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OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting Warsaw, 16 - 27 September 2019

EU statement – Working Session 18: Discussions of human dimension activities (with special emphasis on project work)

Madam Moderator,

I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of the European Union.

I would like to begin by making the following recommendations.

- Meeting the conditions for the timely adoption of the OSCE Unified Budget is essential to facilitate the executive structures and field offices in delivering on their mandates, including in the human dimension.
- OSCE participating States should regularly consult with the offices of the executive structures to avail of the wealth of expertise carried within those structures.
- The executive structures should continue to co-ordinate closely with one another to maximise synergies and to avoid duplication.

Madam Moderator,

We welcomed the adoption of the 2019 OSCE Unified Budget this year, and commend the Slovak CIO for facilitating agreement. We emphasise that the adoption of the OSCE Unified Budget by the due date is essential to enable the executive structures of the organisation to prepare, plan and carry out their projects and taskings in an efficient and effective manner.

The executive structures of the OSCE offer a wide range of services that, availed of regularly, are invaluable to all of us in enhancing the implementation of our human dimension commitments. Examples include facilitating visits and monitoring missions, as well as regular consultation on third dimension issues. EU Member States have benefited greatly from such



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assistance across a wide spectrum, including on many of the areas that have been discussed at HDIM this year, and we will continue to do so.

Executive structures should continue to coordinate closely with each other and as appropriate, with other relevant international and regional organisations, such as the United Nations and the Council of Europe. Such sharing of learning and experience can only enhance the effectiveness and impact of each institution or regional organisation, including in terms of project work undertaken.

For similar reasons, the executive structures should also continue to develop close cooperation with civil society when designing projects and activities to ensure increased participation of civil society in the implementation phase. There may be scope for 'pathfinder' projects to illustrate a particular issue and set an example.

Executive structures should continue to improve the monitoring and evaluation of their projects, from conception through to completion, including by prioritising the use of key performance indicators and implementing results-based management best practice. They should, where appropriate, make use of social media to highlight their activities.

Madam Moderator,

The EU places a strong and supportive emphasis on the Human Dimension of the OSCE. It is essential to our comprehensive concept of security. Without respect for human rights and the rule of law, there can be no lasting security. It is the responsibility of all participating States to ensure that they take all possible measures to ensure that fundamental rights and freedoms are upheld and protected.

The EU regrets that some recent developments in parts of the OSCE region indicate a lack of respect for fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly. We, all 57, have made commitments, and we must uphold them. The fact that they are commitments common to all of us opens a space for dialogue to ensure that they are implemented in full. It is in this context that the EU warmly welcomes the Decision on the Safety of Journalists at Milan last December as well as the cross-dimensional decision on Combating Violence Against Women. It is our sincere hope that these decisions demonstrate a



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collective willingness to further build on our commitments in the Human Dimension at Bratislava.

The EU remains steadfast in our determination to promote a safe and enabling environment for civil society. We stand firmly behind the mandates of ODIHR, RFoM and HCNM and the work of these autonomous institutions. Their work, through a wide variety of projects and other activities, is integral to underpinning democracy, rule of law and fundamental freedoms throughout the OSCE region. The EU recognises and welcomes the indispensable role played by ODIHR in monitoring elections and supporting human rights defenders, as evidenced throughout the past year: we regret that resourcing issues mean that it is not always possible for ODIHR to carry out monitoring missions. Within the office of the RFOM, the increasing challenges posed by a rapidly changing media environment are addressed, as the Office continues to bring to public awareness the need for the participating States to implement our media freedom commitments. The HCNM's endeavours to embed the protection of national minority rights as an integral element of good governance are as essential as its vital role in deescalating and addressing inter-ethnic tension throughout the region.

Madam Moderator,

Project work remains an important way for OSCE executive structures to engage with participating States and to assist us in implementing our commonly agreed commitments. All field operations have human dimension responsibilities, and the EU attaches great importance to the fact that their mandates and activities continue to cover human dimension related issues. We would also like to recall the importance of maintaining human dimension activities, an integral part of the comprehensive concept of security of the OSCE, in dealing with conflict cycles. A key example of this is the invaluable work of the OSCE executive structures in response to the crisis in and around Ukraine, where their efforts which includes the include the strengthening of dialogue among civil society and key government stakeholders on human dimension issues. In this context, the Project Coordinator's Office in Ukraine and the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine are of particular importance. To be fully effective, the SMM must be ensured safe, secure and unimpeded access throughout Ukraine.



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In conclusion, the EU wishes to underline the significant role played by the Human Dimension Committee (HDC), currently under the very able Chairmanship of the Czech Ambassador, Ivo Šrámek. The HDC has facilitated debate and discussion across the spectrum of our commitments, including from the voluntary reports provided by participating States, and we reiterate our support for the Committee's work.

Thank you.

The Candidate Countries REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and ANDORRA align themselves with this statement.

* Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.