

Statement by Mr. Dragomir Knezevic, member of the Serbian delegation at the  
Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

Working session – Violence against women and children

Warsaw, 26 September 2014

Mr. Moderator

Serbia has reported it on earlier HDIM's that National Strategy for Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women in the Family and Intimate Partner Relationship was adopted in 2011.

Let me report today that Serbian Parliament ratified Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (known as Istanbul Convention) in October last year, being among 14 countries which ratified above mentioned Convention by now.

Subsequent harmonization of national legislation with provisions of the Conventions has been initiated, with the aim to create the conditions for more substantive cooperation among relevant institutions in charge of health, education, justice, interior and social affairs. Strong Partnership is established with all other relevant stakeholders in the country from both private and public sector and last but not the least, civil society.

Mr. Moderator,

Let me emphasize some of the most important activities undertaken at local and national level. The Centers for Social Welfare have become central institutions at disposal to the victims of violence. The majority of cases have been reported by victims themselves and it has been observed that the women from marginalized groups are among the most affected ones. Therefore, public awareness campaign was introduced in order to bring closer information on existing mechanisms of remedies to the victims of violence and sensitize employees in the institutions to

recognize a victim and assist her without any bias or discrimination. The public materials on domestic violence, protective measures and addresses of organizations concerned have been disseminated in Serbian, but also in Hungarian, Roumanian, Slovak, Ruthenian and Romani languages. The leaflets Stop against Violence on Women and SOS phone number for assistance have been promoted. Local authorities merge their efforts and resources in order to support cooperation with respective organizations of the civil society. As a result, 6 nongovernmental organizations provide assistance by the phone 24 hours 7 days a week. There is a Mobile Team against Domestic Violence organized by volunteers of the Local Youth Office in the south of Serbia, which held 15 workshops for high school students about the violence from June to December 2013.

The Code on Penal Procedure of the Republic of Serbia has regulated that a proceeding in cases of violence is urgent and protective measures have been provided by the Family Act against family member who committed violence. For Perpetrators, a court is entitled to introduce one or more protective measures including temporary and/or limited access to other family members.

In national capacity but also as incoming Chairmanship, we fully support planned activities of the OSCE executive structures in preventing and eradicating violence against women and children.