
Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2018

Opening Session:

Warsaw, 10 September 2018

Statement of the Delegation of Switzerland

Thank you Madam Director,
Madam Chair,

Switzerland welcomes the decision of the Italian Chairmanship to hold the 2018 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. We thank Ambassador Azzoni for his leadership. We are happy to be here in Warsaw today and to participate in the most important OSCE meeting of the year related to the human dimension.

We thank the Polish authorities for welcoming us once again in Warsaw and we thank ODIHR for organizing our meeting on such short notice.

We are at a critical moment in the OSCE, where decisions are often blocked and discussions highly politicized. And we are spending much efforts in Vienna trying to reach consensus. Vienna is indeed the place where we should discuss about our decisions and Organization's modalities.

This morning and during these two weeks we would like to talk about something else. With or without a formal agenda adopted we would like to talk about the substance. We are here to talk about human rights.

We owe it to our citizens, whom are witnessing everywhere a shirking of the democratic space and a restriction of fundamental freedoms. We owe it to Civil Society

Organizations, with which we want to engage constructively. And we owe it to ourselves, the participating States, and to our commitments.

Human rights violations are security concerns and need to be acknowledged as such. Human rights violations are often the first signs of imminent armed conflict and conversely conflicts lead to massive human rights violations. The OSCE, as the largest regional security organization and with its comprehensive approach to security, must place human security at the forefront of its work - human security issues concern us all.

Madam Chair,

The participation of civil society organizations adds value to our discussions at HDIM and we can only benefit from their crucial role in monitoring the implementation of human rights, maintaining a constant watch over violations and their role as liaison between the concerns of the population groups and the government.

Citizens are often losing faith in governments, all over the world. We must here these voices, we must understand why it is the case and we must react. We thank the civil society Organizations for their tireless effort and courage and Switzerland reaffirms its commitment to continue fostering the inclusion and independence of civil society.

Madam Chair,

In closing, let me reiterate Switzerland's full support to ODIHR, the RFOM and the HCNM. In particular we wish to thank you, Madam Director, as well as Ambassadors Désir and Zannier for your precious work. The three autonomous institutions have been established by the OSCE participating States in order to support us in the implementation of OSCE commitments, but also to point out violations of these commitments.

We are looking forward to constructive discussions during these two weeks and hopefully we can pave together a way to Milan and beyond.

Thank you, Madam Chair.