

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY!**

# Summary and closing remarks by Ambassador Janez Lenarčič

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and Human Rights (ODIHR)

at the

OSCE Review Conference



Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a difficult task to try to summarize the exchange of views on topics as diverse as those we have been discussing here over the past few days. I will not attempt to do so, particularly since I would not wish to repeat either the reports that my colleagues from other institutions and I presented at the beginning of this human dimension part of the Review Conference or the reports we have just heard from rapporteurs.

I would like to note, however, that this longer term review of the status of implementation of numerous commitments in the human dimension has once again proved to be necessary and useful. It is not finished yet, as it will still continue with the forward-looking discussion on three specific topics here and later in Astana.

But even after this first part, it is confirmed that for an effective review, four elements are to be highlighted:

1. First, I would highlight the need for a **self-inventory** within each participating State. Every participating State has to be able to find the way to honestly review its own record in fulfilling the commitments it has undertaken and to find the will and means to improve in any areas where it may find that there are gaps between promises and performance. And these past sessions have shown that gaps are to be found everywhere. Somewhere those gaps might be bigger, somewhere smaller. But no one should shy away from addressing them.
2. Second, no participating State should shy away from calling others to account for implementing their commitments. In Moscow 1991, participating States *categorically and irrevocably declared that the commitments undertaken in the field of the human dimension are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned*. This has established the basis for a **peer review**.
3. Third, **civil society** and non-governmental organizations have a vital role to play. With the exception of those who resort to the use of violence or publicly condone terrorism or the use of violence, the unimpeded participation of civil society stakeholders is a crucial element for effective review. One of the main reasons it is important for official delegations and OSCE structures to hear from civil society is so that in addition to the information about 'implementation gaps' and 'action plans', we are reminded that the subject of our work in the human dimension is ultimately to improve respect for the rights and dignity of real people who live in all of our participating States.

4. Finally, I would like to mention the **role of OSCE institutions** and other international organizations in the human dimension. We each have distinct mandates to monitor, report and assist, entrusted to us by States themselves with a view to protecting the rights and improving the lives of each individual within their societies. I do not need to say more on this.

The review of implementation, even if all the afore-mentioned elements are fully used, is not there to serve its own purpose. This is particularly true this year. The Summit is indeed the opportunity to reaffirm commitments, as was repeatedly emphasized. But not only that. It is a great opportunity to address shortcomings that have come to light in past years, throughout the discussions on reform and strengthening the effectiveness of the organization, during the Corfu process as well as in these last eight substantive sessions.

While preparing these summary remarks, I had occasion to glance at the human dimension section of the report that our colleague Knut Vollebæk, then in his capacity as the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, submitted from the 1999 OSCE Review Conference to the Istanbul Summit in November 1999. While I believe that many participating States and many OSCE structures, including ODIHR, can be proud of much we have accomplished since 1999, I must be frank in telling you that this is in many ways a very sobering comparison.

As I foreshadowed in my own report to this Review Conference last week, far too many of the problems identified on the eve of the Istanbul OSCE Summit remain just as serious today, and far too few of the forward-looking recommendations from 1999 have been implemented in the intervening 11-year period.

I believe we can and should do better this time.

We are glad to host all of you here in Warsaw for the first part of the Review Conference. We are pleased to assist the Chairmanship and the Secretariat in organization and conduct of it. And we are grateful for all contributions that have moved us closer towards achieving the outcome we are all – I believe – hoping for.