Moskalu, International development expert, Head of Board, Global Ukraine Foundation (France / Ukraine) 2. Ana Ursachi, lawyer, human rights defender and civil activist, founder of the civil movement NUmTem (Moldova) 3. Alexei Tulbure, Former Ambassador of Moldova to United Nations and Council of Europe, Executive Director at Helsinki Citizens' Assembly (Moldova)

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**

Venue: **Meeting Room 3**

Title: Demarginalization of the right-wing movements as a threat to democracy in Eastern Europe

Convenor: Information Group on Crimes against the Person

Working language: English, Russian

Summary: The growing influence of the right-wing movements poses real danger for the stability and democratic development of the Eastern European countries, since this also poses threat for the basic values and freedoms of Europe. One of the brightest examples of the growing influence of the right-wing movements is their demarginalization. Despite neo-Nazi ideology is blamed in Europe in terms of political discourses, representatives of the far-right movements get an opportunity to demonstrate their political views and are «accepted» at the official level more and more often. Such problem is especially serious in the countries of Eastern Europe. The international activities of National Guard of Ukraine «Azov» Regiment is an example of it. There is only one viewpoint on both «Azov» Regiment and the «National Corps» («Natsionalnyy Korpus») political party affiliated to it: they are neo-Nazis and racists, and any kind of cooperation with them is impossible. At the same time, political parties, representatives of the armies and military departments of Eastern and Western Europe maintain friendly and close ties with «Azov» and the «National Corps», accepting their representatives at their sites and participating in the events organized by «Azov».

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**

Venue: **Plenary Hall**

Title: Lawyers under threat in OSCE region: identifying trends and finding solutions

Convenor: American Bar Association, Center for Human Rights, Justice Defenders Program ; International Commission of Jurists, Lawyers for Lawyers, International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute, Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe

Working language: English, Russian

Summary: This panel discussion aims to identify current threats against lawyers and lawyers' professional rights and guarantees in the OSCE region. The speakers will analyze the current situation

and forming trends through a discussion of recently gathered data and specific cases of violation of lawyers' rights from Central Asia, Caucasus and other countries in the OSCE region and make recommendations regarding the way forward to increase protection for lawyers and the independent legal profession. This discussion will focus on regional trends and practical steps that can be taken to strengthen the rule of law. Attacks against lawyers and the judicial branches of governments are direct threats against the foundations of democracy and the rule of law. This panel will elaborate on practical steps that non-governmental, international organizations as well as professional legal associations can take to strengthen the rule of law and the independence of the judicial branches of governments. This panel will be open for discussion and will look forward to participation from the audience, sharing personal experiences from their own countries.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Roma and Sinti Youth Initiative: Youth as Agents of Change
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
Working language: English

Summary: The Roma and Sinti community is not only the biggest European ethnic minority in Europe but also the youngest, with an average age of 25 years, compared with an average age of 40 years for non-Roma. Roma and Sinti youth represent a huge potential in the OSCE area, both from an economic and socio-political perspective. In a rapidly aging Europe, the growing demographic decline poses considerable societal risks for the coming decades, which will manifest in difficulties to secure an adequate transition between the active working population and the passive one. Therefore, Europe will relatively soon find itself in a dire need of an influx of a young and skilled working population. Active participation of Roma and Sinti youth features among the priorities for capacity building and empowerment as laid out in the OSCE 2003 Action Plan for Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area, as well as the Ministerial Council Decision No. 4/13, which places emphasis on Roma and Sinti women, youth and children. ODIHR CPRSI's Roma and Sinti Youth Initiative (RSYI) focuses primarily on three thematic areas: empowerment and social inclusion of Roma and Sinti communities through youth activism and volunteering, public and political participation of Roma and Sinti youth, and Roma and Sinti youth and the issue of security. In the course of the project's implementation in 2019, opportunities were created for Roma youth to train as short-term election observers, in view of their deployment in ODIHR election observation missions, as well as to engage as junior experts within the CPRSI and help raising awareness of OSCE institutions, participating States and the wider public on the situation of Roma and Sinti youth. This side event will provide a platform for discussing challenges and opportunities related to the participation of Roma and Sinti youth in public and political life, and their civic engagement to defend and promote the rights of Roma and Sinti.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:15-19:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Human rights and frontier technologies: to find a balance between progress and humanism

Convenor: Center for Development of Humanistic Ecology and Culture (NGO, Russian Federation)
Working language: English

Summary: As mentioned in the documents of the UN General Assembly in 2014, our commitments to sustainable development, inclusiveness and human rights require that the emerging information society be shaped in the interests of humanity in order to maximize the benefits of new technology and minimize the risks that it may pose.

Although current developments in frontier technologies - biotechnology, genetic engineering, artificial intelligence and robotization etc. - open up new possibilities for humanity, they also raise very serious concerns. Does material and technical progress always promote human rights and human dignity? Does it always create conditions for equality and justice and guarantee the respect for personal privacy, security, and safety or the prevention of any forms of discrimination and hate crime? We cannot ignore the worrisome fact, that some directions of technological development threaten to undermine the very essence of Man as a rational and spiritual being, and also to “dehumanize” social and economic relations.

Today is a time to rethink our attitude to frontier technologies in the way of priority of human rights and human dignity. HUMEC (Center for Development of Humanistic Ecology and Culture) presents “Anthropological charter” – a document for international discussion - what are the actions that the international community can take to contribute to maximize the benefits and mitigate the risk associated to rapid technological change. Main speakers : Sergey Lakovsky, HUMEC (Center for Development of Humanistic Ecology and Culture), General Director Marine Voskanyan, HUMEC (Center for Development of Humanistic Ecology and Culture), Director of International Programs.

Refreshments will not be provided

Thursday, 26 September

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Dangerous Work: Reprisals against Environmental Defenders in the OSCE Region
Convenor: Crude Accountability
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Environmental defenders are under increasing attack throughout the world, including in the OSCE region. Administrative and criminal legal charges, bureaucratic obstacles, and physical threats are just some of the risks environmental defenders face on a regular basis, and with increasing frequency and intensity. Crude Accountability will preview the results of its forthcoming report, Dangerous Work, which will be published in October 2019. Case studies from the report will be presented by speakers from Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine, and the United States, and will focus on the full gamut of risks faced by environmental defenders. Speakers will include defenders from the region, representatives of Crude Accountability, and the environmental and human rights watch researcher for Human Rights Watch. Please join us. Refreshments will be served.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**

Title: Hate speech as apolitical weapon employed against disobedient judges and prosecutors in Poland
Convenor: Open Dialog Foundation
Working language: English

Summary: Destructive changes in the Polish justice system have been taking place since 2015. The Law and Justice government and the Ministry of Justice are committed to completely politicize the judiciary and the prosecutor's office. This happens not only via unconstitutional laws, while ignoring the opinions of many European institutions and CJEU rulings, but also with an unprecedented attack on judges and prosecutors who have been opposing these changes for two years now. They are being harassed by disciplinary proceedings, dismissed from their faculties and persecuted with Internet hate campaigns which - as has recently been revealed by still independent Polish media - are a part of a massive smear campaign initiated by close associates of Minister of Justice Zbigniew Ziobro.

Judges Waldemar Żurek, Piotr Gąciarek and Dariusz Mazur, as well as prosecutor Krzysztof Parchimowicz - the direct victims of the hate machine orchestrated at the highest levels of power - will be speakers at our event. They will present the hate campaign conducted against them by top executives of the Polish government. They will talk about their personal experiences related to their collision with the system, which today they openly call "Soviet methods of power". They will showcase the systemic destruction of the rule of law taking place in Poland, making their service to the Polish nation and state almost impossible when being subject to open persecution.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Racism, intolerance and violence against Roma and Sinti in the OSCE area
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
Working language: English

Summary: As early as 1990 the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has recognized the particular problems of Roma and Sinti, in the context of the proliferation of racial and ethnic hatred, xenophobia and discrimination. Since the Copenhagen Document, the OSCE and its participating States have repeatedly reinforced through all commitments concerning Roma and Sinti the importance of combating racism, hate crimes and violence, and eradicating discrimination against them. Despite these important frameworks and commitments, the anti-Roma public discourse and frequently occurring racist violence throughout the OSCE area remain major obstacles to Roma and Sinti inclusion and the eradication of systemic racism and discrimination affecting them. Repercussions of these have a huge impact on the situation of Roma and Sinti, hampering their capacity to enjoy equally their rights as citizens, and precluding them from adequate access to public services such as health care, housing, education, and employment. In the recent years, ODIHR has continued to receive worrying reports indicating that racist and stigmatizing anti-Roma rhetoric in a number of participating States has become part of the public and political discourse at the highest levels, many of such attitudes and behaviours being unchallenged and manifesting in a climate of impunity. Additionally, we witnessed a continuation of biased attacks and violence against Roma and Sinti being perpetrated by individuals, or extreme-right groups and organizations, where such acts are often poorly investigated and prosecuted by laws enforcement agencies and the national justice

systems. Oftentimes, ethnic profiling, along cases of unjustified and disproportionate use of force, including of firearms, conducted by law enforcement is indicative of a pattern of bias and prejudice towards Roma and Sinti, including women and youth. This side event provides a platform to raise awareness among OSCE participating States about the ongoing racism, intolerance and hate-motivated violence against Roma and Sinti and the broader negative impact and consequences of these manifestations to the inclusion of Roma and Sinti into the wider society. Moreover, the event will stimulate an open discussion between representatives of participating States and civil society about the measures undertaken to tackle the violence and its root causes affecting Roma and Sinti, and to effectively ensure their safety and security.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Violence against Roma (police operations, forced evictions, pogroms) in Russia, Belarus and Ukraine.
Convenor: Anti-Discrimination Centre "Memorial"
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Side-event of ADC Memorial with participation of the Human Rights Center “Viasna”. Roma population of Eastern Europe is one of the most vulnerable groups at risk of violence and pogroms motivated by racism and intolerance. In some neighbourhoods, Roma are perceived as “new-comers” that trigger hatred. The problem is rooted in ages of discrimination, but even in this context the events of 2018-2019 in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus seem to be shocking. In Siberia Roma settlement (Ust-Abakansk) was attacked, destroyed and later evicted by the police; in Ukraine radical groups attacked a few Roma settlements; in Belarus police raided the homes of Roma in Mogilev and other cities on the artificial pretext, arrested hundreds of men, women and even children, kept them for several days in inappropriate conditions without any accusations. The worst events took place in Penza Province of Russia in summer 2019, when hundreds of men got involved in a fight attacking the houses of Roma families. As a result, some fighters were hospitalized, 28 Roma arrested and accused of violence, no one of non-Roma participants of the mass-fight was suspected of violence by the police. A similar event took place in Kuzbass 2 months later. All these cases should be closely monitored and addressed as they indicate the alarming rise of anti-Roma actions, violations of Roma rights, intolerance and racist indictment of police, investigators and local authorities.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:15-14:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Documentary on the Romani Holocaust: A Hole in the Head
Convenor: Slovak OSCE Chairmanship
Working language: English

Summary: Little is known about the tragedy of the Roma and Sinti during the Second World War. They were murdered by the tens, hundreds and thousands; in concentration camps, by the edges of mass graves and roadsides, by rifle butts, hammers or gas. Silence surrounds them. For years they existed and still exist on the edge of society. They survived and keep their memory and scars as proof. In a world where fascism is once again prevalent, they are one of the last living witnesses to the

Holocaust. They exist with a hole in their head, an imprint from the past. Robert Kirchhoff, director: *"I believe that what helped the Roma and Sinti survive during times of persecution during the Second World War was their non-materialistic nature and attitude towards the world, existence and time. Their inner freedom is in fact a gift of irrationality or perhaps culture, that allows them to talk about their past and present, about life and death. That's what I wanted the film to convey the most - the memory that they keep with them and the one that our collective subconscious validates. I decided to record how the Roma and Sinti deal with their own history 70 years after the end of the war. I searched for what fascinated me the most about this subject, which was the human will and freedom. The use of illustrations and archive materials is omitted. Their scars, both visible and invisible, remind them and us, to never forget. To forget, would be the worst thing that we could do."*

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **13:30-14:30**
Venue: **Plenary Hall**
Title: Civil society and human rights in Belarus on the eve of parliamentary elections
Convenor: Assembly of Pro-Democratic NGOs of Belarus
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Representatives of the Belarusian CSOs will focus on the human rights situation and legal environment for civil society in Belarus on the eve of parliamentary elections scheduled for 17 November 2019. Domestic election observation coalition "Human Rights Defenders for Free Elections; will give an overview of the legal environment before the elections and obstacles to free and fair elections, as well preliminary conclusions on the first stages of the campaign (formation of district election commissions and registration of initiative groups for nominating candidates, conditions for the media and for holding public assemblies). Experts from the Human Rights Center Viasna, the Belarusian Helsinki Committee, Committee "Salidarnasts" and the Legal Transformation Center (Lawtrend) will assess the latest legislative changes in Belarus, including new anti-extremism laws and Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) laws. Special attention will be consecrated to the new legislation on mass events and practice, which requires organizers to pay large sums of money for rallies and demonstrations. The adoption of amendments to the Law "On Mass Events", which entered into force in 2019, deteriorated the situation with the freedom of peaceful assembly, since the costs of conducting gatherings are a serious obstacle to the exercise of constitutionally guaranteed freedoms. Belarusian CSOs will present their fresh semi-annual monitoring report "Changes in legal environment for non-commercial organizations and freedom of associations in Belarus" covering the first half of 2019, including opinion on the draft law "On amendments to the laws on the activities of political parties and other public associations". Speakers will make assessment of the abolition of Article 193.1 of the Criminal Code, which was replaced by a monetary fine for the operation of unregistered associations and religious groups. CSOs experts will also share their opinions on how human rights are impacted by 'Inter-agency Plan for implementing the recommendations addressed Belarus within the framework of the UN Mechanisms" which has been implemented by the Government since November 2016. Summing of the implementation of this three-year national plan will be an important component in the process of preparing for the next UPR report of Belarus at the Human Rights Council in 36th session of the UPR working group in May 2020.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:00-19:15**
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**
Title: Fundamental freedoms of human beings in Kazakhstan: 2019 . Have there been changes?
Convenor: Coalition of Matter of Defense of Convict's Rights
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Today the situation of the prevention of torture, freedom of peaceful assembly, association, the right to express opinions and digital rights remain the most essential in Kazakhstan. Our report provides information on guarantees of freedom from torture in Kazakhstan and describes cases where the UN Committee against Torture admitted that the authors of the complaints were tortured by the police. Moreover, reports on freedom of peaceful assembly, association, expression and digital rights are presented. The analysis of threats of human rights defenders, civic activists, journalists and bloggers for exercising their rights to peaceful assembly, association and freedom of expression for 2018 was presented as well.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:00-19:15**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Round Table "What is a modern racism in Europe today"
Convenor: European Center for Democracy Development
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Modern racism is not about discrimination based on race like it was in 19-20 centuries: it has to do with cultural discrimination. In the discourse of modern racism, it is believed that different racial and ethnic groups with divergent cultural codes have no chance of getting along with each other. Thus, in modern discourse, racism is expressed in the discrimination of the people who are endowed, as before, with insurmountable differences, but the former role of "race" is assumed by culture. This idea began to be introduced into public consciousness at the middle of the 20th century. Is there modern racism in modern Europe and what is it today? We invite the participants to discuss this problem together with the expert on radical right movements in Europe Dr. Valery Engel, Director of the European Center for the Development of Democracy (Latvia), senior fellow of the Center for Analysis of the Radical Right in London, Dr. Pranvera Tika, senior analyst of the Pantheon University, Department of Political Science (Greece), head of the Radicalism Research of the Research Institute for the European and American Studies, and Mr. Ruslan Bortnik, director of the Ukrainian Institute for Policy Analysis and Management, leading political scientist in Ukraine.

Refreshments will not be provided

Time: **18:00-19:15**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Human rights in contested entities: the price of living in the 'blind spots' of international law
Convenor: International Federation for Human Rights
Working language: English, Russian

The situation of human rights in de facto states of Europe such as Abkhazia, Crimea, Eastern Ukraine, Nagorno-Karabakh, Transnistria and South Ossetia often stay outside of the spotlight of the

international attention. In such situations, cooperation of civil society representatives and independent professionals such as lawyers, journalists and human rights activists is crucial for defending the fundamental rights of individuals and upholding the rule of law. In order to shed light on current situation in de facto states, the side-event will gather speakers who directly work on the ground and can share first-hand experience of existing challenges and available means of solution.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **18:00-19:15**
Venue: **Plenary Hall**
Title: Outline of priorities for the Human Dimension during OSCE Albanian Chairmanship 2020
Convenor: Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania to the International Organizations in Vienna
Working language: English

Summary: This side event aims to share with the OSCE participating States and civil society the general outline of the Albanian Chairmanship priorities for 2020 in Human Dimension.

Refreshments will not be provided

Friday, 27 September

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**
Title: Human rights violations as a result of “Borderization” in Georgia
Convenor: Amnesty International - International Secretariat
Working language: English

Summary: Russia’s and the de facto authorities’ attempts to physically demarcate a boundary between the breakaway territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia/Tskhinvali Region and the rest of Georgia have led to severe restrictions on freedom of movement and other human rights violations, with families separated by barbed wire, cut off their livelihoods and at risk of arbitrary detention if they try to cross. Amnesty International’s recent report Behind Barbed Wire: Human Rights Toll of “Borderization” in Georgia reveals the devastating human rights impact of efforts by Russian forces and the de facto authorities to set up an “international border” along the disputed line.

Refreshments will be provided

Time: **08:15-09:45**
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**
Title: Formation of the High Anti-Corruption Court in Ukraine: Lessons learned and way forward
Convenor: DEJURE Foundation
Working language: English

Summary: On June 7, 2018, the Parliament of Ukraine adopted the Law of Ukraine “On the High Anti-Corruption Court”, establishing a specialized court for adjudicating top-corruption criminal

cases. The law also envisaged a so-far unprecedented special feature for selecting the HACC judges: the creation of the Public Council of International Experts, a special body consisting of renowned international experts that supports the High Qualification Commission of Judges of Ukraine in the decision making. The PCIE has the power to terminate candidates from the competition in case there are reasonable doubts as to the integrity and professionalism of a given candidate. Such a selection procedure with a crucial role for international experts was an essential demand of the civil society and international partners of Ukraine to guarantee for the independent and impartial selection of judges. As a result of the competition conducted between August 2018 and April 2019, 38 out of 343 candidates were appointed as HACC judges. The Court started its operation in the beginning of September 2019.

- How did the competition to the HACC differ from other judicial selection processes in Ukraine?
- Did the international expert's involvement serve as the expected safeguard ensuring high-level integrity of the appointed HACC judges?
- What are lessons learned from the HACC selection process and is the applied model an option in the context of future reforms in Ukraine and abroad?

These are main questions that will be discussed during the event. Speakers:

- Marjana Lazarova Trajkovska, Member of the Public Council of International Experts, former judge of the European Court of Human Rights (2008-2017) (TBC);
- Andriy Kozlov, former member of the High Qualification Commission of Judges of Ukraine;
- Olena Tanasevych, President of the High Anti-Corruption Court of Ukraine;
- Clemens Mueller, Senior Anti-Corruption Adviser of the European Union Anti-Corruption Initiative in Ukraine;
- Andrii Khymchuk, lawyer of the DEJURE Foundation NGO.

Moderator: Iryna Shyba, Executive director of the DEJURE Foundation NGO.

Refreshments will be provided