



Organization for Security and  
Co-operation in Europe  
**Presence in Albania**

## **HEAD OF PRESENCE REMARKS AT BUS ART CEREMONY**

*20 June 2012*

General Director Burgaj,  
Deputy Mayor Panariti,  
Rector Malaj,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

For me, this event is most meaningful.

It is meaningful as it involves the joint efforts of public authorities and civil society.

It is meaningful as it combines high public service ethics and the creative passion of Albanian young people.

It is meaningful as a public commitment to solve an urgent social problem.

The OSCE Presence has a clear human rights mandate. For this reason, while health clearly matters on this occasion, I would like to focus on domestic violence.

Domestic violence is not just a family problem. It is a human rights problem. That includes society.

My message regarding domestic violence is clear and simple:

Human rights must be respected everywhere, including all Albanian homes.

Violence against women is an obstacle to the achievement of equality in the society.

Domestic violence deprives the victims of their ability to enjoy fundamental freedoms and rights.

Domestic violence provokes serious injury to women, children and families, thus damaging the whole of society.

Domestic violence is also a criminal offence, it requires reporting and a robust and strong response from the judicial system.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me turn now to the work of the students of the Academy of Arts who participated in the competition. They showed remarkable artistic skills. My compliments to their civil engagement.

I hope that the work of these talented art students will help the community receive their messages, enhance public awareness and offer support to all victims of domestic violence.

I am confident that this step will be followed by many others thus helping that all men, women and children can fully enjoy their inalienable human rights.

The OSCE Presence will stay engaged in helping to eradicate domestic violence.

Thank you very much.

**Ends**