

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR TACAN İLDEM
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY**

**2014 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
Opening Plenary Session
Warsaw, 22 September 2014**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

I would like to express our thanks and appreciation to the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights for its efforts in organizing the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, together with an expression of gratitude to our hosts, the Polish authorities, for their traditional generous hospitality.

The substantial body of human dimension commitments produced by the OSCE over the past decades forms an integral part of our Organization's comprehensive security concept. It goes without saying that the ultimate success of the OSCE can be measured, to a great extent, by the effective implementation of these commitments across the entire OSCE region. The HDIM, in giving us a yearly opportunity to assess the implementation of our shared commitments, fully reflects the key role of human rights for our common security and stability. There is no doubt that the HDIM's value also stems to a large part from the indispensable participation of civil society, giving all participants the opportunity to voice their concerns and make recommendations.

This year, against the backdrop of the crisis in and around Ukraine, where various human rights assessment missions as well as our OSCE institutions have ascertained numerous and grave human rights violations in the eastern parts of the country as well as in Crimea over the preceding months, it is even more important to soberly review the implementation of our human dimension commitments.

Mr. Chairperson, Distinguished Participants,

Turkey fully supports the Swiss Chairmanship's focus on the implementation of existing commitments in the human dimension. It is our hope and expectation that the relative positive trend in the human dimension which emerged last year through the valuable efforts of the Ukrainian Chairmanship will continue under the consecutive Swiss and Serbian Chairmanships, notwithstanding the challenges posed by the crisis in and around Ukraine.

While upholding the commitments in such critical areas as fundamental freedoms, human rights, democratization and the rule of law, of particular importance to Turkey is addressing the alarming rise of racism, xenophobia, intolerance and discrimination in the OSCE region. It is an indisputable fact that global economic and financial difficulties, coupled with the increase in unemployment in many participating States, are exacerbating the already grave situation on the ground and having negative repercussions on the perception of migrants. Those considered to be different or "other", whether on the basis of their ethnic background, their religious beliefs or other reasons, are frequently subjected to incidents of discrimination and xenophobia which often entail harassment and violence, violating the human rights and

fundamental freedoms of the victims. In this regard I very much welcome the observations and recommendations of our keynote speaker, Ms. Elisa Massimino. We furthermore appreciate the Swiss Chairmanship's timely decision to devote this year's third Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting, which will be held at the end of October, to the issue of human rights and fundamental freedoms in economic crisis.

In this context I also wish to underline Islamophobia, which leads to an additional dimension of discrimination against migrant communities. We all recall the statements made by certain NGOs in numerous sessions of last year's HDIM. Appalling as they were, those remarks also served to highlight the prevalence of anti-Muslim sentiments as well as intolerance and discrimination based on religion in many participating States. The situation of members of other faiths or Roma and Sinti is alarming as well.

We must all do more to strengthen the implementation of our commitments in the field of tolerance and non-discrimination if we are to have a realistic chance of eradicating the rising threat, without approaching the human dimension selectively or by setting up artificial hierarchies. As with the three dimensions themselves, all human dimension areas are also fundamentally and equally important. Fundamental freedoms and tolerance and non-discrimination are a prominent example in this regard, and must be given equal consideration and effort. A positive step was made in this direction with the adoption at the Kyiv Ministerial Council of a decision on the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, in which the prevention of discrimination based on religion was also addressed.

Let me also emphasize at this point our commitment to the goals of improving the rights of women, ensuring their full and equal participation in all spheres of life and strengthening their status in society. This is why we also take the issue of violence against women very seriously and are doing all we can to eradicate it.

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate our hope that the discussions of the next two weeks will provide us not only with the opportunity to critically scrutinize the implementation of our existing human dimension commitments but also with fresh insights on how to address worrying trends and alarming recent developments, along with valuable recommendations which will help us chart the path ahead. Looking forward to fruitful and constructive discussions in all the working sessions as well as the various side events, I wish the participants of the HDIM every success.

Thank you, Mr.Chairperson.