



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Serbia to the OSCE and other International Organizations in Vienna

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Statement by Permanent Representative of the Republic of Serbia

H.E. Ambassador Roksanda Ninčić

at the opening plenary session of the 2018 OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
10 September 2018

The Delegation of the Republic of Serbia expresses its gratitude to the Italian Chairmanship and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights for convening this year's Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, as well as to our Polish hosts for their traditional generous hospitality.

We believe that Human Dimension Implementation Meetings, as one of the largest annual human rights forums, present an invaluable opportunity for discussing the progress made by our governments in implementing our human dimension commitments. The great value of this meeting also stems from the indispensable participation of civil society alongside the representatives of the participating States, giving us all the opportunity to express our concerns and make valuable recommendations. Moreover, we consider that strengthening the cooperation with civil society and promotion of its active involvement would contribute to further implementation of OSCE commitments in the third dimension.

In the previous period some Participating States have expressed their interest in improving the implementation of relevant OSCE modalities of participation of civil society representatives to the OSCE activities, and particularly to human dimension events, in order to preserve the efficacy of the OSCE in supporting stability and security. As Chair of the newly created Informal Working Group on participation of the civil society our delegation would like to encourage all Participating states to have a constructive debate on this very important and equally sensitive issue in order to achieve concrete results and to improve our work and effectiveness of the Organization.

We would also like to underline the important role of the OSCE institutions, as one of the key elements of the OSCE's human dimension, especially having in mind that only strong and professional institutions are able to support participating States in addressing challenges and implementing their OSCE commitments. Therefore, we have to support them in the fulfilment of their respective mandates, especially nowadays when threats to security are largely present in the entire OSCE region.

Lately we have witnessed worrying trends of intolerance, discrimination and hate crime targeting specific groups - migrants, refugees, national and other minorities. The crisis and protracted conflicts within the OSCE region, that directly affect human rights and fundamental freedoms, are becoming more frequent and increasingly complex. Therefore, we need to invest all possible efforts to find the peaceful and comprehensive solutions, to rebuild trust and confidence within the OSCE and to further implement our commitments.

We believe that additional efforts should also be invested in the implementation of the human dimension commitments in many areas, such as the rule of law, promotion of tolerance and non-discrimination, protection of rights of persons belonging to national minorities, freedom of religion or belief, freedom of expression and freedom of the media, including protection of journalists, freedom of assembly and association, rights of refugees and IDPs, to name a few that has been highly on the priority list of the Serbian Government in previous years.

We hope that lack of trust and divisions that prevented us from adopting new deliverables during the last three Ministerial Council Meetings will be overcome and that we will be able to have a positive outcome in Milan next December. Let me assure you that Serbia will actively engage and act as a constructive and reliable partner in order to achieve the concrete results in the human dimension.

Thank you.