



Statement by the Delegation of Slovenia at the Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on “Promoting human rights, peaceful coexistence and security in the OSCE region through education”, Vienna, 8 October 2018, Session I – Policy making for mainstreaming human rights education in the OSCE region

Madam Moderator,

Today we are addressing important topic, which has been in the agenda of OSCE for many years. Already in 2003 OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty- First Century addressed this very topic in the following quote: "*The OSCE's efforts will in particular be targeted at the younger generation in order to build up their understanding of the need for tolerance and the importance of reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. Their outlook and perspective of the future are key. Where appropriate, the OSCE will therefore take on a stronger role in the field of education. An area such as human rights education would deserve particular attention.*"

Human rights education is still vital for establishing and maintaining a democratic, tolerant and sustainable society promoting human values and mutual respect. However, respect for human rights may only be achieved by informing people of their rights and the rights of others and by generating an active interest in these rights at both individual and community levels. Human rights are vital to long-term peace, stability and security, while human rights education helps prevent human rights violations and contributes significantly to attaining a just society. Development and security are inconceivable without respect for human rights, which is why Slovenia makes every effort to bind human rights to these two areas.

At the international level, Slovenia is among countries actively engaging in human rights education since 2005, when we chaired the OSCE. That year the ministerial decision 11/05 on promotion of human rights education and training in the OSCE was adopted in Ljubljana. In the same year we started with human rights education pilot project called "Our rights", which was then conducted in 17 languages, throughout the OSCE region for 66.000 children, also involving children from minority groups, including Roma children. The Expert Assessment of the OSCE Pilot Project clearly showed that it has helped raise awareness of the significance of teaching and learning about human and children's rights in all participating states.

In the following years Slovenia has enabled education on children's rights with the "Our Rights" project and teaching materials for more than 200.000 children in 26 countries in Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and Africa, therefore also beyond the OSCE region. The launch of this project coincided with the launch of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 10 December 2004 with the aim of promoting a common understanding of basic principles and methodologies of human rights education, providing a concrete framework for action and strengthening partnerships and cooperation from the international level down to the grass roots.

Human rights education and training is a lifelong process. It can prevent human rights violations by promoting a culture of peace, non-discrimination and tolerance anchored in respect for universal human rights and fundamental freedoms. We believe that it is essential to enable young people, who are still developing their identities, to learn about human rights, i.e. their rights and respecting the rights of others. Our experience shows that different environments present both great opportunities and exhibit pressing needs in this regard. We continue to understand that such projects and other efforts by international organizations, NGOs and government institutions are valuable for all.

Slovenia has been a member of the Platform for Human Rights Education and Training since 2009, which was the leading factor in drafting the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training in 2011, a document promoting the implementation of the World Programme for Human Rights Education in order to promote the development of a culture of human rights and to ensure a focus on human rights education at the national, regional and international levels. We continue to cooperate closely with members of this Platform in promoting human rights education and training, especially to implement the World Programme which is concluding its third phase and preparing for the fourth.

Just recently in September 2018, during the 39th session of the UN Human Rights Council that is chaired by Slovenia, a Resolution on the World Programme for Human Rights Education was adopted. A decision was made to make youth the focus group of the fourth phase of the World Programme, with a special emphasis on education and training in equality, human rights and non-discrimination, inclusion and respect for diversity, with the aim of building inclusive and peaceful societies, and for aligning the fourth phase with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and specifically with target 4.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals, taking into account the synergies between the different concepts and educational methods mentioned therein.

In conclusion we take this opportunity to call upon OSCE participating States and all other stakeholders to increase their efforts to implement and promote the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training and thus respect and promote universal human rights for all.

Thank you.