

## **Opening session HDIM 2013 – national statement of Sweden**

Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

While fully aligning with the statement of the European Union, I would like to make some additional remarks in a national capacity.

Firstly, I would like to thank the Ukrainian CiO for its efforts in guiding us in our work towards a security community and to Ambassador Janez Lenarcic and his team at ODIHR for the excellent preparations for this meeting, as well as for their tireless work throughout the year in helping us all implement our OSCE commitments and to promote democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms in our region.

The Human Dimension remains a cornerstone of the comprehensive security concept that is the basis for our cooperation within the OSCE as a security organization. The security of states is inseparable from the security of individuals and groups of individuals. There can be no security without respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights and without respect for democracy. This cornerstone is, however, under significant pressure. Our common commitments, from the Helsinki final act and onwards, are increasingly being challenged. This negative trend is

reflected in our daily work within the OSCE, where we see efforts to undermine and water down these important standards, but also, and what is worse, on the ground. In parts of our region the situation is clearly moving in the wrong direction. Implementation of our commitments is not only an obligation we have to each other as governments, but an obligation to all those who live in our countries. We applaud the good work that is being carried out in many places in the OSCE area to better live up to these obligations, often with the assistance of the field missions and the three autonomous OSCE-institutions; ODIHR, HCNM and RFoM. Not to forget the important and crucial work of civil society in this work. Recent trends to limit the possibilities of NGO's to operate freely are therefore particularly concerning.

Against this backdrop, the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting is a key event in the OSCE calendar. The participation of civil society organizations, on equal terms with national delegations, and our unfiltered interaction, makes this event unique, and is a precondition for real dialogue on how we, as participating states, bound by our

collectively made commitments, can better live up to our responsibilities towards all individuals of the OSCE region.

I look forward to frank and fruitful discussions.