



**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR TACAN İLDEM
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY**

**2013 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
Opening Plenary Session
Warsaw, 23 September 2013**

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

I would like to join the previous speakers in thanking the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights for its efforts in organizing this year's Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. I would also like to express our gratitude to our hosts, the Polish authorities, for their traditional generous hospitality.

The OSCE's human dimension lies at the core of our Organization's comprehensive concept of security, and no other single event more fully reflects the key role of human rights for the security and stability of the OSCE region than the yearly HDIM. What makes the HDIM so valuable is of course the indispensable participation of civil society, which allows governmental, institutional and NGO representatives to engage in lively and productive discussions on all aspects of the human dimension. The HDIM gives us all an opportunity to pronounce our various concerns and recommendations. It provides an unequalled platform for drawing attention to shortcomings in the implementation of existing human dimension commitments and underlining the perceived need for new ones.

Last week the Ukrainian Chairmanship-in-Office circulated the preliminary drafts of the human dimension decisions it is proposing for adoption at the upcoming Kyiv Ministerial Council. Certainly the representatives of the participating States will receive much useful input from civil society during the HDIM concerning the important issues addressed by the draft decisions. This valuable input will, in turn, flow into the negotiations on these drafts. We believe that a balanced approach within and among these draft texts is of prime importance to secure success in the end. In this vein, the artificial prioritization of certain human rights issues to the detriment of others is most likely to cause imbalance, which will inevitably result in disagreement. One of the strengths of our Organization is its reliance on consensus. Constructive engagement, goodwill and mutual respect are therefore essential if we are to overcome the persisting deadlock in the third dimension and achieve human rights deliverables in Kyiv after an unwelcome hiatus of two years. We need to be sensitive to the sensitivities of all others.

Mr. Chairperson, Distinguished Participants,

Turkey is fully committed to the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. As you have also stated on many occasions, Janez, human rights are universal, inalienable, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. Thus all the various topics on the HDIM's agenda this year are significant, and they all deserve our earnest attention. In this vein, while focusing on fundamental freedoms such as freedom of expression and the media, freedom of

assembly and association, freedom of religion or belief and the rule of law, to name just a few, we should also attend with equal concern to our commitments in other fields like combating intolerance and discrimination. The concerns vividly voiced by civil society during last year's HDIM session devoted to TND were no less than an eye-opener for many. Similarly, the more recent High-Level Conference on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination held this past May in Tirana was another important instance where calls were made by civil society for greater focus on TND issues. There is much more that our Organization can and should do in tackling the often violent manifestations of racism, xenophobia and discrimination in the OSCE area based on some perceived "otherness", be it religious, racial, ethnic, linguistic or otherwise in nature. We must bear in mind that victims of intolerance and discrimination do not only suffer from a lack of respect and understanding, but that their very human rights are violated. It falls to us to step up our vigilance and take urgent steps to rectify and prevent such grave injustices, in line with the commitments we have all pledged to uphold.

In closing, let me reiterate our hope that the discussions of the next two weeks will not only provide us with opportunities to assess the implementation of existing human dimension commitments, but also with fresh food for thought on alarming trends and worrying recent developments, along with valuable recommendations which will contribute to the finalization of the draft decisions before the Ministerial Council meeting in Kyiv. While looking forward to fruitful and constructive discussions in the working sessions and the various side events, I wish the participants of the HDIM every success.

Thank you.