



OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) 2015 Statement by Germany – Closing Session on 2 October 2015

Mr Chairman,

The representative for the European Union did also speak in our name, but allow me to add a few remarks from a German perspective.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Director Link and his team at the ODIHR for organising this year's HDIM. It takes a Herculean effort to bring together the numerous topics, proposals for side events and not least the many participants from participating States, institutions and civil society to generate fruitful exchange.

Yet again, the ODIHR worked hard this year to make the HDIM more attractive and lively, give all participants room to get involved and yet keep the discussion focused on essentials – which it managed not least by strictly limiting speaking times. We also welcome the joint press conference held at the Opening Session, the first ever with the current and upcoming Chairs, the host country, the Secretary General, the Parliamentary Assembly and the three Third Dimension institutions. It is important to involve the public more, as was also acknowledged by the use of Twitter and live streaming of events.

We have had intensive, sometimes heated debates in the plenary sessions, and the diverse side events and talks on the margins allowed us interesting as well as worrying insights into developments in the participating States. Thank you for the valuable ideas we gained from all that. My special thanks also go to the representatives of civil society from the various countries, whose contributions make the HDIM what it is, namely a forum of discussion, dispute and lively exchange.

The Third Dimension of the OSCE is not only about exchange between people; it is also about the fundamental freedoms and human rights of every individual and of the various groups in society. Gernot Erler, the Special Representative of the Federal

Government for Germany's OSCE Chairmanship in 2016, put it into words at the start of this meeting: the Human Dimension is at the core of the OSCE and our obligations in this field are and will remain "a cornerstone of European security". During our Chairmanship next year, we want to concentrate on topics which we consider particularly important in the light both of the current situation and of the outcomes of the HDIM. I would firstly mention freedom of the press and the media, which must at no time and in no country be taken for granted. We want to examine what a positive force national minorities can be as bridge-builders within societies and between countries. And we want to keep working on possible ways to more firmly embed tolerance as the basis of social cohesion in the OSCE area. Inevitably, the situation facing migrants in the OSCE area will also have to be on the agenda, particularly with regard to guaranteeing human rights and fundamental freedoms. For the OSCE to play its part in these complex matters, it needs to have functioning institutions. The ODIHR, the Representative on Freedom of the Media and the High Commissioner on National Minorities need to be provided with sufficient funding and staff to carry out their duties.

Finally, we want to use our year as Chair to intensively seek dialogue with representative of civil society and with young people. We look forward to that dialogue and to working with you all.