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COUNCIL OF EUROPE

OSCE 2006 HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING

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Statement

By

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Mr Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Council of Europe welcomes the opportunity to take part in the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting and thanks you, Mr Chairman, for the excellent organisation.

I bring you warm greetings from our Secretary General Terry Davis who regrets not being with you today but follows this meeting closely, as well as all other parts of our multifaceted co-operation.

The Council of Europe Commissioner on Human Rights, Mr Thomas Hammarberg was a key note speaker at the opening of this meeting last week. Since then a dozen or so colleagues have addressed the meeting on all the items of the agenda.

The considerable presence in Warsaw underscores the complementary nature of our two organisations in what is the OSCE Human Dimension, and in the words of the Council of Europe 1949 Statute:

"The pursuit of peace based upon justice and international co-operation as vital element for the preservation of human society and civilisation"

The Council of Europe and the OSCE have different origins but today they stand side by side in promoting democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The human dimension is the strongest connecting line between the two and we should ensure that we work together coherently.

At the Council of Europe's Third Summit held in May 2005, here in Warsaw, the Heads of State and Government encouraged the Council of Europe to step and rationalise co-operation with the OSCE, on the basis of their specific tasks and comparative advantages, whilst avoiding duplication of effort.

It is my pleasure to declare today that our two organisations have made resolute steps in this direction.

The current Russian Chairmanship in the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has outlined its priority concerning relations between our two organisations as a "*necessity to accelerate the transition from information sharing to the joint discussion of issues and formulation of common approaches with a view to taking coordinated actions.*"

In the four agreed priority areas, namely the fight against terrorism, the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, the fight against trafficking in human beings and the promotion of tolerance and non-discrimination, including intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, we have been successful in

beginning to move increasingly towards the organisation of joint activities.

It is necessary to sustain the efforts that have been undertaken over the last two years. Meticulous assessments of the situation should be carried out before either organisation launches any new initiatives in order to prevent duplication and ensure that the activities conducted by the two organisations reinforce those of the other.

The joint activities have to be designed on a long-term basis in order to maximise their impact. Therefore, when a particular activity is being devised jointly, special attention should subsequently be paid to securing follow-up, taking account of each organisation's specific strong points. In doing so the advisability of co-ordinating the action with other competent international organisations namely the EU and the UN family should be borne in mind.

The Council of Europe and the OSCE will focus their increased attention on solving a broad spectrum of issues in the light of new threats and challenges and on the advisability of joint actions to foster security, peace and stability in Europe.