

## **HDIM 2012**

### **Working Session 17: Human Dimension Activities (with special emphasis on project work), including:**

- Presentation of activities of the ODIHR and other OSCE institutions and field operations to implement priorities and tasks contained in relevant OSCE decisions and other documents.

*Rapporteur: Mr. Paul Welsh, United Kingdom Delegation to the OSCE*

Working Session 17 discussed human dimension activities run by ODIHR, provided the perspective of a Field Operation as well as some examples of how the OSCE Secretariat engages in human dimension activities.

First Deputy Director, Douglas Wake provided an overview of ODIHR's approach to programmatic work through its five thematic departments. He described the tools that ODIHR uses and stressed their determination to always seek to add value to what other organizations do.

He cited examples of how ODIHR uses resources to assist participating States in fulfilling their commitments including;

In the area of democratization: Women In Political Parties Project, reviewing legislation on request and the upcoming Expert Forum on Criminal Justice in Central Asia.

In the area of Tolerance and Non-Discrimination, training on Hate Crimes for an international group of prosecutors, Training on Hate Crime Issues for Law Enforcement Officers (TAHCLE), guidelines on prosecuting Hate Crimes and on data collection, a training curriculum on freedom of religion or belief, guidelines on countering intolerance against Muslims and the dissemination of teaching materials on anti-Semitism.

In the area of activities covered by the Human Rights Department: a project to observe public assemblies in 11 participating States to identify challenges and examples of good practice on freedom of assembly and a recently started project on Human Rights Protection for Trafficked Persons and Vulnerable Groups in Central Asia.

On Roma and Sinti issues: the next Status Report due to be issued in 2013 to coincide with the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the OSCE Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti, report on a field visit focusing on education in the Czech Republic and a large scale project on Best Practices for Roma Integration involving seven jurisdictions in South Eastern Europe.

Mr. Alexander Shlyk, Elections Adviser presented the E-learning course for Short-Term Observers.

Nina Lindroos-Kopolo from the Office of the Co-ordinator of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) briefed about her office's co-operation with ODIHR and highlighted thematic areas of co-operation including good governance, corruption and migration. She stressed the importance of synergies and complementarity between OCEEA and ODIHR.

Murat Yildaz from the OSCE Secretariat's Strategic Police Matters Unit briefed on the work of the Transnational Threats Department and stressed the importance of the human dimension in their work. He cited examples of co-operation on action against terrorism, human rights training guides for Policing Assemblies, Guidelines on Human Rights Education for Law Enforcement Officers and training at the Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

Douglas Wake spoke of how ODIHR was exploring ways to pass on the many lessons learned and positive experiences of democratic reform to OSCE Partners for Co-operation in North Africa. There had been notable success in Tunisia where stakeholders had shown interest in ODIHR's advice on increasing women's participation in political parties.

Andrea Cellino from the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina provided the perspective of a field operation citing work they had done on the War Crimes Justice Project, supporting a review of anti-trafficking legislation, a governance project for State entities and War Crimes Processing.

In the following interventions a number of speakers stressed their strong support for OSCE human dimension activities. ODIHR's election observation work and its methodology were praised in several interventions. A number of speakers stressed the importance of preserving ODIHR's autonomy and the need to focus on issues where the gap between commitments and implementation are greatest. Some delegations called for ODIHR's work on election observation to be implemented on an equal basis free from bias and for more balance in the selection of Heads of Election Assessment Teams. One delegation commented that field operations should not stray beyond their mandate and should restrict themselves to reporting on project activities. One speaker called for ODIHR to focus more on freedom of movement, economic, social and cultural rights and combating aggressive forms of nationalism.

**The following recommendations were made:**

- ODIHR's independence should be preserved and remain free from political interference;
- Participating States should follow up on ODIHR's election observation report recommendations;
- ODIHR should make short visits after Election Observation Missions to follow up on recommendations;

- ODIHR Director should make regular reports on how participating States are implementing the recommendations of Election Observation Missions and how they are complying with election related commitments;
- There should be clear criteria for election observation missions;
- ODIHR should undertake a comparative analysis of election legislation and practice in different participating States;
- There should be better geographical balance in terms of the make-up of observer missions;
- ODIHR should focus its attention on those areas where the most serious violations of commitments exist;
- ODIHR should produce a compendium of best practices in human rights education;
- Research should be conducted on the effectiveness of National Human Rights Action Plans.