

OSCE HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING 2006

Statement by the Republic of Serbia for the Closing Reinforced Plenary Session
13 October 2006, Warsaw

Mr. Chairman,

Although we aligned with the statement of the European Union, allow me to say few words on behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Serbia in our national capacity.

Let me point out, first, that we very much appreciate and commend the work of ODIHR and Ambassador Strohal as well as the unique opportunity this Human Dimension Implementation Meeting offers to exchange views, experiences, but also criticism regarding issues which do affect us all as citizens and human beings and which – in their last consequence – are or can be literally a matter of life and death.

This meeting showed once more that the countries of the OSCE region are facing a broad range of challenges in the field of human rights, which request appropriate answers, based on our common values, in order to ensure stability and security in all participating States and between them. As you may have took note of during this meeting, the Republic of Serbia is doing its utmost to fully comply with its commitments in the fields of human and minority rights, in combating intolerance, discrimination and hatred. After years of disorder and war this is still a very demanding task.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank the OSCE for the valuable assistance in support it is offering Serbia in this regard on her path of transition and transformation, especially through its field mission in Belgrade, but also through its field mission in Kosovo. As regards Kosovo, Serbs and Albanians have now, for the first time in history, the unique opportunity to build their relationship on truly democratic values, human rights and cooperation based on democratic principles.

However, as we all are aware of, the implementation of standards in the south Serbian Province is far from being acceptable, not only from the perspective of the non-Albanian population of Kosovo. This is why we regret very much that one the worst – if not the worst – human rights situations in the OSCE region was put so low on the agenda of this HDIM – by all participants, including the NGO community, as, among others, the former international Ombudsperson in Kosovo, Marek Nowicki, noticed yesterday at the side event.

In spite of that, we firmly believe that the OSCE, its participating States and the civil society will not forget the fate of ten thousands of people still deprived of the fundamental human rights. For many of them the issue of human rights is, indeed, a matter of life and death.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman