



***PERMANENT MISSION  
OF TURKEY TO THE OSCE***

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR TACAN ILDEM  
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(HDIM OPENING PLENARY SESSION)  
(26 September 2011, Warsaw)**

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to begin by expressing our gratitude to the Polish authorities for their customary warm hospitality that they extend to us. I would also like to thank the Director of ODIHR and his able team for the efforts in organizing this important forum.

Human Dimension Implementation Meeting serves as one of the best reflections of the comprehensive concept of security which makes the OSCE distinct from other international organizations and institutions. At a time where security cannot be simply defined as the absence of war, this meeting provides another opportunity to underline the inextricable link between respect for human rights and security. During our discussions in Warsaw and beyond, Turkey will join the calls for enhanced compliance with human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the OSCE region.

The participating States of the OSCE, many years ago, have been forward-looking and forthcoming in enriching the work of the human dimension by inviting and involving the civil society in our midst. Thanks to the participation of NGOs, we will strive to benefit once again from lively and inspiring debate. I hope the HDIM this year, as were the case in previous years; will enable us to identify worrying trends in implementation of our commitments on the one hand, and exchange views on effective response strategies and best practices on the other.

Mr/Ms.Chairperson,

As had been eloquently pointed out by the distinguished speakers of the opening session, the current state of implementation of the OSCE human dimension commitments is well below a level that could be qualified as sufficient. The broad thrust of what has been highlighted before me in essence coincides with our assessment.

In the interest of brevity, I should avoid repeating the sentiments of concern on the lack of implementation and political will on the part of the participating States. I cannot agree more that no country holds the perfection in the field of human rights and yet fulfilled its responsibility to this end. While acknowledging the deficiencies, I would like to briefly underline the role of the OSCE in this regard.

Turkey has always valued the uniqueness of the OSCE in many aspects. Almost four decades of cooperative work has transformed this Organization to a structure that is more than the sum of its parts. The Chairmanships, Secretariat, the institutions and executive structures, participating States and dynamic civil society have become crucial components of our joint work. We have every reason to take the pride of our accomplishments. On the other hand, we should also be sharing the responsibility of the shortcomings and drawing necessary lessons together.

In this context I have to state that, as we speak, violations of fundamental rights and freedoms are constantly growing. Racism, xenophobia and discrimination are taking deeper roots in societies. Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance against Christians and other religions and beliefs, discrimination on various grounds have become usual practices and unfortunately in some places institutionalized. Journalists, migrants, human rights defenders are exposed to violence, intimidation and harassments. Muslims who are criticized for their lack of integration in many of the participating States are severely discriminated, particularly in the area of employment.

Turkey strongly believes that none of these threats to our security is less important than the other. A life of a migrant, journalist, Muslim or Christian is not less valuable than the other. Concentrating on one of these aspects should not necessarily result in neglecting the others. Turkey is gravely concerned of the fact that these phenomena have not benefited yet the attention that they deserve. Turkey is equally worried as this trend of creating hierarchy among different elements of the human dimension will have negative impacts for the Organization. OSCE, with all its components, not least the governments, should be able to make self-criticism since it directly relates to the credibility of the criticism extended to the participating States.

In concluding, we wish every success for HDIM and are looking forward to a constructive and lively debate.

Thank you.