



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

**2012 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting  
Opening Plenary Session**

**Warsaw, 24 September 2012**

Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

I would like to express my thanks to the Polish authorities for their traditional warm hospitality that they accord us with. I would also like to thank ODIHR for their efforts in organizing this momentous event.

The Human Dimension Implementation Meeting is a hallmark occasion where OSCE's comprehensive concept of security is accurately reflected through a uniquely wide scope of topics, featuring voices from governmental and civil walks of life. We certainly value the participation of civil society in this important forum of discussion and find it as an indispensable contribution to the process. I hope, much of what we are going to hear and say during the upcoming two weeks will echo the essential role of human rights in maintaining security and stability as well as underline the importance of cooperation for this common goal of the OSCE family of nations.

Let me at the outset take this opportunity to reiterate Turkey's commitment to promoting respect for human rights. In that respect, we earnestly believe that we should make every effort in focusing mainly on human rights and fundamental freedoms with particular attention to the freedom of the media, including the safety of journalists, freedom of assembly and association, freedom of religion, belief and conscience, the right to fair trial, free and fair elections and the fight against torture and other forms of inhuman and degrading treatment. Within this context, another important aspect of human dimension that needs to be tackled seriously is all forms and manifestations of intolerance and discrimination which we condemn.

There is no harm in emphasizing once more that the OSCE is in a unique position among many intergovernmental organizations thanks to its comprehensive approach to security. Participating States should adopt an attitude commensurate with this unique character of the OSCE and focus their efforts for making the best use of the OSCE's capacity to address the challenges that we face today and will be facing tomorrow. In doing so, we need to maintain a balance between the three dimensions as well as a balance among the components of each dimension. This requires refraining from application of artificial prioritization with respect to

different categories of human rights, since such a behavior may lead us to neglect the importance of certain challenges. It is thus essential not to create an imbalanced situation where the rights that are held dearest by a group of countries are promoted, while others of equal importance remain disregarded or understated.

It is an undeniable fact that many OSCE countries are undergoing relative economic difficulties. Unfortunately, we are witnessing developments triggered by these financial and economic drawbacks that should make us aware of the urgent need to cooperate effectively in curbing circumstances that may eventually resemble the bitter memories of the past. With loss of jobs, decrease in income levels and most importantly, exploitation of economic conditions by various groups to blame on the “other”, we should make sure that xenophobia, anti-immigrant sentiments are not channeled into the center of political spectrum. We should be doing more than just wishing that this trend would not pose a danger for the security of our societies and individuals. Therefore, it is imperative at this moment that we evaluate these alarming trends in a realistic and honest manner, have the resolve to face these phenomena, and redouble our efforts to address them.

Distinguished Participants,

I may take this opportunity to remind this august body of Minister Davutoğlu’s remarks at the Ministerial Council in Vilnius, where he reminded all of us to be vigilant and take appropriate measures to prevent the radicalization of extremist ideologies.

Intolerance in the form of racism and xenophobia, and discrimination are merely different disclosures of a combination of prejudice, ignorance and fear, although manifested through various masks, including racial superiority, religious rivalry or blame for the communal underachievement. Concentrating our efforts on one category of human rights at the expense of others’ denial is profoundly unfair, if not in sharp contrast to the spirit of the organization. We are fully convinced that xenophobia and discrimination based on religion, which came to be everyday experiences like Islamophobia, also constitute grave human rights violations within the OSCE area that should be addressed in the realm of tolerance and non-discrimination.

Mr. Chairperson,

Being the central human rights apparatus of this organization, we believe that ODIHR has much to offer and should do more to tackle this threat and enhance the profile of the OSCE in the face of growing radical groups and ever stiffened discourse anti-immigrant sentiments and Islamophobia.

Last but not the least, we are looking forward to the input to be provided by all participants of HDIM for the consultations in the run-up to the Dublin Ministerial Council, which hopefully will bear fruits in this particular area that will serve our purpose in the future. I would like to reiterate that Turkey stands ready to show its political will and support for the work to be carried out and for the enhancement of capacity resources of ODIHR.

In concluding, I wish every success for HDIM and I am looking forward to a constructive and a lively debate.

Thank you.