

16th HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING

Warsaw, 5 October 2012



Closing remarks by Ambassador Janez Lenarčič

Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

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Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

two intensive weeks of discussions are coming to an end.

On one hand we can be satisfied with the richness of the review and the large number of relevant recommendations, while on the other hand, it is disappointing that so many serious gaps in implementing human dimension commitments continue to be identified – including long-standing problems that have been raised at many Human Dimension Implementation Meetings without resolution over a period of many years, as well as some others that have emerged or become much more serious over the past year.

There is no need to go into summaries of each working session – that was already provided by rapporteurs. Therefore allow me to only highlight some characteristics of this – already 16th – Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM).

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Also this year, HDIM proved its continuous relevance, with:

- participation of 1072 government representatives and civil society activists from the OSCE's 56 participating States, of whom 577 representatives were from non-governmental organizations; geographical representation of NGOs was also balanced;
- the length of the lists of interventions. The most popular sessions were: **Independence of the judiciary and Right to a fair trial, Freedom of expression, free media and information, Freedom of assembly and association, Freedom of movement and Freedom of thought, conscience, religion**

or belief. However one session really stood out at this HDIM, with 91 interventions and only 90 seconds available for each intervention. This was the session 14 on **Tolerance and non-discrimination II (Prevention and responses to hate crimes, Combating racism, xenophobia and discrimination, Combating anti-Semitism and Combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims).**

- 51 side events that provided good opportunities for freer and informal discussions.

I really do hope that all these facts and numbers will be taken into consideration by all participating States when planning the future human dimension events. As it is already the established practice, I will present the outcome and the results of the HDIM at the PC on 8 November.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

With modalities of Human Dimension Events undergoing a review process, there may soon be some changes in the modalities, if participating States would agree. As we all know, the progress is impossible without change. So we in ODIHR welcome the efforts of OSCE participating States to make the events more attractive and the peer-review process more efficient. I strongly hope that the ongoing reform will bring innovative improvements corresponding to the needs of this day and age and yet will preserve the existing positive nature of the human dimension events as a unique forum in the OSCE region where different stakeholders can take stock of the implementation of the human dimension commitments, share best practices and make recommendations for improvement.

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Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me conclude by thanking all of you – the Irish Chairmanship, delegations of participating States, partner States, NGOs, colleagues from the OSCE institutions, field operations and other international organizations – for attending the HDIM and for actively contributing to the success of this meeting. I would like to particularly thank our keynote speaker Prof. Adam Daniel Rotfeld, the introducers, moderators and the rapporteurs. Finally, I would like to thank the interpreters as well as my ODIHR Team for the work they have invested to make this meeting a success.

Thank you for your attention and have a safe trip home or a nice weekend in Warsaw.