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OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting Warsaw, 11-22 September 2017

Working session 18: Discussion of human dimension activities (with special emphasis on project work)

Thank you Moderator for this opportunity to speak. I would like to begin by making the following recommendations:

- The 2017 OSCE Unified Budget was adopted on 1 June while that for the previous year was adopted on 31 December, 2015. The six months delay in the adoption of the 2017 OSCE Unified Budget is regrettable. Timely adoption of the OSCE Unified Budget is imperative to ensure that the executive structures of the organisation are able to plan and execute their activities in an efficient and effective manner.
- Participating States should avail themselves of the services offered by the OSCE executive structures, in enhancing the implementation of commitments, including by facilitating visits and monitoring missions. EU Member States have benefited from such assistance on a range of issues, and we will continue to do so.
- Executive structures should continue to coordinate closely with each other and with other relevant international and regional organisations, such as the Council of Europe and the United Nations, in order to learn from each other's experiences, avoid duplication and to deepen the impact of activities.
- When designing projects and activities, the executive structures should develop close cooperation with civil society and increase their participation in the implementation phase.
- There may be scope for 'pathfinder' projects to illustrate a particular issue and set an example.



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- Executive structures should continue to improve the monitoring and evaluation of their projects, from conception through to completion, including by prioritising the use of key performance indicators and implementing results-based management practice
- The EU values highly the work of the OSCE in the Human Dimension. There is obvious linkage between the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the maintenance of an indivisible, comprehensive and co-operative OSCE security community. The EU is concerned that there continues to be a discernible drift away from the full respect for fundamental freedoms, including media freedom. Indeed some would argue that, in the past twelve months, support for the implementation of human dimension commitments in parts of the OSCE region has significantly regressed. It is very important that the 57 participating States recommit to implementing the commitments that each one of us has voluntarily agreed to.

The EU is committed to promoting a safe and enabling environment for civil society and strongly supports the mandates of ODIHR, RFoM and HCNM and the work of these autonomous institutions in the wide variety of activities and projects essential to the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the OSCE region. We welcome the recent appointments and wish the new office-holders every success.

The work of these institutions is a valuable example for the grounding of democratic values and the rule of law in the participating States. ODIHR plays an indispensable role in monitoring elections and supporting human rights defenders. The EU continues to fully support ODIHR's vital election monitoring work. The work of the RFOM continues to bring to public awareness the failures among the participating States in the implementation of our media freedom commitments and to highlight other challenges to the work of the media. The HCNM continues to play a pivotal role in identifying and addressing short term triggers of inter-ethnic tension as well as long term structural concerns.



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Moderator

Project work remains an important way for OSCE Executive Structures to engage with participating States and to assist them to implement our commonly agreed commitments. In particular we would like to underscore the invaluable work of the OSCE Executive Structures in response to the crisis in and around Ukraine that includes the strengthening of dialogue among civil society and key government stakeholders on human dimension issues. We should also include the innovative work of the RFoM on journalism in situations of conflict, involving participants from Ukraine and the Russian Federation. The Project Coordinator's Office in Ukraine also continues to provide assistance to the Ukrainian authorities, in a number of ways, seeking to foster democratic reforms. We should remember, too, that confidence building is part of the mandate of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine and that its unarmed civilian monitors continue to carry out their duties in an exemplary manner under very difficult circumstances. US citizen Mr. Joseph Stone lost his life last April while on an SMMU patrol. We must work to ensure that this tragedy is the last of its kind.

In conclusion, the EU wishes to underline the significant role played by the Human Dimension Committee (HDC) in 2017 under the adept Chairmanship of Ambassador Sian MACLEOD of the United Kingdom. The HDC has amplified OSCE dialogue in areas such as freedom of religion or belief, freedom of expression, the upholding of commitments on torture, women's participation in public and political life, freedom of assembly and association and, the role of society in combating hate crime. At the HDC this year EU Member States are among those who have provided concrete examples of how they have turned OSCE recommendations into concrete action. We encourage all participating States to consider providing such voluntary reports.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.