



## **RIGHT OF REPLY STATEMENT BY TURKEY**

**In response to some statements made concerning Turkey at Working Session 9 (Freedom of assembly and association - continued) of the 2013 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting**

**Warsaw, 27 September 2013**

Thank you Mr. Moderator.

I would like to briefly reply to some statements made concerning Turkey by our introducer, Ms. Feray Salman, as well as by Freedom House in this session.

Regarding the legal status of civil society organizations, it goes without saying that fully-fledged legal status is required in order to benefit from funds and acquire property. This is the case not only in Turkey but throughout the OSCE area. Furthermore, I wish to point out that Turkey's new laws regarding associations and foundations, passed in 2004 and 2008 respectively, have been codified entirely on the basis of the European Union *acquis*. Therefore many issues raised in this session concerning civil society in Turkey are issues common to many other participating States.

Concerning human rights defenders in Turkey, no one is prosecuted on the basis of anti-terror legislation or other criminal accusations merely for being a human rights defender. Prosecutions in Turkey follow from very concrete accusations regarding criminal offenses. Human rights defenders are not treated differently from any other citizen if they commit a crime. We are ready to provide information on the relevant criminal accusations and crimes attributed to any individual who is also designated as a human rights defender, if the names of the individuals in question are shared.

Finally, as regards the Gezi Park demonstrations, we have stated our views concerning these events at the Permanent Council as well as during the previous Working Session. Here I would only like to add that information on the numbers of those wounded or detained during the demonstrations in Turkey is in fact readily accessible and has regularly been reported in the media in the recent past.

Thank you.