



**2014 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
22 September – 3 October 2014**

***Working Session 4 – Rule of Law I
Protection of Human Rights and Fighting Terrorism***

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Thank you Chairperson,

And my appreciation to Gerald Staberock for introducing this session.

For those who don't know me, I lead the Action against Terrorism Unit, in the OSCE Secretariat's Transnational Threats Department. We are mandated to serve as focal point for the co-ordination and facilitation of OSCE counter-terrorism activities.

Our job is to assist OSCE participating States in fulfilling their OSCE commitments and international obligations in the field of counter-terrorism – commitments which are many, and cut across the three OSCE dimensions of security.

I take this opportunity to underline our excellent collaboration with ODIHR in our continuous efforts to ensure that all human rights implications in our programmes and activities are identified, understood and appropriately addressed, whilst promoting effective measures, effective action against terrorism.

Since I attended the HDIM in 2012, there have been important developments within the OSCE in the field of counter-terrorism, which I would like to briefly touch upon.

First of all, participating States have adopted in December 2012 a new blue print for OSCE counter-terrorism activities in the years to come: the OSCE Consolidated Framework for the Fight against Terrorism.

The Framework reiterates cornerstone counter-terrorism related commitments, such as the imperative of conducting all measures to prevent and counter terrorism in accordance with international law, including international human rights, humanitarian and refugee law. Accordingly, the Framework identifies the promotion and protection of human rights as one of 8 strategic focus for the contribution of the OSCE to the global efforts against terrorism.

Second, I would like to highlight the release this year of the first joint publication of ODIHR and the OSCE Transnational Threats Department in the field of counter-terrorism. In March, we launched a guidebook on "Preventing terrorism and countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism: a community-policing approach".

This is a guidance document on central issues that can have an impact on the success or failure of police efforts to harness a community-policing approach to preventing terrorism and countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism. The guidebook is primarily intended for policymakers and senior police professionals. However, it may also be a useful resource for members of civil society with an interest in these issues, in particular community leaders.

I am pleased to say that the guidebook is attracting a lot of interest and attention. I believe that some hard copies are available outside in English, Russian, but also Albanian, Arabic, Bosnian and Serbian.

Third, my Unit has developed closer co-operation with ODIHR in the field of travel document security and identity management. There is a natural intersection between efforts to ensure, on the one hand, that terrorists cannot use forged or fraudulent travel documents, and on the other hand that the issuance of identity documents is based on secure processes and reliable population civil registries. This facilitates legitimate cross border movements, promotes equal access to public services and better voter registration.

This is a promising area for joint work between our Department and ODIHR. In October last year we co-organized a pioneering expert roundtable on the topic of identity management, and this year we organized a needs assessment mission to Kyrgyzstan in collaboration with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

Fourth, I would like to stress the importance of a comprehensive approach in thwarting the practice of kidnapping for ransoms to finance terrorism, and countering the phenomenon of 'foreign terrorist fighters'. These complex and growing challenges are very high on the agenda of OSCE participating States and the broader International Community,

The Swiss OSCE Chairmanship convened at the end of April this year in Interlaken a counter-terrorism conference at the level of national co-ordinators – the discussions emphasized that upholding human rights and the rule of law should be an integral part of our collective reflection and action to effectively tackle these threats.

Civil society organizations, including human rights organizations, should contribute to preventing and mitigating these threats, by i.a. raising awareness among the public, counselling and supporting families and vulnerable individuals, advising governments, promoting public debate and accountability.

As I did two years ago, I think it is essential to remind that it is incumbent upon all of us, not only public authorities, to actively challenge terrorism as a denial of human rights – to actively challenge ideas that violence is a legitimate course of action – to actively challenge the intolerance and hatred that nurture terrorism as they fuel other forms of violence.

Thank you.