



## **Human Dimension Implementation Meeting**

Warsaw Poland, 11 - 22 September 2017

### **SCHEDULE AND OVERVIEW**

#### **OF SIDE EVENTS**

##### *as submitted by the organizers*

*The Helsinki Document of 1992 (Chapter IV) called for increasing the openness of OSCE activities and expanding the role of NGOs. In particular, in paragraph (15) of Chapter IV the participating States decided to facilitate during CSCE meetings informal discussion meetings between representatives of participating States and of NGOs, and to provide encouragement to NGOs organizing seminars on CSCE-related issues. In line with this decision, governments, civil society and other participants are encouraged to organize side meetings at the Review Conference on relevant issues of their choice.*

*The side events below have been exclusively organized and scheduled exclusively at the request of participants of the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. The below descriptions have been provided by the organizers. They have been only lightly edited by ODIHR for language but not for content. Responsibility for the content remains with the organizers. Neither the text below nor the events themselves necessarily reflect the views of the OSCE.*

#### **Monday, 11 September**

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: **Human Rights in Belarus - From the Case of Patriots to the Case of Labor Unions**  
Convenor: **Belarusian House Foundation (Warsaw, Poland)**  
Working language: **English, Russian**

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Summary: Belarus remains one of the most repressive countries in the OSCE region. Our experts will present reports on current state with Human rights in Belarus as well as its dynamic development. Special attention will be brought to situation around street protests in late-winter/early spring this year and following repressions, that can be compared with December of 2010. Another point is so called "Patriots case", that resulted in arrest and criminal persecution of dozens of persons and their release

on the eve of OSCE summit in Minsk. Estimation will be also given to repressions against independent trade-unions and its leaders and different aspects of this case. The reports will be accompanied by visual materials. Experts: The reports will be presented by leaders of Belarusian and international Human right organizations

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: INTERPOL – Reforms and the Challenges Ahead  
Convenor: Fair Trials Europe  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Fair Trials will host a panel discussion on the margins of the 2017 Human Dimension Implementation Meetings of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to highlight the ways in which INTERPOL has tackled human rights challenges, and to discuss how civil society organisations can work together to stop the misuse of international cooperation mechanisms. This side event will highlight the reforms which INTERPOL has introduced in recent years to prevent the misuse of its systems as an example of good practice to be followed by other international cooperation mechanisms, and it will discuss the roles that civil society can play in supporting the implementation of these reforms, and identifying further challenges. It will also be an opportunity to raise awareness of the ongoing challenges that INTERPOL faces to human rights activists as well as OSCE state representatives, whose citizens and residents are often targeted by abusive INTERPOL alerts.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Tajikistan in Focus: Assault on Freedom of Expression, Retaliation against Relatives, and Worsening Political Crackdown  
Convenor: Human Rights Watch; Norwegian Helsinki Committee  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Tajikistan's human rights situation has deteriorated precipitously amid an ongoing crackdown on the freedoms of expression and religion, jailing of the political opposition and dismantling of the independent legal profession, and violent mob retaliation against the relatives of dissidents abroad. Following the Tajik government's designation of Central Asia's only legally registered Islamic political party—the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT)—as a terrorist organization in September 2016, authorities have jailed well over 150 of its members, and have jailed at least 6 other independent lawyers. While political opponents in Poland, Lithuania, Germany, Turkey, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and other countries abroad are targeted for extradition,

authorities have launched a vicious campaign of retaliation against dissidents' relatives inside the country, pursuing a policy of collective punishment. The event will feature fresh analysis of the latest developments and crackdown in Tajikistan while focusing particularly on attacks on the freedom of expression, including the new and disturbing trend of mob justice against activists' relatives in country. The speakers will also focus on a report submitted in June 2017 to the UN Human Rights Council by UN rapporteur on freedom of expression David Kaye, who will speak via video link about his report. Speakers will offer recommendations for policy responses by the US government, EU, and other international partners. Speakers include: Steve Swerdlow, Central Asia Researcher, Human Rights Watch, Marius Fossum, Central Asia Representative for Norwegian Helsinki Committee, David Kaye, UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression, Professor, UC Irvine School of Law Bruce Pannier, Senior Central Asia Analyst, Radio Free Europe.

*Refreshments will be provided*

## **Tuesday, 12 September**

Time: **09:00-10:00**  
Venue: **Bristol Hotel (Slowacki Room)**  
Title: Priorities of the incoming Italian Chairmanship  
Convenor: Permanent Mission of Italy to the OSCE  
Working language: English

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Summary: Building on the presentation offered by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, H.E. Angelino Alfano, to the OSCE Permanent Council on the 20 July 2017, the incoming Italian Chairmanship would like to share preliminary considerations on main areas of interest for 2018. In the "spirit of Helsinki", dialogue and co-operation will stand at the core of the Italian Chairmanship. The event is therefore also conceived as an opportunity to receive precious feedbacks and suggestions.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Freedom of Peaceful Assembly in Post-Soviet States. Report on Armenia, Belarus, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine  
Convenor: Association of Ukrainian Human Rights Monitors on Law-Enforcement (UMDPL); Moscow Helsinki Group; International Partnership for Human Rights (IPHR)  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: The freedom of peaceful assembly is a cornerstone of democracy. Our analysis provides a comparative review of this right in five post-soviet states: Armenia, Belarus, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: ANTI SECT MOVEMENTS AND LAICITE  
Convenor: CAPLC - Coordination des Associations et Particuliers pour la Liberte de Conscience  
Working language: English

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Summary: Since the beginning of the century, religious matters have emerged as a critical issue in national and international political agendas. However, starting in the 1980-1990s, a question started preoccupying certain European States: the emergence of new religious and spiritual groups coming from abroad, from Northern America or the East, or the spontaneous appearance of new spiritual movements, besides traditional Churches and worldviews well integrated in society. Some isolated violent acts that were committed in relation to a few unknown groups on several continents, including Europe, were then largely covered and exploited in the media, creating public concern. This gave the political authorities of certain European countries, mainly French or German speaking, the opportunity to claim a threat to public order and security of citizens to put in place “anti-sect” policies designed to fight against minorities they deemed undesirable. France started financing private anti-sect organizations to fight against the abuses allegedly committed by such groups, the abuses consisting mainly, after a deep and thorough review, in spreading beliefs considered as deviating from tradition and norms. The French authorities also financed a French initiative of a European federation to gather similar groups in various EU countries. Scholars and lawyers from five European countries have studied this phenomenon and documented how the collusion with and support to traditional Churches to eliminate religious minorities is a violation of the duty of neutrality of European States in religious matters under international human rights law. But it mainly infringes the sacrosanct principle of Laicité of the French State provided in its Constitution.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: GONGOs: Sham Civil Society  
Convenor: Permanent Mission of the Republic of Lithuania to the International Organizations in Vienna  
Working language: English

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Summary: The aim of this panel discussion is to shed light on the ways GONGOs operate in the OSCE participating States and to raise awareness of this issue, while exploring democratic responses and policy recommendations in order to stand up for the independent civil society, counter disinformation and enhance the implementation of the OSCE commitments.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Situation of Human Rights Defenders in the Government-Controlled Territories of Ukraine: Three Years after Euromaidan  
Convenor: Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights; Netherlands Helsinki Committee; Human Rights Information Center  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Over the last three years, the focus of attention of international organisations and human rights groups has been justly devoted to the security concerns as well as humanitarian and human rights situation of civilians in the conflict-affected Donbas and the illegally annexed Crimea, where hefty charges, including charges of terrorism are levied against human rights defenders, activists and critics of de-facto authorities. At the same time, multiple cases of legal and physical harassment of human rights defenders and activists striving to protect public interest occur in the territories of Ukraine controlled by the government in Kyiv. A comprehensive report on this issue, prepared by HRIC within the framework of a NHC-HFHR-coordinated project on support for human rights defenders was presented in Kyiv in May. The report provides a situation analysis and description of cases of interference with the work of human rights defenders and activists who strive to protect the public interest in the government-controlled territories of Ukraine. The report covers the three years after Euromaidan (March 2014 – March 2017). It describes legislative changes that have adversely affected freedom of association and freedom of movement for human rights defenders and contains an overview of criminal and administrative proceedings against human rights defenders and activists who act to protect the public interest, incidents of threats and physical violence (including murder, violent assault and property damaging), surveillance and smear campaigns. The side event will feature a presentation of the report, including new information on developments after March 2017. This includes legislative initiatives to increase financial reporting obligations of NGOs. Discussion at the side event will focus on steps that are required by the Ukrainian authorities to improve the protection of human rights defenders, and to take enabling rather than suppressing steps vis-a-vis civil society.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Tajikistan's Political Prisoners: Unfair Trials, Denial of Legal Rights, Torture, Harassment, Denial of Basic Prisoners' rights  
Convenor: Islamic Renaissance Party  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Following ban of the Islamic Revival Party of Tajikistan (IRPT), more than 150 of its leading members were arrested and sentenced to long-term imprisonment in unfair trials and denial of judicial and legal right. They reportedly have been mistreated – and some tortured – in detention and denied access to doctors and lawyers. For example, the trial of 13 leading IRPT members ended in June 2016; deputy IRPT leaders Saidumar Hussaini and Mahmatali Khait received life terms in prison, while 11 others received sentences as long as 28 years. Many international and human rights organizations and embassies publicly expressed due process and human rights concerns about the trials. In October 2016, similar concerns were noted over the trial of IRPT defense attorneys Buzurgmehr Yorov and Nuriddin Makhkamov, who were sentenced to prison terms of 23 and 21 years, respectively. These political prisoners have been arrested for their political views and actions as members of the main opposition party. They have consciously fought against social injustice, corruption, nepotism, regionalism, injustices, et. and have been sentenced to long-term imprisonment as a result of their political commitments.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: Presentation of the ODIHR Handbook on Observing and Promoting the Electoral Participation of Persons with Disabilities and the ODIHR Guidelines on the Role of Public Security Providers in Elections  
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights  
Working language: English

Summary: As tasked by the OSCE participating States (Ministerial Council Decision 19/06), ODIHR continuously strives to further improve its methodology and increase its professionalism by developing handbooks on specialized aspects of elections. During 2017, ODIHR has finalized the development of two new handbooks for election observers and will present them at this side event. Shortcomings in the fulfilment of electoral rights of persons with disabilities have become increasingly recognized in recent years, including the impact this has on their marginalization and exclusion from society. All OSCE participating States made a commitment to “ensure protection of the human rights of persons with disabilities”. Election observers have an important role to play in monitoring the legal, structural and practical barriers that prevent inclusion, and the extent to which persons with disabilities are actively participating in elections. Observers have a responsibility to identify how political agreements and human rights treaties are being fulfilled, where there are shortcomings in compliance, and to recommend what key improvements could be made. The Handbook on Observing and Promoting the Electoral Participation of Persons with Disabilities highlights a number of action points to be considered by election observation missions and teams, including: (1) a comprehensive understanding of disabilities (physical, mental, sensory), (2) overview of relevant OSCE commitments and international obligations and standards, (3) voting and candidate rights and registration, (4) election management bodies planning and voter education, (5) access to the campaign and media, (6) access to voting modalities, (7) gender and disabilities, and (8) inclusion of organizations representing persons with disabilities in electoral reform. The Guidelines on the Role of Public Security Providers in Elections guidelines are intended as a reference document for observing and assessing the conduct of public security providers over the course of an electoral process as well as to offer guidance to public security providers. They are based on applicable international

obligations and standards, with a particular emphasis on OSCE commitments as well as international good practice in the spheres of law enforcement and electoral security. By providing a basis for election observation methodology in this area, these guidelines aim to ensure that assessments of the role and performance of public security providers during an electoral period are carried out in a professional and consistent manner. They also aim to assist public security providers in effectively performing their functions during the different stages of an election. By assembling applicable references, guidance, and considerations, a broad overview of ODIHR's approach to assessing the role of public security providers in an electoral context is provided.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:30-14:30**  
Venue: **Plenary Hall**  
Title: Illusive Terrorists? Russian Repressive Policy in Crimea under the Guise of Combatting Terrorism  
Convenor: KrymSOS; Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: In the last decade, governments have increasingly employed counter-terrorism measures to limit civil and political freedoms, surveil societies, control particular groups, as well as endow police and intelligence agencies with excessive powers. Russia has followed this general trend, particularly tightening its counter-terrorism and anti-extremism legislation and policy since 2012-2013. It is based on broad definition of terrorism and extremism used to toughen control and suppression of civil society and particular groups of population. After seizing control over Crimea in 2014, Russian de facto authorities started to increasingly use counter-terrorism and anti-extremism legislation and policy in the peninsula, which resulted in the suppression of civil freedoms and persecution of disloyal groups of population. However, in the eyes of the international community counter-terrorism slogans may legitimize repressions and human rights violations, and hinder correct assessment of the situation in the field. The prohibition of the so-called extremist materials, literature and publications leads to serious violations of freedom of speech, the media and information. These violations are accompanied by criminal and administrative prosecution for publications, regular searches at private houses and offices and blocking of web-sites and the media. In the same way, de facto authorities have banned public events, non-governmental organizations, as well as the Crimean Tatar self-governing body. The counter-terrorism policy enabled the de facto authorities to establish security services' surveillance over religious institutions and clergy; organize regular raids on markets and compact settlements of Crimean Tatars; and to regularly detain and interrogate persons suspected in any alleged extremist act. This policy has also resulted in politically motivated criminal prosecutions of Crimean Tatars, Crimean Muslims and pro-Ukrainian activists, particularly in the case of Sentsov-Kolchenko, so-called 'Hizb ut-Tahrir' case and prosecution of Ilmi Umerov, Nikolay Semena and Suleiman Kadyrov. Russian counter-terrorism measures in Crimea are, in principle, directed against anyone who disagrees with the annexation of the peninsula or with the Russian policy in general, labelling them as enemies and extremists. Thus, state-sponsored hate speech causes discrimination and aggravation of inter-ethnic relations. Russian policy creates fear among general population and constant sense of endangerment to which the absolute power of security services is supposedly the only possible response. The speakers at the side event will include representatives of Ukrainian and Russian NGOs, and human rights defenders and activists from Crimea working in the field.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Shrinking civil society space in Poland  
Convenor: Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights  
Working language: English

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Summary: Over the last several years, systemic violations of the freedom of assembly and association have taken place in several countries all over the world, leading to what has become known as a “global crackdown” on the civil society. It is estimated that over the past four years, more than 60 countries across the globe have passed or drafted laws that curtail the activity of non-governmental and civil society organisations. Poland has not remained immune to this trend. In recent months, there have been several significant changes limiting the operational space for the civil society – from personal attacks on activists through administrative decisions cutting funding for selected non-governmental organisations to the recently submitted to the Parliament draft law significantly changing the distribution of public funds among NGOs. At the same time, however, the Polish civil society has shown its strength and impact on public life by mass mobilisation in protests against e.g. the complete abortion ban (Black Protest in October 2016) or the reforms of the justice system (Candle Light Movement in July 2017). The Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights would like to invite you to join the discussion on the recent changes in the Polish civil society. The invited speakers will present their diagnosis of the condition of the civil society in Poland and the recently occurred changes significantly limiting its operational space. By comparing the situation in Poland to that in other countries in the region, the speakers will assess the role and impact of the civil society in light of the observed democratic backsliding. Eventually, the discussion should answer the question whether the civil society is the first victim of illiberal trends in governing or the last guardian of democratic values.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: OSCE must take new resolute actions immediately to stop enforced disappearances in Turkmenistan  
Convenor: Center for the Development of Democracy and Human Rights; Crude Accountability; Norwegian Helsinki Committee; Human Rights Centre "Memorial"; Human Rights Watch  
Working language: English

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Summary: Enforced disappearances in the prison system is the most acute human rights problem in Turkmenistan. The international campaign Prove They Are Alive! has documented more than 100



cases of people kept in full isolation in prison, some of them for as long as 15 years. There are likely several dozen more cases, including most recent ones in 2016-2017. The campaign has documented more than 20 cases of deaths of people from this group, including at least five deaths in the last 18 months. Since the Prove They Are Alive! campaign was launched in 2013, it has worked closely with OSCE institutions and participating States as well as with the UN, the EU, and other international actors to demand from the government of Turkmenistan to put an end to enforced disappearances. In spite of sustained pressure from the international community, the Turkmen authorities have avoided taking any real steps to end this gross violation of human rights and have not implemented relevant decisions by inter-governmental bodies. Instead, they simulate an ineffective “dialogue” with international organizations on this issue. Since the last HDIM, the situation has deteriorated further. Firstly, responses from Turkmenistan to inquiries on the problem of disappearances have become increasingly empty and often are simply absent. Turkmenistan did not provide any meaningful answers to questions on disappearances during periodic reviews by the UN Committee against Torture and the UN Human Rights Committee. Turkmen authorities are not making any progress on this subject in the framework of cooperation with the EU, including annual Human Rights Dialogues; the last Dialogue with the EU in spring 2017 did not bring any results on this matter because of the position of the Turkmen delegation. In March 2017, the International Committee of Red Cross withdrew from negotiations on cooperation with Turkmenistan, citing unwillingness of the authorities to accept standard ICRC requirements for prison visits. Promises of President Berdymukhamedov to Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany made in August 2016 to organise prison visits by diplomats have been limited to a couple of “potemkin village” visits to freshly painted colonies with no contact with people on the list of the disappeared, as in the past. Neither have the Turkmen authorities reacted to pressure by OSCE participating States made by statements at the Permanent Council or through embassies in Ashgabat. Moreover, since 2016, the government started a new wave of enforced disappearances, with dozens of victims subjected to full isolation in direct violation of the country's obligations under international and domestic law. Thus, enforced disappearances cannot be seen anymore as only a matter of the past that can be blamed on the previous president; they are widely practiced by the current leadership. Finally, lately there has been a growing number of deaths of people held incommunicado in prisons since 2002-2003: they are just not able to survive after many years of isolation in harsh conditions of Turkmen prisons. Evidence of continued enforced disappearances in Turkmenistan 15 years after the beginning of this illegal practice and the obvious ineffectiveness of existing dialogues with the Turkmen authorities on this subject are a serious challenge to the international community. It is clear that when no strong leverage is applied, the Turkmen authorities avoid real cooperation on this urgent matter. OSCE participating States and institutions should recognize that the approach they have been using is not sufficient and adopt a new strategy, using more resolute and proactive means. At the side event, relatives of the disappeared in the “old” and “new” waves of repressions will give testimony of their ordeal, and representatives of the Prove They Are Alive! campaign will present its new findings and present ideas of possible new strategies for the OSCE and the international community.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: International and domestic actors of legitimization of the elections  
Convenor: Russian Public Institute of Electoral Law  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: The institute of election monitoring – its role and importance in the election process. Domestic and international observers – principles of work, approaches and level of assessments' objectivity. Good practices of public control in the elections. New vote technologies as the factor of credibility of the elections. New technical possibilities at the service of the observers.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Plenary Hall**  
Title: Ukraine: Safety of journalists and investigation of crimes against them  
Convenor: Office of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine  
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Participants: Oksana Romaniuk, executive director of the NGO Institute of Mass Information; Oleksandr Yegorov, Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine; Oleksandr Kovtun, investigator of the National Police of Ukraine; Dmytro Gnap, journalist; Andrey Lokhmatov, journalist. Since 2013, the issue of safety of journalists in Ukraine has gained special attention inside and outside the country. Investigation of a resonant assassination of Pavel Sheremet remains open, so it is on number of cases of violence towards other media professionals. Is there any progress at all and what actions government and media community are taking to break up the circle of impunity? During the side event, chaired by the representative of the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine, two journalists will share their experiences of dealing with investigation processes, and representatives of responsible law enforcement agencies (prosecutor and national police) will speak about Ukrainian government's approach to tackle the issue of impunity. NGOs will present the plan of actions to be taken by both media organizations and government institutions to improve the situation.

*Refreshments will be provided*

## **Wednesday, 13 September**

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: How to Free the Media in Turkey?  
Convenor: ARTICLE 19: Global Campaign for Free Expression; PEN International  
Working language: English

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Summary: Turkish and international journalists and media freedom advocates, including Harlem Désir (OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media), Erol Önderoğlu (a Turkish journalist, and representative of Reporters Without Borders), Yonca Şık, (activist and wife of imprisoned journalist Ahmet Şık), Sarah Clarke (Policy Manager at PEN International) and Katie Morris, (Head of Europe at ARTICLE 19), will discuss the current situation regarding freedom of the media in Turkey and

debate ways to restore this fundamental freedom. The Turkish authorities have pursued a relentless crackdown on freedom of expression and other human rights in Turkey since the failed coup attempt of July 2016. Independent mainstream media have been all but silenced, with some 180 media outlets closed down. Turkey is turning into one big prison for critical or dissenting voices. More than 40,000 people are languishing behind bars following the failed coup, including at least 170 journalists. Turkey's judicial system has come under extraordinary attack since the failed coup. What judicial independence existed has been eviscerated as the courts are packed with political appointees. The removal of judges who have granted bail to journalists demonstrates the pressure judges are under to make politically motivated rulings. The trials of journalists detained since the coup are ongoing. The second hearing in the trial against Cumhuriyet staff is occurring this week. We are profoundly concerned about the quality of justice that journalists can expect to face. The organisers of this event believe that a free, diverse and pluralistic media is essential to guarantee Turkey's democratic development. The event will explore the current media situation in Turkey, and at the role of various actors, including the international community, in restoring media freedom.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Egypt Blasphemy law impact on Europe  
Convenor: Organisation Franco-Egyptienne pour les Droits de l'Homme  
Working language: English, French

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Summary: Blasphemy law, religious extremist teachings at Al Azhar University, Fatwa Boxes at metro stations, Al Azhar proposal of a new law against hate, are some of the reasons of the exportation of extremist ideology to Europe. It's time for OSCE countries to react.

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: A new, comprehensive law on minority rights in Albania on the way  
Convenor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Albania  
Working language: English

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Summary: Albania is committed to fulfil the international obligations for the respect and protection of human rights and minorities, in accordance with international obligations. Albania has ratified several conventions on human rights, as well the Framework Convention of Council of Europe "for the Protection of National Minorities". Albania has a positive balance related to the protection of minorities and a climate of respect and tolerance prevails in Albania. Albanian institutions are committed to fulfil the international obligations for the respect and protection of minorities, and to enhance the implementation of the recommendations of monitoring bodies. The Constitution and

domestic legal framework guarantee the rights of persons belonging to minorities, the right to declare their ethnicity, to maintain and develop their national identity, the right of education in mother tongue, their culture, religion, their fundamental freedoms and rights. Albania is fulfilling its commitments in this respect even within its EU integration process. In this context, Albanian institutions during 2016-2017 worked on the preparation of a specific law on minorities, based on European standards, best European practices, international expertise, and taking into account the specific conditions and needs of Albania. A broad consultation process took place, by involving central institutions, local self-government units, independent institutions, minorities' associations, civil society and international organizations. Albanian authorities consider the broad consultation on the improvement of the legislation and implementation of institutional measures of a great importance, through the involvement of relevant and independent institutions, minorities' associations, civil society and international organizations. The process of preparation of the draft law was supported by the international expertise of the Council of Europe. This law aims at ensuring the exercising of specific human rights of persons belonging to a national minority which are necessary to protect the distinct identity of national minorities as an essential component of an integrated society and which guarantee non-discrimination and full equality before the law. On 12 April 2017 Albanian government adopted the draft law on minorities, and according to domestic legislation in order to enter into force, it will be adopted by the Albanian Parliament.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: Participation of persons with disabilities in political and public life  
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights  
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: ODIHR will organize a side event on political participation of persons with disabilities in the OSCE region. The aim of the event will be to launch a booklet developed as part of the project activities designed for the purpose of raising awareness on participation of persons with disabilities in political and public life targeting OSCE delegations, field operations and civil society organizations. Further, the event will provide an opportunity to discuss some of the challenges and the existing good practice examples across the OSCE region, promoting such participation. The discussions will be based on the work carried out by ODIHR in this field in the last year as part of an Extrabudgetary project on "Our right to participate - promoting the participation of Persons with Disabilities in political and public life (Phase I and Phase II)." In addition, the side event will serve as a platform for discussions about the need to increase awareness and ensure stronger disability mainstreaming within the OSCE executive structures. Disabled people's organizations will be invited to the side event in quality of discussion participants and observers. As a result of the meeting, ODIHR aims to raise awareness about political participation of persons with disabilities in the OSCE region and the steps that need to be undertaken to achieve a change. ODIHR will also present its current and future activities in this field.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: The rise of extreme rights in political life and society.  
Convenor: Interregional Social Movement "For Democracy and Human Rights"  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Radical discourse of extreme right parties becoming more and more dominant in political main stream. As its consequences we see the expansion of xenophobia, hunting for internal enemies, fundamental human rights violations. The danger is that this reality is now actual for many countries. Step by step things can be taken as normal. The case of “Azov” battalion in Ukraine with its neo-Nazi ideology reveals how an extreme right movement evaluated to the volunteer unit and then became an official part of the Ukrainian state, as well as the relativisation of crimes committed by this unit on the political and social levels.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Empowerment of Women and Youth as a Means of Preventing Radical Extremism in Central Asia  
Convenor: Permanent Mission of the Republic of Latvia to the OSCE; Permanent Delegation of Norway to the OSCE  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: The volatile and insecure social and political environment in Central Asia raises a number of questions regarding ways to address lack of progress on gender equality and considerable risks of radicalization of youth. Young people often suffer from lack of social and economic opportunities and lack of inclusiveness in education systems, and are induced to search for low-skilled jobs in neighbouring countries. At the same time, the society’s perception of gender roles in the last twenty years has shifted to become more patriarchal, women in the region face persisting inequalities in access to economic resources, there are unequal labour force participation rates, sector and occupational segregation, a gender pay gap, and low representation of women in leadership. The goal of this panel discussion is to outline the ways to address the need to prevent Central Asian societies from slipping into gender inequality and religious radicalism. This goal can be achieved by highlighting the issues that need to be addressed (including the gaps in social, economic and education policies) and by showcasing the examples of good practices related to promoting empowerment of women and youth. Speakers from the international organizations and NGOs in Central Asian region and beyond will provide insights in regard to these topical issues. Simultaneous interpretation in English and Russian will be provided.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:30-14:30**  
Venue: **Plenary Hall**  
Title: Children, Victims of the Ukrainian Civil Conflict  
Convenor: IGCP - Information Group on Crimes Against the Person

Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Civil conflicts badly affect the most vulnerable groups of people – those who cannot care for themselves, including children. The death toll of the civil standoff in Ukraine has reached at least 103 children so far, from Donetsk and Lugansk Oblast. The children were killed as a result of military action, shelling, air strikes, or direct acts of murder committed by both volunteer and regular units of the Ukrainian armed forces and police. Eastern Ukraine is now facing the problem of social protection of children as long as kindergartens, schools and medical care facilities were badly damaged in the conflict, and their infrastructure is not functioning properly today. At the event, we discuss matters regarding the investigation of child fatalities and casualties during the civil conflict in Ukraine, as well as issues regarding social protection of children on the unrecognized territories of Donetsk and Lugansk. Our guests are human rights activists from Russia and Ukraine, journalists and eyewitnesses. We also expect a videoconference with socially active residents.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Presentation of the Annual Report "Xenophobia, Radicalism and Hate Crime in Europe, 2016"  
Convenor: European Center for Democracy Development  
Working language: English

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Summary: Several years ago, a number of experts working in well-known European research centers (IRIS, Jagiellonian University, Pantheon University in Athens, Teeside university London, etc.) joined forces to monitor Xenophobia, Radicalism and hate crimes in 10 European countries - France, Great Britain, Germany, Poland, Greece, Ukraine, Hungary, Russia, Italy and the Netherlands. The result of the monitoring is an Annual report on the problems of Xenophobia and Radicalism in Europe. The report provides comparative statistics for the period 2014-2016 on Xenophobia and hate crime. The report also contains new information on the radical movements of Europe, including far rights and Islamist organizations, as well as on changes in the legislation and law enforcement practice of these countries. Annual Report made by the support of the European Tolerance Center (Latvia).

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: Government against the rule of law and civil society in Poland  
Convenor: Open Dialog Foundation  
Working language: English, Polish

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**Summary:** Government Against the Rule of Law and Civil Society in Poland A moderated discussion panel with representatives of Polish civil society and opinion leaders, legal experts and politicians. **Background** Non-governmental organisations, critical of the state authorities of Poland (including Obywatele RP, KOD, Fundacja Otwarty Dialog and Akcja Demokracja) have been subjected to an unprecedented pressure by the government due to their involvement in the protests aimed at defending the rule of law and the Constitution in the second half of July 2017. The draft laws presented by the current parliamentary majority in cooperation with the government violate the separation of powers principle. A significant mobilisation of the society led to the vetoing of two of the three bills by President Andrzej Duda. Thus, the independence of the Supreme Court and the National Council of the Judiciary is temporarily maintained. However, the law on the system of common courts was passed and is subjecting the courts to the significant control by the Minister of Justice. At the same time, Polish public television TVP controlled by the ruling party has launched a massive defamation and slander campaign against the aforementioned organisations and, more broadly, all civil society organisations criticising the government. The campaign is based on manipulations, half-truths, and fake news. Organisations criticising the government are accused of artificially provoking protests in defence of courts and the Constitution, as well as manipulating public opinion for money from the abroad. In response to the protests, the Ministry of Interior along with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have launched a series of administrative repressions against the organizations involved and asked them to cease the "illegal activities", as well as to provide an explanation with regard to their critical statements. The image of the external enemy is created, the key activists are portrayed as traitors of the homeland, or puppets in the hands of foreign powers and governments (e.g. George Soros, Russia, Germany and the Brussels elites). The ruling party started a discussion with regard to drafting of the new NGO law, which would require organisations receiving funding from the abroad to be labelled as foreign agents.

*Refreshments will be provided*

**Time:** 18:15-19:45  
**Venue:** Plenary Hall  
**Title:** Civil Society and "Foreign Agents" -- Growing Legal Restrictions on Civil Society in the OSCE Region  
**Convenor:** United States Mission to the OSCE  
**Working language:** English

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**Summary:** Civil society is under threat in several countries of the OSCE region, where activists face pressure from their governments for nothing more than exercising their fundamental rights. This has been a topic of intense discussion in the OSCE Permanent Council, the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, and other OSCE venues. This event will create a venue for civil society organizations to discuss how so-called "foreign agent" laws and other restrictions on civil society impact their work and to outline the challenges they face. Our panel discussion will include

presentations by: Ilie Chirtoaca, Legal Resources Centre from Moldova; Roman Udrot, Golos Movement in Defence of Electoral Rights; and, Dávid Vig, Hungarian Helsinki Committee.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Equality of opportunity - equal participation in political and public life  
Convenor: United Kingdom Delegation to the OSCE  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: At the 1992 Helsinki Summit, participating States of the OSCE acknowledged that ‘There is still much work to be done in building democratic and pluralistic societies, where diversity is fully protected and respected in practice’. Across the OSCE region however individuals may still face additional barriers to full participation in public/political life on account of race, gender, religion, disability or sexual orientation. Taking as our starting point the principle that everybody is born free and equal, this event will discuss how state institutions that are representative of all the people they serve contribute to inclusive, stable and democratic societies. Lord Cashman [a well-known British actor and former MEP] will lead a discussion with public and political figures from under-represented groups. Speakers will discuss the professional barriers that they have overcome and explore the positive impact upon institutions and wider society of diverse representation in political and public life. Simultaneous interpretation into Russian and English is planned. Light refreshments will be available.

*Refreshments will be provided*

## **Thursday, 14 September**

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Armed Forces and Freedom of Religion or Belief  
Convenor: European Organisation of Military Associations (EUROMIL); OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights  
Working language: English

Summary: OSCE participating States have committed themselves to ensure freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief for all and to prohibit discrimination on any ground, including religion or belief, principles which are enshrined in major international human rights instruments. Notwithstanding this, the right to freedom of religion or belief remains under significant pressure in the OSCE region. In the armed forces, the expression of an inalienable right such as freedom of religion or belief is often confronted with the limits imposed on its manifestation by military service. The side event will aim at sharing experiences and good practices in the OSCE region. It will encourage discussion on the right to freedom of religion or belief in the armed forces, exploring how states regulate freedom of religion or belief in the context of the armed forces.



*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: Countering Violent Extremism and Securing Freedom of Expression Online: Possibilities and Limits  
Convenor: OSCE Secretariat; Action against Terrorism Unit; Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media  
Working language: English

Summary: The aim of the side-event is to expose the interaction between the exercise of the human right to freedom of expression online, and States' national security interests, especially as reflected through their policies regarding violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT). Through practical examples, the side-event will focus on identifying how the freedom of expression online, including by journalists, can enhance States' security interests. Discussions will concentrate on how freedom of expression online and national security may be undermined by disproportionate laws, policies and practices, specifically regarding VERLT. Discussions are also expected to highlight the role of the ICT sector, in particular intermediaries, such as social media platforms and search engines that wield critical power over the digital space and thus the individual realization of freedom of expression online. Drawing on international standards on the role and responsibility of the ICT sector, the event will provide an opportunity to address recently adopted legislation and emerging proposals from States concerning the liability of intermediaries for "extremist" messaging or "hate speech", as well as the policies of intermediaries (only if publicly available) on such content. It is envisaged that the side-event will also offer a forum for the identification of frameworks and practices in accordance with international human rights standards and OSCE commitments.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Politics of memory: move toward reconciliation or an instrument of the social conflicts' escalation?  
Convenor: "Historical Memory" Foundation  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Nowadays the "politics of memory" serve to invite social tension and escalate conflicts instead of being the cure for traumas of the Past. How can the work of the NGOs within the framework of the OSCE/ODIHR meeting help to overcome the problem of the abuse of historical memory? The discussion will be held by the members of the Historical Association "United initiative of memory and concord" and "Historical memory" Foundation.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Years of Combating Hate Crimes against LGBTI: drawing up the balance  
Convenor: C.O.C. - Cultuur en Ontspannings Centrum (Centre for Culture and Leisure)  
Working language: English

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Summary: The OSCE has many important commitments in combating any form of intolerance, discrimination, and bias based violence. All through the OSCE region, a clear pattern emerges of a high level of violence and bias crimes against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons. Since 2008, COC Netherlands has been engaging with the OSCE with several partners from across the OSCE region. With the support of many participating states, we have addressed hate crimes, intolerance and discrimination during side events. Activists from partner organizations around the region have delivered many related statements during working sessions at the HDIM. Only last year, COC Netherlands and TGEU have pointed out that only in the last five years, 71 murders of trans people have been documented in Europe. Nearly every transgender person experiences harassment, abuse and violence. Similar facts are available when it concerns the position of lesbian, gay, bisexual and intersex people. During this side event we would like to draw up the balance of years of engagement between civil society, the OSCE and participating states. With all these stakeholders, we will identify obstacles for progress and propose clear and practical solutions in our common efforts to combat hate crimes in the OSCE region. Confirmed speakers will represent community-based organisations from the Netherlands, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and ODIHR.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: How to address anti-Semitism through education?  
Convenor: OSCE Delegations of France, Germany, Romania, Switzerland and the United States  
Working language: English

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Summary: Anti-Semitism continues to be a grave concern, as it is on the rise across the OSCE region. OSCE participating States agree on the principle that anti-Semitism is also a worrying signal for human rights overall. There is a serious need to prevent, clearly identify and address anti-Semitism early. While criminal acts must be addressed by law enforcement and the courts, anti-Semitic prejudices and stereotypes need to be primarily addressed outside the criminal justice system. Recognizing that education is essential to promoting tolerance and combating anti-Semitism (the 2004 OSCE Chairmanship's Berlin Declaration on Antisemitism), OSCE participating States have committed to implementing educational programs to combat anti-Semitism and to provide young people with opportunities for human rights education, including on the subject of anti-Semitism

(Ministerial Declaration of December 2014). Through education, children and young people learn how to recognize anti-Semitic incidents, including contemporary forms of anti-Semitism, and fight against them, promoting tolerance, human rights and fundamental freedoms, and critical thinking. In this regard, a working definition of antisemitism was adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance in Bucharest in 2016. This event will allow participants to engage in a substantial and practical exchange of views on new ways and tools to combat anti-Semitism through education, on ongoing or future programs and actions aimed at eliminating this form of discrimination for better and safer societies. An exhibition dedicated to the topic will be on display on the occasion.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: Racism and Islamophobia  
Convenor: COJEP International  
Working language: English, French

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Summary: Presentation of our report on racism and Islamophobia in European French-Speaking countries.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:30-14:30**  
Venue: **Plenary Hall**  
Title: Tajikistan: Preventing the Radicalization of Youth by Fighting the Root Causes  
Convenor: Eurasian Dialogue  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: An increasing number of youths in Central Asia, especially in Tajikistan being drawn into terrorist and extremist groups, like ISIS, in search for identity and a meaningful place in society has been the painful reality in this region. Profound feelings of injustice and frustration about their social exclusion, lack of freedom, crackdown on dissent, etc are amongst the main root causes contributing to young people's vulnerability and increase their willingness to adhere to violent terrorist organizations, which offer an apparent social purpose to them. The policy of using force taken by Tajik government, to fight radicalization led to reverse results and more radicalization of youths. To prevent the radicalization amongst the youths needs to learn its root causes and why the youths join the terrorist groups in large numbers.

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: The role of interreligious dialog as a key instrument for social peace and security  
Convenor: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department for Humanitarian Co-operation and Human Rights, Russian Federation  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: The side-event will provide an opportunity to exchange best practices of interreligious dialogue in the OSCE area. Contributions are expected both from the participating States and civil society.

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Prosecution of human rights defenders in Russia  
Convenor: Foundation "For Environmental and Social Justice"; Moscow Helsinki Group  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Organizers: Moscow Helsinki Group, Coalition in support of human rights defenders in Russia, SOLIDARUS, ECOSOCIS Foundation. Presentation of the report on prosecution of human rights defenders in Russia. The report is based on annual monitoring and analysis of situation with violations of basic freedoms and prosecution of human rights defenders in Russia. Also information on the defense of human rights defenders inside and outside Russia will be presented. Speakers: Sergey Krivenko (International Memorial), Macha Chichtchenkova (Frontline Defenders), Alexey Kozlov (author of the report), (Moscow Helsinki Group / SOLIDARUS)

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Investigation of human rights violations engendered by the armed conflict in the East of Ukraine  
Convenor: Center for Civil Liberties; Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights  
Working language: English, Russian, Ukrainian

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Summary: Members of the coalition "Justice for Peace in Donbass" have been documenting since 2014 the facts of serious human rights violations resulted from the armed conflict in the Eastern Ukraine. A large number of victims have addressed the members of the Coalition with the requests of legal aid. The violations in question are related to fundamental human rights and also social and economic rights. There are also the cases related to the war crimes. Illegal arrests (kidnapping) and holding in the detention, extrajudicial executions, sexual violence, forced labour, and involvement of children in military activities - it is an open list of violations that occur in the conflict in Donbass every day. Today more than 3 million people continue to stay on occupied territories in Donbass. The persons staying on these territories are deprived of any legal remedy protecting them from these illegal activities. The question remains: what can Ukraine do for all these situations to receive a proper legal assessment, and for the offenders to be punished? How should Ukraine carry out the investigation when the conflict still continues? During the side-event, Ukrainian human rights defenders will expose the scale and the tendencies of the main violations, as well as the level of their investigation by Ukrainian law enforcement agencies. In addition, the organizers are ready to propose for discussion their recommendations in this regard for both Ukraine and international organizations. The presented recommendations will concern both changes in Ukrainian legislation and practical investigation of the above-mentioned crimes.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Plenary Hall**  
Title: Xenophobia and Radicalism in Russia  
Convenor: European Center for Democracy Development  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Report of the European Center for Democracy together with the Russian Institute for Ethnic Policy and Inter-Ethnic Relations Studies regarding the Xenophobia, Radicalism and Hate Crime in Russia. Statistics, Pools, data of NGO.

## **Friday, 15 September**

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Islamophobia as the new Normal? Reflection and Action for Governments and Civil society  
Convenor: European Muslim Initiative for Social Cohesion - EMISCO  
Working language: English

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Summary: EMISCO, the European Muslim Initiative for Social Cohesion, has for the past seven years campaigned to highlight a range of societal issues and challenges that Muslim communities across Europe have been facing. EMISCO believes that the combat against Islamophobia has entered a new critical phase. Recent events on both sides of the Atlantic have resulted in an unprecedented 'normalisation' of Islamophobia discourses and policy measures. While it was customary in the not-too-distant past to talk of Islamophobia predominantly in the context of the extreme right, we now witness a creeping 'mainstreaming' of Islamophobia, as it becomes more pervasive in everyday language, as it seeps into the official discourse of politicians and media, as it underpins discriminatory policies and hardening public attitudes. History is painfully instructive as to what happens when the world - international organisations, national governments, social institutions, and society as a whole - watch the growing wave of intolerance and discrimination against a particular group without making a timely decisive stand. The current creeping normalisation of Islamophobia constitutes a grave threat not only to the Muslim communities that it directly affects but also to every single member of society. This is because Islamophobia is an affront to the rule of law, the protection of fundamental human rights, the legitimacy of international institutions, and the goal of social cohesion. EMISCO believes that the combat against Islamophobia is now more vital than ever, demanding reflection and concerted action on part of both governments and civil society. To discuss the most effective strategies for combating and reversing the normalisation of Islamophobia, EMISCO organises a side event at the HDIM 2017 with the title "Islamophobia as the new normal? Reflection and Action for Governments and Civil Society". The event aims to encourage reflection and build a momentum for more coordinated action in the near future.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Freedom of Expression and Religious Rights: Struggles and Challenges  
Convenor: Soteria International  
Working language: English

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Summary: Freedom of expression and freedom of religion as two points of concern in Europe. The complex interaction between these two freedoms is becoming more apparent in our diverse society, where the cultural norms are being challenged by globalization. The right to freedom of expression is constitutionally guaranteed and the state is legally bound to protect it. However, freedom of expression is not an absolute right, but is regulated by the law and through responsibility. One may freely express one's self, but in doing so, one should not damage the rights or reputation of others, by making false and misleading statements. Unfortunately, this recommendation is largely ignored, and, thus, often not respected across all levels, whether in governmental institutions, the mass media, or on the individual level. The result is that this perceived total freedom of expression does indeed have the capacity to harm. The aim of this side event is, therefore, to open the dialogue between various members of society on the topic of freedom of expression—particularly in the European contexts—with the hope of increasing our understanding for one another and to find a way to embrace diverse beliefs in the increasingly globalized European context, while adhering to the shared moral code of conduct and rule of law. During the side event we will openly discuss the issues related to freedom of expression in a

religious context in Europe, and will focus on questions such as: 1. What role can education play in raising awareness regarding how to maintain freedom of expression, while ensuring the respect of one another's reputation? 2. How can education help raise awareness with regards to the thin line between the freedom of religion and belief and the freedom of expression? 3. How can an open society engage and work towards ensuring the freedom of expression, while respecting the moral and ethical code? 4. Should there be 'checks and balances' in relation to freedom of expression in a religious context? 5. How can we resolve these issues together?

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: Enhancing civil society's impact in Donbas  
Convenor: Deutsch-Russischer Austausch e. V.  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: In Eastern Ukraine, especially since the Maidan events, the illegal annexation of Crimea and the beginning of the Russian aggression in Ukraine, a vibrant civil society has flourished and civic engagement is increasingly dynamic. NGOs are active in various fields such as human rights advocacy, documentation of war crimes, peacebuilding, protection of women's rights and rights of majorities, humanitarian aid, support and integration of IDPs, legal assistance, etc. Civil society activists carry out their task in a volatile security environment. Their contribution to the alleviation of living conditions on the ground, focusing on the needs of the most vulnerable, is crucial. Some are involved in conflict resolution, reconciliation and dialogue activities, and are keen to enhance contacts across the line of contact as well as with NGOs from the Russian Federation, helping to defuse tensions. What are the main challenges CSOs face whilst carrying out their activities? How to bridge the gap between different fields of NGO work? How to help create synergies in their work and enhance their strategic cooperation? How to support civil society's vital engagement in conflict-related work? How to maintain and develop contacts to dwellers of the non-government-controlled areas? This side event will present the main findings and recommendations by NGO-representatives from Ukraine, Russia and other European countries working on Donbas issues, worked out at strategic retreat in Warsaw (26-28 June 2017), which was co-organised by the Civic Solidarity Platform (CSP) and the German-Russian exchange (DRA) with the support of the French and German governments. The presented findings contribute to the development of a joint NGO-strategy to enhance the impact of civil society in Donbas conflict resolution, which is the main goal of the European civil society platform CivilMPlus. Convenors: DRA (German-Russian Exchange), CSP (Civic Solidarity Platform), French Delegation to the OSCE, German Delegation to the OSCE. Speakers: Sasha Romantsova (Center for Civil Liberties, Ukraine), Valentina Cherevatenko (Women of Don, Russian Federation), Alexandre Pavlichenko (Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group, Ukraine), Stefan Melle (DRA, Germany).

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: National security transfers in CIS countries: shortcomings, comparative practices and recommendations for change  
Convenor: International Commission of Jurists  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Several cases in the last years have highlighted the serious implications for human rights and the rule of law of transfers of people based on national security and criminal cooperation grounds in the CIS region. Extraditions, expulsions and, sometimes, transfers occurring outside of the legal framework have triggered international reactions and rulings of international courts and human rights bodies. The ICJ has researched these cases and legal framework and produced a report with its analysis and assessment of the situation, providing concrete recommendations for change based on the comparative experiences and shortcomings of selected EU member States. In this side events - that will see the participation of experts in this field from the CIS and EU regions - the ICJ will present its findings and engage in a discussion with all stakeholders on the concrete steps ahead of reform of the system and practices in the Russian Federation and Central Asian countries to ensure that transfers for the purpose of criminal cooperation are carried out in full respect of the rule of law and human rights.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Confronting hate crime: progress is possible  
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights  
Working language: English

Summary: This lunch event will present information on hate crime in 2016, gathered by ODIHR's Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department as part of its annual reporting. A new visualization of hate crime data will also be launched at the event, allowing our hate crime website to show a more nuanced picture of hate crime situation across the OSCE. The event will demonstrate new initiatives developed for the OSCE community to better address gaps in responding to hate crimes. In particular, tools to build comprehensive national solutions and to support the victims of hate crime will be introduced. Our partners, NGOs and government officials who have worked with the TND over the past year, will do most of the talking. Please join us for delicious food and discussions over any hate crime issue on your mind!

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Reform of the INTERPOL, don't let it be stopped halfway  
Convenor: Open Dialog Foundation  
Working language: English



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Summary: Due to release of the report "Abusive use of the INTERPOL system: the need for more stringent legal safeguards" by the Special Rapporteur of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), Member of the Parliament Mr Dr. Bernd Fabritius (Germany, EPP/CD) and the Open Dialog Foundation organise an expert seminar to assess its findings, comment on the reform adopted by INTERPOL so far, discuss present challenges related to abuse of the INTERPOL system and project the future in this regard. The Open Dialog Foundation will present its assessment of the reforming process and a list of 16 recommendations that will enable to move it towards addressing the most present challenges and practices adopted by the authoritarian governments. They include taking actions against persecution of entire families (Kharpunov, Tokmadi – Kazakhstan), creation of the compensation fund for the victims of misuse of the INTERPOL, stressing on the preemptive approach to avoid persecution of persons who risk being enlisted for political reasons (Ana Urachi, Alexandru Machedon – Moldova; Leila Yunus, Arif Yunus – Azerbaijan) as well as developing answers to practice of targeting people residing in unsafe third countries (Anatoliy Pogorelov – in United Arab Emirates).

Time: **13:30-14:30**  
Venue: **Plenary Hall**  
Title: EU-wide Movement of the European Citizens' Initiative Against Extremism (ECI): Yes to a peaceful joint Europe, no to extremists!  
Convenor: STOP Extremism  
Working language: English, German

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Summary: EU-wide Movement of the European Citizens' Initiative Against Extremism (ECI): Yes to a peaceful joint Europe, no to extremists! Extremism is the threat to our time. To continue to live in a peaceful and economically successful common Europe, we must resist religious and political extremism with all our resolve! Stop Extremism is a European citizens' initiative, reaching out for a comprehensive, official anti-extremism-package by the EU which would allow an effective and joint action by all member states against extremist tendencies. All of Europe is requested to seize measures to correct the mistakes of the past and to effectively push back extremism in all its forms. The aim is to protect people and the economy in the European Union, and in particular, the European internal market. Yes to a peaceful joint Europe, no to extremists! Our side event during the HDIM 2017 is dedicated to present those EU-wide measures and discuss openly the initiative's main purpose with delegations and the NGO community. Keynote speakers will be: Seyran Ates, German lawyer, author and human rights activist, who has kicked off a broad debate on integration and Islam in Germany with her books (among others, the bestseller The Multiculturalism Fallacy). She advocates a peaceful, equitable and, above all, reformed Islam, far away from violence and outdated structures. Efgani Dönmez, a former member of the Austrian Federal Council, is one of Austria's warning voices on adherence to basic and human rights and has been active in social work and caring for refugees and migrants for many years. He is a lecturer at the University of Applied Science for Social Work.

Sebastian Reimer is a lawyer with a doctorate and a software developer. He helped bring innovative projects to fruition – such as the Electronic health record – with his expertise in constitutional and Union law. As an employee of the Constitutional Service of the Austrian Federal Chancellery, he was able to acquire five years of intensive practice in the area of basic rights after his studies. More info about the European Citizens’ Initiative Against Extremism: [www.stopextremism.eu](http://www.stopextremism.eu)

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: Azerbaijani exiles in Georgia: a test for Georgian democracy  
Convenor: International Partnership for Human Rights (IPHR)  
Working language: English

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Summary: In 2014, the Government of Azerbaijan initiated an unprecedented crackdown against dissidents and independent activists. Many civil society leaders were imprisoned on politically motivated grounds and others were forced to flee from Azerbaijan. Many of those who fled the persecution came to nearby Georgia where they presumed they would be free from Azerbaijani harassment. In May this year, the abduction of Afghan Muhktarli and his unlawful transfer to Azerbaijan marked a turning point in the lives of Azerbaijani exiles living in Georgia. Afghan’s case is not an isolated incident, although it is the most unsettling example of operations by Azerbaijani authorities to target dissidents residing outside the country. In recent years, some Azerbaijani nationals have been denied residence permits and asylum by Georgian authorities. These incidents raise serious questions as to the extent of collusion between the countries and influence exerted by the Azerbaijani government over the policies and respect for human rights exercised by the Georgian authorities. This side event is intended to bring to light stories of Azerbaijani exiles in Georgia facing the illegitimate restriction of their internationally protected rights and the discriminatory treatment to which they are subjected.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: The Disappeared Poet: Batyr Berdyev’s Verses Written Behind Bars  
Convenor: Crude Accountability; Center for the Development of Democracy and Human Rights; Human Rights Centre "Memorial"; Norwegian Helsinki Committee; Human Rights Watch  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: The Prove They Are Alive! campaign will hold a side event at the HDIM reading from and discussing poetry written in prison in late 2002 and early 2003 by a victim of enforced disappearances and political repression, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan and former Representative of Turkmenistan to the OSCE, Batyr Berdyev. The poems were smuggled out of prison and passed on to an acquaintance abroad. The campaign will present a collection of these poems in the Russian original and an English translation which it published in August 2017. The campaign will host James Womack, poet and translator, who edited the translated poems, and Arkady Dubnov, journalist and expert on Turkmenistan's disappeared, to speak about the poems and the disappeared in Turkmenistan's prisons. We will read from the poems, discuss the case of Batyr Berdyev, and provide an update on Turkmenistan's disappeared. Batyr Berdyev was arrested on December 7, 2002, and charged with involvement in the coup attempt against then-President Niyazov, which took place on November 25, 2002. A video of his "confession" was broadcast on television on December 18, 2002, and he was convicted on January 21, 2003 by the Ashgabat city court and sentenced to 25 years imprisonment. Testimony was given that Berdyev was beaten and tortured by the authorities during the course of the investigation into charges against him. His relatives have no information about his fate or whereabouts since after his trial. There are controversial and unconfirmed reports of his death in prison. President Berdymukhamedov, when asked about Berdyev's fate, and that of Boris Shikhmuradov, at Columbia University in September 2007, responded, "I am sure that these people are still alive." (<http://www.fergananews.com/news.php?id=7191>). This has been the only statement about the fate of Berdyev made by the Turkmen authorities. Batyr Berdyev served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan in 2000-2001. From 1995 to 2000, he was Turkmenistan's Ambassador to the OSCE; he was simultaneously Turkmenistan's Ambassador to Austria, the Slovak Republic, and the Czech Republic. He had served the government of Turkmenistan in various capacities prior to that, and had also worked as a journalist. He graduated from Turkmen State University in 1982.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Plenary Hall**  
Title: Presentation of European Islamophobia Report 2016  
Convenor: SETA - Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research  
Working language: English

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Summary: The recent wave of hostile, xenophobic, discriminatory and racist discourse and actions against Muslims in the European countries have been alarming following the so called "Syrian refugee crisis" in Europe and emergence of DAESH attacks throughout Europe. Hence, Islamophobia became an acute risk and a threat to European peace and stability. To increase the awareness towards Islamophobia, in 2016 SETA started to publish an annual report, namely "European Islamophobia Report", which covers the Islamophobia and related events in approximately 27 European countries. On September 15, 2017 SETA will organize a side-event on the issue of "Islamophobia: A Threat to Peace and Stability in Europe" in Warsaw/ Poland during the "2017 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting" organized by OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). In this side-event, the findings of the past year's report and the events related to Islamophobia happened so far in European countries will be discussed.

Time: **18:15-19:45 (SIDE EVENT CANCELLED)**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Citizen observers' electoral recommendations: Follow-up on the implementation in the EU-Eastern Partnership countries and Russian Federation  
Convenor: Norwegian Helsinki Committee  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: The role of domestic citizen election observers in promoting electoral reforms in the post-soviet countries according to the OSCE standards has gained in importance over the recent years. The core part of the citizen election observation is the assessment of how and to what extent the particular State is implementing regulations which reflect the national election legislation and the international standards. Thus, the follow-up on the implementation of electoral recommendations provided over the past years both by the citizen election observers and the international organisations is increasingly important in assessing the democratisation of the election processes. The willingness of the States to improve electoral systems by implementing citizen observers' recommendations vary significantly among the countries where the member organisations of the European Platform for Democratic Elections are operating. The crucial questions to be addressed during the event are: what instruments can citizen election observers use to effectively push electoral reforms according to their recommendations, what mechanisms can a State develop to better recognise the assistance of citizen election observers in implementing their electoral recommendations and how to develop a synergy among domestic and international election observers in order to enhance the democratisation of electoral systems in the post-soviet region.

## **Monday, 18 September**

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Development of the civil control system in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus  
Convenor: Interregional Human Rights Group - Voronezh / Blacksoil Region  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Presentation of the NGO's report on the development of the civil control system in Russia, Ukraine and the Republic of Belarus for the last 7 years

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: Youth Engagement: Effective Practices from the OSCE Area  
Convenor: Permanent Mission of Spain to the OSCE, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights  
Working language: English

Summary: Trends throughout the OSCE area indicate that young people are making use of new ways of engagement beyond conventional forms of public participation, evidenced by extremely low rates of youth membership in political parties, among other indicators. At the same time young people are increasingly engaged in issue-based activism and advocacy, favouring new engagement tools in order to exert influence. Strong democratic institutions rely on a foundation of an informed and engaged citizenry, and such engagement requires that citizens are aware of their rights, and are also able to leverage those rights to access public and political institutions, and advocate for change within their communities. New information and communication technologies (ICT), including social media and online platforms, offer a range of engagement opportunities for young people, from the ability to identify and research issues of importance, to sharing information and connecting with like-minded peers around an issue. Yet, while these tools can be an avenue for public participation, ensuring a multiplicity of voices in the public arena, they can also be used for the dissemination of divisive rhetoric. The OSCE's Human Dimension commitments highlight the critical role that young people have in helping participating States fulfil their democracy and human rights obligations. The 2007 OSCE Madrid Ministerial Decision No. 10/07 specifically acknowledges "the important role youth can play in fostering mutual respect and understanding [...] contributing to the promotion of democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms." Over the past several years, ODIHR and other OSCE institutions have conducted a number of youth-focused activities, to assist participating States in upholding these commitments, ranging from consultative Youth Leadership Forums to capacity-building workshops that prepare young people for a career in public service, and peer-to-peer networking opportunities. This side event will facilitate an exchange of experiences and good practices for supporting youth political participation in the OSCE region, and explore how public institutions are adapting to new and indirect forms of participation from young people, also noting the experiences of youth from marginalized groups. Discussants will reflect on these experiences, highlighting practices to continue in the future.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Gender: Law and practices in daily life and media representation under the State of Emergency in Turkey  
Convenor: HUN Consultancy; Ucan Supurge (Flying Broom)  
Working language: English, Turkish

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Summary: The event is going to focus on what has happened in 'gender issues' in daily life in terms of legislation and practices since the state of emergency was declared in Turkey in July 2016. Gender is chosen as a key word to better understand not only problems stemming from binary (man and woman)

order but also covers sexual minorities including lesbian, gay, transsexual, trans, non-binary, intersex, gender non-conforming people (and so on). At the end of the event, we are going to look in the media representation of especially women who were subjected to male violence due to their appearances and clothing in public transportation and related works of Flying Broom Woman Communication and Research Association.

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: The Role of Civil Society within the National Referral Mechanisms of participating States  
Convenor: Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: OSCE participating States have committed themselves to promoting a comprehensive human rights-based and victim-centered approach to combating all forms of trafficking in human beings (THB), as reaffirmed by the Vilnius Ministerial Declaration on Combating All Forms of Human Trafficking (MC.DOC/1/11/Corr.1, 7 December 2011), through national, regional and international arrangements. There exists a fundamental importance of a strong legal framework in all areas of anti-trafficking action – protection, prosecution and prevention. These include an effective and inclusive National Referral Mechanisms (NRM), to guarantee protection and provision of legal assistance and access to justice for victims of trafficking, and to undertake measures to ensure protection of victims’ rights, including in the process of return. The importance of establishing an effective NRM has been confirmed by the participating States in numerous OSCE commitments and documents. The OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings recommends to participating States to establish NRMs by creating a co-operative framework within which participating States fulfil their obligations to protect and promote the human rights of the victims of THB in co-ordination and strategic partnership with civil society and other actors working in this field (MC. Dec. No. 2/03, Annex V.3.1). This effort is supported by a practical handbook - National Referral Mechanisms: Joining Efforts to Protect the Rights of Trafficked Persons – developed by ODIHR in 2004 and which is currently in the process of being updated. Principle 6 of the ODIHR NRM handbook states that “combating trafficking in human beings requires a multidisciplinary and cross-sector approach, involving all relevant actors from government and civil society.” The participation of civil society allows anti-trafficking measures to be scrutinized for the degree to which they protect human rights. In addition, multidisciplinary teams are more likely to have the expertise necessary to draw up measures to counter human trafficking across the various fields. With many participating States experiencing an unprecedented wave of migration consisting of a mix of asylum-seekers/potential refugees, economic migrants, and populations vulnerable to trafficking, among others, the role and expectations of the civil society in addressing the vulnerabilities to human trafficking within mixed-migration flows have furthermore increased. Civil society actively provides shelter, food, medical care, search and rescue, and other forms of support to new arrivals across the OSCE region. The side event will highlight the need for strengthening the role of civil society across the OSCE region to ensure an effective victim-centered human rights-based approach to combating trafficking in human beings. It will aim at promoting exchange of information and views among OSCE delegations, international actors and civil society on strengthening the role of civil society

within the NRMs, as well as focus on civil society good practices in decreasing the vulnerabilities to trafficking in human beings within mixed-migration flows.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Violations of International humanitarian law and international crimes in Eastern Ukraine  
Convenor: Truth Hounds  
Working language: English

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Summary: Three and a half years since the conflict first erupted in Eastern Ukraine it is still taking lives of many civilians, leads to destruction of civilian property and forces people to flee. More than 100 civilians were killed, and over 500 wounded in Donbass in the course of last year. Most of these incidents were acts of war crimes, committed by combatants of both sides of the conflict. Local and international actors have been documenting violations of international humanitarian law and international crimes since the conflict erupted in the spring of 2014. While documentation efforts continue from the civil society side, there is little effort to bring perpetrators to justice, a practice which reinforces already enshrined culture of impunity in Donbass. Importance of accountability for international crimes in Eastern Ukraine as well as alternative prospects for fight against impunity will be discussed at this side event that will be hosted by Truth Hounds together with International Partnership for Human Rights.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Roma and Sinti Youth Initiative: Youth as Agents of Change  
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights  
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Active participation of Roma and Sinti youth represents one of the most quintessential elements for ensuring the involvement and empowerment of Roma and Sinti youth as agents of change. It remains a priority in the OSCE's capacity building mandate under the 2003 Action Plan for Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area, enhanced in 2013 with the Ministerial Council Decision No. 4/13, particularly focusing on Roma and Sinti women, youth and children. ODIHR's project Roma and Sinti Youth Initiative placed a primary focus on three thematic areas: empowerment and social inclusion of Roma and Sinti communities through youth activism and volunteering, public and political participation of Roma and Sinti youth, and Roma and Sinti youth and the issue of security. In the course of the project's implementation in 2016 and 2017, the Roma and Sinti Youth Initiative created opportunities for youth to implement small grassroots projects in its main thematic areas, provided young Roma and Sinti activists with professional development opportunities at ODIHR, and raised awareness of OSCE institutions, participating States and the wider public on the situation of Roma and Sinti youth. On this side event, Roma and Sinti civil society

activists who were directly engaged in the Roma and Sinti Youth Initiative will highlight the main achievements of their activities and the key issues affecting the Roma and Sinti youth in their communities.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:30-14:30**  
Venue: **Plenary Hall**  
Title: Combating hate crime: towards comprehensive and effective model of prevention and counteraction  
Convenor: "Ordo Iuris" Institute for Legal Culture  
Working language: English, Polish

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Summary: The purpose of the event is to analyze the possible development of the concept of hate crime, with particular respect to the problem of criminalization of incitement to hatred and violence. The analysis will aim to situate the notion of hate crime within the broad framework of fundamental rights guarantees and examine its relation to the guarantees of the freedom of expression. It will encompass European Union law, including Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, the Council of Europe system of human rights protection, as well as of constitutional human rights protection systems the OSCE states, in particular legal framework in Poland. Adequacy of statutory measures available and their adoption in practice will be assessed.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Plenary Hall**  
Title: Political persecution in Ukraine and Baltic States  
Convenor: Center for Social-Political Studies "Russian Baltica"; Institute of European Studies  
Working language: Russian

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Summary: Monitoring of the observance of human rights in Eastern Europe is characterized by examples of systematic pressure on the people with opposition sentiments, in the main representatives of ethnic minorities, for political reasons. In the framework of the side-event two reports on the forms and instruments of political persecution will be presented. The first one will cover the situation in Baltic States, the second one – the situation in Ukraine. The main aim of the reports is to find out reasons why political persecution has become more frequent and its specifics in Baltic States and



Ukraine. The question of ensuring access to justice for people persecuted for political reasons in Ukraine and Baltic States will be also raised.

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: The protection of human rights in addressing violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism (VERLT) in the prison context  
Convenor: Penal Reform International, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights  
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Questions concerning Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism (VERLT) in the prison context have received increasing attention at the OSCE and at the international level more generally. The 2015 Belgrade Declaration on preventing and countering VERLT of the OSCE Ministerial Council drew attention to “the fact that radicalization to terrorism and recruitment by terrorists can take place in prisons”, as did several resolutions of the UN Human Rights Council and the General Assembly. A number of international and regional actors (such as UNODC and the Council of Europe) have also published guidance documents related to the issue; and both ODIHR’s Human Rights and Anti-Terrorism (HRAT) Programme as well as Penal Reform International (PRI) have started exploring the various human rights issues arising in preventing and countering VERLT in prisons in accordance with their respective areas of work. Given that many conditions conducive to VERLT in prisons appear to stem from human rights violations, it is essential that OSCE participating States follow a human rights-based approach to preventing terrorist radicalization in prisons. This must encompass efforts to improve overall prison conditions and ensure humane, safe and secure conditions for all prisoners; but also human rights based measures concerning the management of violent extremist offenders and their reintegration and rehabilitation. The side event will provide a platform to further explore the human rights issues arising in preventing and countering VERLT in prisons, promote exchange of information and views on the subject and highlight the need for human rights compliant responses to VERLT in prison settings.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Ensuring Security for Roma Communities in Ukraine: Challenges and Steps Forward  
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights  
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Safety and security are among the most basic needs which enable people to play an equal part in the society. In Ukraine little progress has been made since the adoption of the National Roma Strategy, which recognized Roma community as one of the most vulnerable groups in Ukraine and tasked the executive bodies to strengthen the co-operation of law enforcement agencies and Roma civil society organizations. Roma men and women in Ukraine continue experiencing various threats to their safety including discrimination in all areas of life, intolerance, hate crimes, ethnic profiling and misconduct by law enforcement officials, which along with failure to protect Roma and properly investigate crimes against them result in lack of trust between police and Roma community. Ongoing crisis in the east of the country have made Roma even more vulnerable exposing them to displacement and multiple discrimination. Similarly, the recent cases of mob violence against Roma demonstrated

the inability of police to ensure safety for the communities. This side event will present preliminary findings of the study on “Security Perceptions among Roma Men and Women in Ukraine” commissioned by ODIHR and implemented by the Kharkiv Institute for Social Researches. The research provides a more detailed analysis on the security needs of Roma communities in Transcarpathia and Odesa regions and pays attention to the specific security concerns and needs of the most vulnerable groups, in particular Roma women and displaced Roma. Moreover, the study gives insight into the perceptions of police about Roma and policing in Roma communities. Most importantly, the side event will provide a forum for exchange of information on recent cases of violence against Roma community in Ukraine, discussion of security needs of Roma people in Ukraine and challenges they face, and identification of possible ways forward.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: Does Justice Require Trials? The global explosion of plea bargaining and other trial waiver systems  
Convenor: Fair Trials Europe  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Fair Trials will host a panel discussion on the margins of the 2017 Human Dimension Implementation Meetings of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to present our research on the global spread of trial waiver systems as described in the report, “The Disappearing Trial,” and to solicit the sharing of experiences in the use of trial waiver systems across the OSCE. The OSCE has undertaken substantial efforts to assist jurisdictions in adopting trial waiver systems and has monitored their implementation. Its member countries have rich and varied experience in these systems, from the United States where the practice is long-established to countries recently adopting and considering adopting new systems. This side event will capitalize on the comparative expertise of attendees at the meeting to identify jurisdictions and individuals with useful experiences of both good and bad practice in trial waiver systems. It will aim to raise the profile of trial waiver systems as a pressing challenge for human rights and rule of law protection and to gauge potential jurisdictions and partners for future work on this issue.

*Refreshments will be provided*

## **Tuesday, 19 September**

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Racism and the police state in western democracies  
Convenor: Justice and Liberties For All Committee  
Working language: English

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Summary: Analyzing the evolution of public discourse calling for restriction of civil liberties. The failures and impacts of antiterrorism measures on civil liberties. How racism shapes the security agenda. How communities are affected Recommendations to member states.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Independent Evaluation of Selected Human Dimension Commitments - Austria 2017  
Convenor: Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, Austria  
Working language: English

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Summary: Following the examples of Switzerland (2014), Serbia (2015) and Germany (2016), the Austrian Chairmanship 2017 is committed to continuing the good practice of commissioning an independent evaluation of selected OSCE Human Dimension Commitments. The European Training and Research Centre Graz (ETC) and the Austrian Ombudsman Board in its role as the Austrian NHRI will present the establishment of the process and their preliminary assessment. The practice of voluntary reports will be discussed with stakeholders, including the Civic Solidarity Platform.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: Secrecy surrounding the death penalty application in Belarus  
Convenor: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH); Human Rights Center "Viasna"  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: In Belarus, the rights of people sentenced to death are violated at all stages of legal proceedings. In line with the general secrecy surrounding the application of death penalty in Belarus, there is no official information about the conditions of detention of convicts on death row. The public is not informed of the death sentences or executions. Relatives are not being notified neither prior nor immediately after the execution. The body is not returned to the family and the burial site is not

disclosed. Official data is neither complete nor transparent. The recent FIDH and HRC "Viasna" report sheds light on the issue of death penalty in Belarus presenting rare evidence, testimonies, statistics on the enforcement of sentences, information about the detention conditions and execution process. During the side-event, family member of the executed prisoner and leading members of the campaign "Human Rights Defenders against Death Penalty in Belarus" will debate the secrets of the last European country applying capital punishment.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: The danger of speaking out – recent trends in the post-Soviet space  
Convenor: International Partnership for Human Rights (IPHR)  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: In countries across the post-Soviet space, human rights defenders and lawyers, pro-democracy activists, independent journalists, trade union activists, social media commentators and other courageous individuals who speak out about injustice, human rights violations and the lack of rule of law are paying the price. They are intimidated, attacked by pro-government media, subjected to surveillance and travel restrictions, summoned for questioning, sued for defamation, and detained, prosecuted and imprisoned on trumped-up charges following unfair trials. Independent human rights NGOs, media outlets and trade unions are the targets of restrictive and stigmatizing legislation, intrusive checks and inspections, warnings and sanctions, and even court-ordered closures. Peaceful protests against corruption, arbitrary actions by authorities and violations of the rights of residents are suppressed and participants detained. The governments of the region are exploiting concerns about national security and stability to justify repressive measures against key sectors of civil society. The protracted economic downturn, election cycles and other recent developments in the region have reinforced these alarming trends. This side event will give the floor to civil society representatives from post-Soviet countries, who will discuss current challenges to freedom of expression, association and assembly in their countries, share their first-hand insights and assessments of the situation and provide recommendations for strategies to counter threats to civil society in the region. There will also be time for discussion and questions from the audience. The side event will be held in English and Russian and refreshments will be provided.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: New challenges in fighting torture in OSCE region: expulsions, anti-terror actions, pressure on torture survivors.  
Convenor: Committee Against Torture  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: A joint side-event of Civic Solidarity Platform (International), World Organization Against Torture (international), Public Verdict Foundation (Russia) and Committee Against Torture (Russia). The side-event will be held and hosted by three organizations, two of which work in Russia on torture issue and will cover the most problematic issues related to protection of torture survivors and litigation on torture cases. The participants will talk about illegal prosecution of torture survivors for their complaints, growing number of expulsions and extraditions to the countries where the victims would be likely tortured or abducted and this concerns as expulsion outside OSCE region as well as inside it. The growing problem of use of torture when it is justified by fight against terror will also be covered during the event.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Nelson Mandela Rules - Tools for implementation  
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights  
Working language: English

Summary: In December 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the revised Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners concluding a four-year process of review, deciding that the revised SMR should be referred to also as the Nelson Mandela Rules to honour the legacy of the late President of South Africa. While underlining the absolute prohibition against torture and other ill-treatment, the revised Rules include up-to-date standards on issues related to daily life in prison. Since their adoption, prison administrations can go to one reliable and authoritative source for information on good prison management. Following the adoption of the revised the Nelson Mandela Rules, various institutions and organisations including ODIHR have embarked on producing tools to assist states and authorities with implementation. ODIHR and PRI are in the process to develop a guidance document on the implementation of the revised Rules, a practical tool for implementation for penitentiary staff, prison administrations, monitoring bodies and relevant policy-makers from the OSCE region aiming to improve penal systems and the treatment of prisoners in the OSCE region. Similarly, UNODC has recently published its checklist for internal inspections. . Part I of the side-event will provide an opportunity for OSCE delegations and other interested parties to learn about UN and PRI tools and activities. Part II will provide an insight on what the Mandela Rules mean for NPMs and how they apply and use them. The side event will also provide a platform to discuss practical challenges and best practices among OSCE participating States, and civil society organisations.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:30-14:30**  
Venue: **Plenary Hall**  
Title: Human Rights and Russian Militarization of Crimea: Effects and Threats  
Convenor: Crimean Human Rights Group  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: The Crimean Human Rights Group (CHRG) will present the information and analytical report: ‘Human Rights in the Context of Crimea Militarization’ where the facts of violating the human rights by the Russian military men and illegal para-military forces (‘crimean self-defense’) are documented. The human rights experts have also collected the information on the participation of RF political and non-governmental organizations, the Russian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate, the Kazaks and members of ‘volunteer corps’ in militarizing the public life and the war propaganda in Crimea. The CHRG experts have paid a particular attention to the militarization effects for the children and young people of Crimea as well as an illegal conscription into the Russian Army.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Plenary Hall**  
Title: The impact of shrinking democratic space on criminal justice  
Convenor: Open Society Foundations - Armenia  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Authorities continue to use excessive pre-trial detention as a tool to curb activity of political opponents. Based on political motives law enforcement and judicial authorities persecuted a number of individuals with opposing political beliefs in order to terminate their public activities. A distinguishing feature of these persecutions is the deprivation of liberty in violation of the right to a fair trial, as well as other rights and freedoms, such as freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Instead of restoring the violated rights, the courts act hand in hand with the law enforcement to cover the crimes of the authorities and persecute further the opposition and civic activists. In August 2016, the decision on pre-trial detention of Andreas Ghukasyan was prolonged after the latter stated his willingness to continue his oppositionist activities after the release. Systemic attacks on advocates in the course of the recent trials of the cases of “Sasna Tsrer” and “Armed Group of Nork” systemic attacks on advocates, as well as attempts to hinder their activities have become widespread. The law enforcement bodies and the judiciary intervene into the advocates’ lawful activities, hence restricting the opportunities of effective protection of the accused and, thus, violating their rights to a fair trial. While hindrance of advocates’ activities is criminalized, no one has been held liable for that so far. The hindrance of the advocates’ activities repeats during each trial of mentioned cases and is demonstrated by police violence, unlawful and arbitrary examinations and frequent judicial sanctions against the advocates. Lack of health services in prisons: health services in penitentiary system are not adequate and accessible as the institutions have neither sufficient and qualified medical staff nor up-to-date equipment. This situation leads to serious health-related problems for inmates. Most of the deaths in penal institutions are linked to health issues, which were not handled timely. At the same time there are no effective complaint mechanisms in these institutions for inmates to report the cases of torture. Another problem is the structural dependence of the medical service of penitentiaries to the jurisdiction of the Penitentiary Department of the Ministry of Justice, which leads to conflict of

interests in cases of reporting instances of torture, as well as to poor qualification of the medical servicemen, who are outside of the general system of the healthcare. There is no access to mental health services in majority of these institutions. There is a psychiatrist in the staff only in Nubarashen and Artik institutions and the psychiatric ward in the Hospital for Convicts, yet quite often the prisoners with severe mental disturbance are not transferred there to get professional services, which leads to ill-treatment. The poor conditions of detention, as well as lack of adequate health care services in penitentiaries often result in torture and inhuman treatment against the detainees. The recent most ardent case of torture was against Artur Sargsyan (“Bread bringer”), who passed away in the result of serious health issues, which allegedly exacerbated under the prolonged and unjustified pre-trial detention. Despite the fact that the human rights defenders demanded immediate release of A. Sargsyan and claimed that his health condition is incompatible with his measure of restraint, the government failed to release him before his condition became too severe.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Kyrgyzstan: Human Rights Situation Deteriorates Dramatically Ahead of Upcoming Presidential Elections  
Convenor: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Ahead of the Presidential elections in Kyrgyzstan scheduled for 15 October 2017, persecution of human rights defenders, journalists and opposition members intensified. Last months were marked by lawsuits filed by the President and his party against independent media, the court ban of any demonstrations in central places of Bishkek until 20 October 2017, smear campaigns and lawsuits against human rights defenders, violations of the right to a fair trial and complete ignoring of the UN decision to release human rights defender Azimjan Askarov. The side event will discuss ways for the international community to contribute to the first peaceful power transition in the country since the gain of independence in the 90s. Refreshments and sandwiches will be provided.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Russia: The State of Civil and Human Rights before the Presidential Election  
Convenor: Human Rights Centre "Memorial"; Association GOLOS; People in Need  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: In what shape is the Russian politics and civil society before the presidential election in March 2018? Representatives of Golos, HRC Memorial and People in Need will provide an overview of the current situation and latest trends in Russia. The focus will be given to the human rights situation in the country including politically motivated persecutions. In addition, the results of the Russian regional and gubernatorial elections held in first half of September 2017 will be reflected during the event.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: Issues of torture and ill-treatment in closed facilities in Central Asia countries  
Convenor: Penal Reform International; Regional Office in Central Asia  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Torture prevention in line with international standards is moving at varying pace across the Central Asia region. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan both ratified OPCAT in 2008 and have since designated and begun operation of their respective NPMs. Despite these positive steps there are still serious allegations of torture and violence against detainees across the region. Widespread and systemic use of torture and abuse were reported in both States in police, pre-trial and prison facilities, both to extract confessions and as additional punishment, even against juveniles in conflict with the law. According to the research conducted by PRI in closed institutions for juveniles in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan in 2014 more than half of young respondents noted that were subjected to ill-treatment by police officers, who used violence to obtain confession statements. It is reported that a lack of investigation and prosecution into allegations of torture or ill-treatment by officials led to a culture of impunity amongst persons of authority in this regard. For instance, in 2016 General Prosecutor's Office of the Kyrgyz Republic received 435 civil appeals of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment across the country. Only 33 criminal cases were issued. The same goes for Kazakhstan, among 470 registered complaints only 12 were heard by the court in 2016. With torture still pervasive across the region and with little accountability for those who commit it, there is a clear need to promote and build the concept of monitoring places of detention where this needs to be encouraged, and to strengthen and support the measures already in place and functioning to increase their effectiveness. All Central Asia countries lack a system of effective investigation of torture and death in custody. This side event will bring the latest data on torture in Central Asia countries and propose the ways to build effective torture prevention work. This side event is organized by Penal Reform International (PRI) office in central Asia in cooperation with civil society organisations "Bir Duino Kyrgyzstan" (Kyrgyzstan), "Kadyr-Kasiet" (Kazakhstan), "Kylym-Shamy" (Kyrgyzstan), "Child Rights Defenders League" (Kyrgyzstan). PRI is implementing number of projects aimed at reducing use of torture in places of detention, building effective system on torture prevention and fair torture facts investigation.

*Refreshments will be provided*



## **Wednesday, 20 September**

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Chinese Christians in Europe - utterance for defending human rights, keeping away from persecution  
Convenor: Eglise de Dieu Tout-Puissant (Church of Almighty God)  
Working language: English

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Summary: Chinese Christians in Europe - Speak Out in Defense of Human Rights and Repudiation of Persecution.

In 2015, many Chinese Christians who had been brutally persecuted by the Chinese Communist government successively fled to France - a state party to the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees - and submitted their applications for asylum to the French government. Unfortunately, of all the applicants, only two persons have been granted asylum to-date, with about 52% of them still pending for processing and the other 48% completely rejected, facing the danger of being repatriated to China.

What kind of problems are these Christians encountering in their quest for asylum? What is their status quo? Where will their future be? We sincerely invite representatives of governments, international organizations and civil groups to show solicitude to these Chinese Christians. Chinese Christians encounter similar difficulties in Germany, the Netherlands, and Italy, and some of them will be present at this conference to discuss about these problems.

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: Religious persecution of religious minorities by cooperation of state bodies (police, court, ministries) with anti-cult movements in the Czech Republic  
Convenor: Religious Society Path of Guru Jara  
Working language: English

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Summary: Rule of law - fair-trial - independence of courts and behaviour of the state and society towards religious minorities, according situation experienced in the Czech Republic. Throughout the world, and also in the Czech Republic, new religious movements are persecuted and discriminated systematically according to the 11-step typical scheme disclosed in 2012. The case study on FECRIS - antisect movement and state neutrality (published in Religion – Staat – Gesellschaft, journal for the study of beliefs and worldviews by Dresden University). This scheme of persecution typical for FECRIS or other anti-cult organizations in the world primarily uses media to manipulate and intimidate public opinion on a minor religious group and exploit governmental bodies for the persecution and discrimination of their targets. Contemporary Czech Republic is strictly atheist. According to a recent Paw Research Center study in the Czech Republic, Central and Eastern Europe's

most secular country - about 7 in 10 Czechs (72%) do not identify with a religious group, while on a separate question, two thirds (66%) say they do not believe in God. The Czech Republic is repeatedly quoted as one of the most atheist countries in the world, also according to some other polls. This situation creating specific context of the country, where religious pluralism, OSCE guidelines supporting freedom of religion and belief and UN recommendation about protection of vulnerable minorities, including defined by religion, is not taking in account. Because representatives of state bodies often do not act neutral, have limited or lacking objective information sources about religious minorities, and are unaware that they are playing an active role in such a scheme of persecution, this pattern of liquidation or at least damage can be very easily effective. Larger traditional organisations also occasionally face some persecution tactics such as police raids and fabricated criminal accusations hardly to cope with (for instance, questionable police raid of UOOZ police anti-terrorist force during prayers in Prague mosque in 2014), but their situation is still easier to endure, compared to religious minorities, which are far more vulnerable and practically unprotected. Any state cannot be neutral, supporting ideas of freedom of religion and belief, promoting religious pluralism and tolerance towards religious minorities without discrimination, when the governmental apparatus officially cooperates with members of anti-cult movement as independent experts on the area of their interest, thus religious minorities, new religious movements and their alleged danger for the society. The anti-cult movement in the Czech Republic is represented by "The Society for Study of Sects and New Religious Movements." This civil society has been repeatedly and heavily criticized for its extremely discriminative discourse by the Czech Helsinki Committee (especially in 1999 and 2002) and by Czech academics from the field of religion (within 2000-2005). Because the anti-cult movement still functions in synergy with governmental bodies such as police forces, courts, the Ministry of Culture and media, it is heavily perpetuating the toxic attitudes toward spirituality in the Czech Republic which is responsible for destroying the sanity, wellness and rights of citizens to any personal religious belief or freedom of any kind. In the Czech Republic, new religious movements are practically unprotected against social prejudices, hate speech and hate crimes (Yoga in Daily life, Sahaja Yoga, Yogi Sat Nath), and sometimes even systematically persecuted or discriminated by the state representatives itself (as Jiri Krutina - Jiri Vacek, Petr Chobot, Church of Scientology, Grail movement). The Path of Guru Jura is not only among the top most persecuted groups in CR, but has been victim to the most severe methods of persecution since the communist era. The police should have effective corrective mechanisms in place in the case of its misuse of power. The right to a fair trial should be respected and upheld in every case, regardless of religion. The right to a fair trial also includes the right of respect for the presumption of innocence. State authorities should be able to recognize religion, belief or opinion as possible field of discrimination, according Antidiscrimination Act (2009) and be proactive in combatting hate crimes, prejudices, ignorance and intolerance based on religious belief, including that found in the media and on the internet.

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Right to work has no gender  
Convenor: Anti-Discrimination Centre "Memorial"  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: The first woman-pilot flying solo across the Atlantic Amelia Earhart proved 85 years ago (in 1932) that men and women were "equal in jobs requiring intelligence, coordination, speed,

coolness and willpower.”<http://www.care2.com/causes/amelia-earhart-early-pilot-and-feminist.html> However, still exist legal bans for women to be employed in a number of professions, requiring ability "to maintain a high level of attention and concentration, ability to quickly react" (according to Supreme Court of Russia, ruling on Klevets-case, 2009); the bans are explained by "the need to preserve women's health and the quality of health of future generations" <https://adcmemorial.org/all-jobs4all-women/> Hundreds of jobs are forbidden for women as "hard, harmful, and/or dangerous" in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women stated that this approach: "treats men and women differently, it in no way promotes the employment of women and it is based on discriminatory stereotypes". ADC Memorial is running the campaign all-jobs4all-women <https://adcmemorial.org/all-jobs4all-women/> The goal of the campaign is to achieve the cancellation of lists of types of jobs and professions banned to women in all Eastern European and Central Asian countries. The side event of ADC Memorial is dedicated to the need to end gender discrimination in employment and to guarantee all women the right to work where they want. Activists, lawyers and politicians from Eastern Europe will share their experience in opposing the discriminating women law and practice. A video-clip about woman truck-driver in Russia (one of the "forbidden for women professions") will be presented by the author (film producer Tatiana Chistova) and the hero of it - truck-driver Eugenia Markova.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: Lawyers Need Legal Protections too: Human Rights Lawyers Working in Challenging Environments  
Convenor: Justice International; Lawyers for Lawyers; International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (HFHR)  
Working language: English

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Summary: The Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), Justice International (JI), Lawyers for Lawyers (L4L), International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) and Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (HFHR) are highlighting the important role lawyers play when working in challenging conditions, performing professional duties representing human rights defenders, journalists, activists, opposition members and regular citizens. The panel of speakers and experts will discuss the challenging situation for individual lawyers and the legal profession as a whole in the Eurasian region. In particular, this discussion will include cases from Belarus, Crimea, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The focus will be on current trends in civil society in the region, explanations of the national and international legal mechanisms of protection or the lack thereof, presentation of specific cases, and discussion of the ways to move towards finding solutions in defending lawyers working under threat. Over the past several years, this region has not seen improvements in the human rights situation — much the opposite, governments are becoming increasingly authoritarian and citizens are seeing their rights curtailed on a number of fronts. In countries with limited respect for human rights and weakening civil society, lawyers can play a key role in slowing or reversing the trend towards authoritarianism. However, lawyers' work is becoming increasingly difficult as they face retaliation, harassment and abuse as a result of performing their

professional duties upholding the rule of law. Nevertheless, lawyers are still willing to take the risk and work in these challenging conditions under increased pressure to defend the ideals of human rights and rule of law by representing defenders, activists, opposition members, journalists, and regular citizens. The panel will discuss current issues facing lawyers and defenders who work and live under threat in challenging conditions. For example, the February-March protests in Belarus showed that the government yet again failed to respect fundamental human rights by suppressing peaceful protestors and arresting more than 700 people including lawyers and human rights defenders, and we will explore the important role lawyers played in these events. In annexed Crimea, lawyers are working in challenging conditions representing the threatened Crimean Tatar minority. In Kazakhstan, the lawyers are being threatened with criminal prosecution as a result of fulfilling their professional obligations. In Tajikistan, some lawyers are still being behind the bars as a result of their work representing people who are opposing government's policies. In closed countries like Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, it is extremely difficult for lawyers to openly work representing human rights defenders as the threat to their own lives and the lives of their families is too high. As a result, many lawyers working inside these countries cannot travel abroad, the human rights defenders living outside these countries will share with their cases.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Best practice in national responses to Trafficking in Human Beings and Modern Slavery  
Convenor: United Kingdom Delegation to the OSCE  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Every country is affected at some level by human trafficking and modern slavery – be it as a source, transit or destination country. Despite local and international effort, Modern Slavery is a truly global issue, affecting all OSCE participating States. According to the International Labour Organization it is a crime that generates illegal profits of \$150 billion annually. National approaches to tackling Modern Slavery must reflect the complexity and enormity of the challenge. At this side event, speakers will share best practice and lessons learned from the UK experience, in particular the role of competent authorities (or “first responders”) in protecting victims and reducing the risk of them being re-trafficked, and raising awareness at community level as a crucial pillar of the UK’s prevention strategy. The event will also explore how the UK is partnering with countries in the OSCE to ensure a fully effective response to the challenge of Modern Slavery.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:30-14:30**  
Venue: **Plenary Hall**  
Title: Equal Access: People with disabilities and elections  
Convenor: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Georgia  
Working language: English

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Summary: The event aims at providing information on the process of reforms undertaken by Georgia in recent years. It will also serve as a useful platform for exchange of information and best practices. A critical assessment by international experts and a discussion between Government Representatives and experts as well as input of the participating delegations will benefit the discussions on exploring the issue from different angles. Moreover, apart from what has already been accomplished, the discussions should also cover such aspects as challenges related to reform process and issues remaining to be addressed.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: Addressing Discrimination and Inequality in the Central Asian Region  
Convenor: Equal Rights Trust  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: The Equal Rights Trust will present findings from its work on addressing discrimination and inequality in the Central Asian region. Findings will be presented from its reports focusing on Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan which provide an unprecedented insight into discrimination on the basis of religion, ethnicity, political opinion, gender, sexual orientation, disability and other grounds and where little has previously been reported on such issues.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Child protection services - right to respect for family life, the right to a fair trial and rights of the child  
Convenor: "Ordo Iuris" Institute for Legal Culture  
Working language: English, Polish

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Summary: The side event addresses the threats to the human rights system that may result from activities of child protection services. The legal framework and activities of Norwegian Barnevernet office will be assessed. The statutory regulations and case law will be presented in a context of

international guarantees for human rights, with particular emphasis on Convention on the Rights of the Child, European Convention of Human Rights and Hague Convention on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement and Co-operation in Respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: The Role of Cultural and Religious Identity in Humanitarian Diplomacy  
Convenor: World Russian People's Council  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Humanitarian diplomacy can play important role in providing peace and stability, including areas affected by conflicts. Mutually respectful dialogue of historical, cultural and religious traditions can serve as an instrument for peaceful coexistence of different countries and nations. Humanitarian diplomacy is important today in combatting discrimination and persecution against Christians in the Middle East and across the world.

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Plenary Hall**  
Title: Right to quality education in Armenia  
Convenor: Open Society Foundations - Armenia  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Moderator: Larisa Minasyan, Open Society Foundations-Armenia, Executive Director. Presentation 1. Corruption in education as a humper to realization of the right to quality education. Speaker: Arevik Anapiosyan, Institute of Public Policy, Executive Director. Presentation 2. Social dimension of general education. Speaker: Lilit Nazaryan. Open Society Foundations-Armenia, Education Program Coordinator.

*Refreshments will be provided*

## **Thursday, 21 September**

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: HDIM 2017 - Women's Power Breakfast: Promoting equality between women and men through Gender-sensitive democratic institutions  
Convenor: OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights  
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: Promoting equality between women and men through gender-sensitive democratic institutions. In 1995, at the Fourth International Conference on Women, held in Beijing, gender mainstreaming was established as an internationally agreed strategy for promoting gender equality. The legacy of the Beijing Platform for Action was highlighted in the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality where “effective gender-mainstreaming, with the goal of achieving gender equality, is important if full use is to be made of the human capital in the OSCE area.” In the long run, gender mainstreaming aims to transform discriminatory social institutions and practices, recognizing that discrimination can be embedded explicitly or implicitly in a wide variety of laws, cultural norms and community practices. Mainstreaming can reveal a need for changes in goals, strategies and actions to ensure that both women and men can influence, participate in and benefit from development processes. This may lead to changes in organizations – structures, procedures and cultures – to create organizational environments that are conducive to the promotion of gender equality. The 2017 Women's Power Breakfast will provide a platform for discussion on the transformative potential of gender-sensitive institutions, including democratic institutions and parliaments in particular, as one of the approaches to advance women's participation in public and political life as well as to promote and achieve gender equality in the OSCE region. ODIHR's new publication Making Laws Work for Women and Men: A Practical Guide to Gender-Sensitive Legislation will be presented during the event to highlight the responsibility of law-makers to equally promote and protect the rights of both women and men. The Women's Power Breakfast will, traditionally, bring together women parliamentarians and government officials, civil society representatives, as well as the OSCE and other international organizations.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: LGBTI persons outside the Law in Chechnya (Russia). What should be the international community's reaction?  
Convenor: Permanent Mission of the Republic of Lithuania to the International Organizations in Vienna  
Working language: English

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Summary: This discussion, organized by (Permanent Mission of the Republic of Lithuania to the OSCE, ILGA Europe (TBC), Freedom House (TBC)) will provide possibility to take stock of the

current situation in the Republic of Chechnya (with testimonies of victims), to overview the response of the international community (both at the OSCE and the UN level) in the area of addressing violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and to look for synergies of international organisations to combat this negative phenomenon. It will also serve as a platform for generating ideas for the OSCE action in this regard.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **08:15-09:45 (SIDE EVENT CANCELLED)**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Addressing Discrimination and Inequality in Azerbaijan  
Convenor: Equal Rights Trust  
Working language: English

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Summary: During the event the Equal Rights Trust will present findings from its three year project addressing discrimination and inequality in Azerbaijan. To do this, it will launch its report which analyses the legal framework on equality in Azerbaijan and provides, for the first time, a comprehensive overview of discrimination faced on the basis of a number of different grounds including, religion, gender, disability, political opinion, sexual orientation and gender identity, race and ethnicity.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Homonormativity and Christian Dissent in UK: why churches are silent  
Convenor: Core Issues Trust  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: The United Kingdom state apparatus has fully embraced the normalisation of homosexual practices and uses all means at its disposal to promote gender-mainstreaming to overturn any vestige of Judeo-Christian foundation in its political footprint. The Church of England's Arch Bishops Welby and Sentamu are leading the alignment of church and state with respect to the ideology of sexuality. Sex is becoming increasingly politicised and fully exploited as the means by which the state gains increasing control of its citizenry. How might Christian dissenters respond to the state's promotion of homonormativity and what are the avenues open to them in rallying to offer an effective alternative understanding of human sexuality? How might dissenters' voices, objecting to state exploitation of sexual mores and increasing power, be heard? This session provides insight into new pathways by



which Christian and social conservative dissenters might work to create different options for those who reject the State's narrative on sexuality.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: The importance of education on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) as part of the comprehensive concept of security, particularly among minority communities  
Convenor: Permanent Mission of Belgium to the OSCE  
Working language: English

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Summary: Women's sexual and reproductive health is related to multiple human rights, including the right to life, the right to be free from torture, the right to health, the right to privacy, the right to education, and the prohibition of discrimination. In recent years, more attention has been given to the importance of education on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) as part of the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security. This side event will examine the impact of SRHR violations and the link to OSCE's comprehensive concept of security. The expert panellists will explore the challenges that some women and girls face in different communities of the OSCE region as well as the role education can play in preventing SRHR violations. The organizers will invite panel members and participants to provide recommendations for participating States and OSCE structures on how to address challenges related to SRHR in the OSCE region.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:15-14:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Right down to the roots – what does it take to prevent violence against women?  
Convenor: OSCE Secretariat  
Working language: English, Russian

Summary: The OSCE recognized the threat to human security posed by gender-based violence in two Ministerial Council decisions on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women in 2005 and 2014. Measures are needed to prevent gender-based violence in all circumstances, including during and after armed conflict and emergencies. The introduction of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence ('Istanbul Convention') provided an important landmark to improve national legislation and mechanisms to prevent violence and protect victims/survivors. Despite the strong international commitments and conventions and increased attention to the issue of gender-based violence, the reality is that still women across the OSCE region are subjected to violence every day. The underlying causes of the violence, which is rooted in gender inequality, persist. Combating violence against women requires an accelerated and comprehensive approach, focusing on protection and response, but also on addressing the root causes

of violence. This side event will provide an opportunity to identify ways forward to address what may be the most challenging part of combating violence against women: prevention. Presentations will be provided of successful approaches to prevention at the national and regional levels, followed by an interactive discussion with HDIM participants. The focus will be on prevention strategies designed to put the international frameworks into practice, including the CEDAW Convention and the Istanbul Convention.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **13:30-14:30 (SIDE EVENT CANCELLED)**  
Venue: **Plenary Hall**  
Title: Human Rights in Ukraine  
Convenor: Chernivtsy Regional NGO "Human Rights"  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: Human rights in Ukraine during hybrid war.

Time: **18:15-19:45 (SIDE EVENT CANCELLED)**  
Venue: **Plenary Hall**  
Title: New World Knocking: Brainstorming Reforms for the OSCE in the 21st Century  
Convenor: OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek/OSCE Academy in Bishkek  
Working language: English

Summary: Over four decades after the signing of the Helsinki Final Act and more than a quarter century after the end of the Cold War, the OSCE appears to remain a creature of the old world and often find it difficult to navigate the realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The ideals and commitments of the Helsinki Accords appear to be constantly violated in its sphere of influence. Among other things, individual human rights violations have remained the norm in many places, while deadly wars involving tens of thousands of deaths with direct and indirect involvement of some of the OSCE's founding States proliferate the planet. Nuclear war is once again a distinct possibility and global warming threatens the lives and wellbeing of present and future generations. Despite the good intentions of many of the OSCE participating States and institutions, the Organization has become highly bureaucratic, top-heavy and often incapable of pragmatic engagements to tackle the many problems of the components of comprehensive security model facing the populations of its pS and beyond. This informal session hopes to present and brainstorm the necessary reforms that can transform the OSCE to a stronger, more pragmatic, effective and proactive entity in taking on the critical issues of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 1**  
Title: The Difficult Path to Asylum for Christians of the Church of Almighty God in Italy and Germany  
Convenor: Stella del Mattino (Church of Almighty God)  
Working language: English, Chinese

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Summary: As a result of the escalating persecutions against house churches by the Chinese Communist government, many Chinese Christians have been forced to flee overseas. Christians of the Church of Almighty God have applied for asylum in Italy. Due to the Chinese government's massive defamatory campaign against the Church of Almighty God by restricting news media and manipulating networks, this nascent Christian church and the facts of Christians being persecuted are little understood by the outside world. At present, among the Christians of the Church of Almighty God who sought asylum in Italy, over 90% of their applications have been rejected by the Italian Ministry of the Interior. Most of the Christians of the Church of Almighty God who fled to Germany are facing the same predicament of being refused asylum. We hereby call upon representatives of governments, international organizations and civil groups to show solicitude to these Christians of the Church of Almighty God, and explore together how to safeguard the basic human rights of this vulnerable group.

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Nagorno Karabakh up close: between fire and hope  
Convenor: European Armenian Federation for Justice and Democracy  
Working language: English

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Summary: Film Screening and Discussion The film documentary "The Besieged" is a unique insight into the situation in Stepanakert - Nagorno Karabakh - in the years 1991-1992 and the daily life of people there, shortly after the bloody war erupted. The city of Stepanakert, which was being bombed by the Azerbaijani armed forces, had been cut off from the outside world and survival had become a way of life. The documentary is based on archive footage and testimonies of the inhabitants of the city. After the screening of the film, EAFJD would like to discuss the current status of Nagorno Karabakh with the participants of this year's HDIM.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **18:15-19:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Human Rights and Political Persecution in Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and Kazakhstan  
Convenor: Newspaper "Vzglyad"  
Working language: English

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Summary: The expert seminar is aimed at presenting and discussing concrete cases of human rights violations and political persecution in Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and Kazakhstan. The Russian Federation is one of three 'leaders' among all Council of Europe member states when it comes to number of unexecuted rulings of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR); during the event speakers will present individual cases in which Russian authorities have ignored international obligations and failed to apply ECHR decisions. While in Kazakhstan, a new wave of repressions against independent media outlets, journalists and bloggers; as well as peaceful protesters and opposition activists has silent dissenting voices in the country. Worrying developments and facts of politically motivated prosecutions were noticed in the last year in Moldova and Ukraine where NGOs, civil society representatives, independent journalists and opposition politicians are harassed in retaliation of their pro-reform and professional activities. Particularly in the case of Moldova, independent lawyers and judges even face criminal prosecution. The event will be an opportunity to further discuss what kind of mechanisms and tools of OSCE could be involved to stop such practice. The event will be organised by "Vzglyad" in partnership with the Open Dialog Foundation.

*Refreshments will be provided*

## **Friday, 22 September**

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 2**  
Title: Migration and Democracy  
Convenor: International IDEA  
Working language: English

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Summary: Fuelled by globalization, climate change and state failure, and due to its transnational nature, migration poses fundamental challenges to democratic societies on both the national and local levels, particularly in cities. It challenges the nation state and, by extension, policy areas that represent core components of state sovereignty, including citizenship. Large migration flows strain democratic institutions' capacity to effectively integrate migrants into society, and call into question the extent to which governments should enable migrants' political participation and integration. Migration affects governments' ability to deliver public services. This side event will present and discuss preliminary findings from International IDEA's upcoming publication on 'The Global State of Democracy – Exploring Democracy's Resilience' focused on global and regional democracy trends and the specific challenge of migration. It will discuss the democratic dividend of migration focused on political integration for destination and political engagement of the diaspora for origin countries, and how policymakers can effectively address public concerns on migration while also reaping the benefits of inclusive and multicultural integration policies. In addition, case studies from International IDEA's Refugees and Democracy project showcasing comparative knowledge on the impact of refugees and asylum seekers on political life of their host and origin countries through formal and informal means of political participation will be presented, Field research was conducted in Kenya, Germany, Sweden,

Uganda, Turkey, Lebanon, the United Kingdom and South Africa focused on experiences of refugee and asylum seeker communities originating from 5 of the largest source countries: Syria, Somalia, Afghanistan, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The side event will feature presentations by International IDEA experts and field researchers under the IDEA Refugees and Democracy project. OSCE Delegations, civil society and OSCE experts are welcome to attend the Side Event.

*Refreshments will be provided*

Time: **08:15-09:45**  
Venue: **Meeting Room 3**  
Title: Participation of the public in the selection and evaluation of judges. The case of Ukraine  
Convenor: Centre for Democracy and Rule of Law (CEDEM)  
Working language: English, Russian

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Summary: September 2016 marked the launch of the judicial reform in Ukraine, one of the key innovations of which was the creation of the Public Integrity Council as an independent public body involved in the selection and evaluation of judges. In accordance with the Law of Ukraine "On Judicial System and Status of Judges", Public Integrity Council assists High Qualification Commission of Judges of Ukraine in determining the compliance of candidates for the positions of judges with the criteria of integrity and professional ethics. Established in November 2016, Public Council of Integrity participated in the selection of candidates for the positions of judges of the new Supreme Court. Within the framework of the competition, Public Integrity Council evaluated nearly 400 candidates and provided High Qualification Commission of Judges with background information regarding 250 of them. Also, representatives of the Public Integrity Council presented their assessments at the meetings of the High Qualification Commission of Judges, where decisions on the candidates were made. Based on the conclusions of the Public Integrity Council, 51 candidates dropped out of the competition due to non-compliance with the criteria of integrity and professional ethics, and the other 8 candidates refused to participate in the competition. During the event successful experience of the Public Integrity Council and the challenges it faced while performing its powers. The presentation will be followed by the discussion of opportunities for disseminating the above said experience of Ukraine in the European countries. The pool of speakers of the event will include members of the Public Integrity Council, as well as Ukrainian and international experts.

*Refreshments will be provided*