

SCHEDULE OF SIDE EVENTS

To take place during the

HUMAN DIMENSION SEMINAR “EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION IN DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES”

The Helsinki Document of 1992 (Chapter IV) called for increasing the openness of CSCE 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, NGOs, governments, and other participants are encouraged to organize side meetings on relevant issues of their choice.

The opinions and information shared during the side events convened by participants do not necessarily reflect the policy of the OSCE/ ODIHR.

Thursday, 17 May	Thursday, 17 May
<p>Title: Challenges and Trends in Women’s Political Participation in South Caucasus and Central Asia</p> <p>Convenor: ODIHR Democratization Department/NGO Expert Panel on Gender Equality</p> <p>Time 13.15-14.45</p> <p>Venue: Meeting Room 1</p> <p>Language: Russian, English</p>	<p>Title: Presentation of the Survey of Freedom of Association in the World” Published under the auspices of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs</p> <p>Convenor: French Ministry of Foreign Affairs</p> <p>Time: 13.00 – 15.00</p> <p>Venue: Meeting Room 2</p> <p>Language: English</p>
Friday, 18 May	Friday, 18 May
<p>Title: Roma & Sinti: implementing commitments</p> <p>Convenor: ODIHR CPRSI</p> <p>Time: 13.00 – 15.00</p> <p>Venue: Meeting Room 2</p> <p>Language: English, Romani</p>	<p>Title: Democratic Governance: ODIHR Supporting Legal Reform and Promoting Transparent and Inclusive Law-Making Process</p> <p>Convenor: OSCE/ODIHR</p> <p>Time: 13.00 – 15.00</p> <p>Venue: Meeting Room 3</p> <p>Language: English</p>

OVERVIEW OF SIDE EVENTS

As submitted by the organizers

16 -18 May 2007

Warsaw

The side events below have been exclusively organized and scheduled at the request of participants of the Human Dimension Seminar. The content for each meeting was prepared by the organization convening the events and does not necessarily reflect the views of the OSCE, ODIHR.

Thursday, 17 May

Time: 13.15-14.45
Venue: Meeting Room 1
Title: Challenges and Trends in Women's Political Participation in South Caucasus and Central Asia
Convenor: ODIHR Democratization Department/NGO Expert Panel on Gender Equality
Language: Russian,English

Summary: While effective participation of women in governance still remains a problematic issue in many well-developed democracies where women enjoy much greater equality of opportunities, this is a particularly significant challenge in fledgling democracies where representative governments and democratic institutions have been introduced only recently. Achieving tangible results in this process requires an understanding from governments, political parties and other public stakeholders that the democratic reform can only be sustainable with women's full and equal participation in policymaking processes at all levels.

During the OSCE Human Dimension Seminar, the NGO Expert Panel on Gender Equality, established in 2004 with the support of the ODIHR Democratization Department, will host the side event "Challenges and Trends in Women's Political Participation in South Caucasus and Central Asia".

The Expert Panel on Gender Equality comprises fifteen civil society experts working to promote women's leadership, gender equality and increased role of women in decision making in the South Caucasus and Central Asia. The Panel is a unique cross-regional initiative, designed for exchange of local expertise and know-hoe in the field of gender equality and women's participation in democratic processes.

This side-event will seek to draw comments and questions from participating States' delegations and relevant NGOs to involve them closer in review of ongoing developments in broader areas of democratization and public participation, and will specifically address the questions of women's under-representation in political processes. Experts will also discuss examples of successful initiatives and lessons learnt in leadership development and civil society coalition building, co-operation with governments and political parties for promoting increased opportunities for women to participate in political processes and assume leadership positions.

Refreshments will be provided

Thursday, 17 May

Time: 13.00-15.00
Venue: Meeting Room 2
Title: Presentation of the "Survey of Freedom of Association in the World", published under the auspices of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Convenor: French Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Language: English

Summary: The recently published "Survey of Freedom of Association in the World" (Guide de la liberté associative dans le monde, Documentation Française, avril 2007) will be presented by the Ambassador of France for Human Rights, Mr. Michel Doucin.

As both an instrument for the exercise of vigilance and a practical tool for legislators and civil society, this 790 pages collective study, co-ordinated by Ambassador Doucin, analyses the laws governing freedom of association and assesses the interaction between the state and the civil society in 183 countries of the world.

Aiming at identifying and promoting best practices as well as remaining challenges relating to the exercise of this fundamental freedom, the Survey constitutes a useful instrument to support and complement OSCE's efforts to assist Participating states in implementing their commitments on freedom of association.

Free copies of the Survey will be available for participants (in French).

Refreshments will be provided

Friday, 18 May

Time: 13.00 – 15.00
Venue: Meeting Room 2
Title: Roma and Sinti: implementing commitments
Convenor: ODIHR CPRSI
Language: English, Romani

Summary: Within the framework and mandate given by the OSCE Action Plan on Roma and Sinti to ODIHR CPRSI, the side event will approach the issue of identifying ways of strengthening co-operation between ODIHR – pStates – OSCE Institutions and field operations on implementation of Action Plan's provisions.

Discussions will focus also on ways to increase and to reach a more efficient level of exchange of information and collection of input for elaboration of the regular *status reports* on implementation by the pStates of the Action Plan.

The side event will host also discussions about the existing practices to promote political participation of Roma, focusing on the best lessons learned and what would be the logical follow up actions that should be promoted and pursued at the level of pStates and local Roma communities.

Refreshments will be provided

Friday, 18 May

Time: 13.00-15.00
Venue: Meeting Room 3
Title: Democratic Governance: ODIHR Supporting Legal Reform and Promoting Transparent and Inclusive Law – Making Process
Convenor: OSCE/ODIHR
Language: English

Summary: The ODIHR's activities in the area of democratic governance have been significantly reinforced since 2004. The purpose of this side event is to offer an insight into a key component of these activities, namely the assistance provided by the ODIHR in co-ordination with OSCE field operations in support of legal reform on the one hand, and the consolidation of inclusive and transparent law-making processes on the other hand. A legal framework that does not sufficiently reflect OSCE commitments may not be conducive to the conduct of genuine and meaningful democratic elections. The ODIHR has developed mechanisms to strengthen its capacity to provide expert advice on electoral reform initiatives. In other areas, similar efforts are underway and they all benefit from the establishment within the ODIHR of a focal point on legislative assistance, which is responsible for co-ordinating this work and ensuring its consistency and high-level quality. Furthermore, while reviewing individual pieces of legislation, the ODIHR has found that some defects result from failures in the legislative process itself. In response, the ODIHR has developed a pilot methodology that aims to make legislative process efficient, open, and transparent. The side-event will include a presentation of this methodology as well as examples of how it has been applied so far.

Refreshments will be provided
