



## **Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting**

### **NATIONAL MINORITIES, BRIDGE BUILDING AND INTEGRATION**

**10-11 November 2016**

**Hofburg, Vienna**

### **ANNOTATED AGENDA**

#### **Background**

The protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities is essential to stability in the OSCE region and is thus a key element of the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security. In the 1975 Helsinki Final Act the participating States committed to respect the right of persons belonging to national minorities to equality before the law, to afford them the full opportunity for the actual enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms and to protect their legitimate interests in this sphere. In the 1990 Copenhagen Document the participating States reaffirmed that respect for the rights of persons belonging to national minorities as part of universally recognized human rights is an essential factor for peace, justice, stability and democracy in the participating States. The participating States committed to the protection of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of national minorities on their territory and to create conditions for the promotion of that identity. The participating States further recognized the particular importance of increasing constructive co-operation among themselves on questions relating to national minorities and that such co-operation seeks to promote mutual understanding and confidence, friendly and good-neighbourly relations, international peace, security and justice. In the 1990 Charter of Paris the participating States confirmed their determination to foster the rich contribution of national minorities to the life of their societies.

The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) is mandated to provide early warning and to take early action to prevent tensions involving national minority issues from developing into conflict. Since its creation in 1992 the HCNM has developed a set of tools to provide support and assist participating States to work constructively on issues related to minority-majority relations by adopting balanced and inclusive policies to promote integration of societies, protect the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, and remove root causes of potential inter-ethnic conflict. Among these tools are the institution's Recommendations and Guidelines, including *The Bolzano/Bozen Recommendations on National Minorities in Inter-State Relations* of 2008 and *The Ljubljana Guidelines on the Integration of Diverse Societies* of 2012.

While the risk factor of inter-ethnic relations often stays in the forefront of the perception of inter-ethnic relations, positive examples serve to demonstrate opportunities to strengthen integration of diverse societies and to create positive relations between States and prevent conflict. The German OSCE Chairmanship thus wishes to encourage a discussion of the bridge building role and potential of national minority issues across the OSCE area. The concept of using minority-majority relations as bridge-builder stems from the opportunities which lie in the variety of connections that can be built upon diverse societies to promote peace, security and economic development, both within and between States. The OSCE Chairmanship has seized the HCNM with the task to look closer into bridge building opportunities that exist in diverse societies and to identify those policies and mechanisms which can transform these opportunities into reality. A group of researchers has been asked to analyze structural factors such as the existing legal frameworks, policies and practices and the experiences and perspectives at the level of international relations, national and local politics, and at grassroots level on the bridge building role and potential of national minorities. Drawing on first results, this Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting will discuss good practices from across the OSCE area, with a focus on the following key areas:

- 1) Legal mechanisms for bridge building across States
- 2) Promoting the bridge building role of national minority issues across various policy areas
- 3) Empowering civil society to build bridges on the grassroots level

## **DAY 1:**

<b>15:00-16:00 OPENING SESSION</b>
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### *Opening remarks:*

**Ambassador Eberhard Pohl**, Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council, Permanent Representative of Germany to the OSCE

**Mr. Henrik Villadsen**, Director of the OSCE Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities

**Ms. Katarzyna Jarosiewicz-Wargan**, First Deputy Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

### *Keynote Speech:*

**Prof. Rainer Hofmann**, Professor of Constitutional Law, Public International Law and European Law, Goethe University Frankfurt am Main

**16:00-18:00 SESSION 1: Legal mechanisms for bridge building across States**

***Introducers:***

**Prof. Jens Woelk**, Professor of Law, University of Trento & Senior Researcher, European Academy of Bozen/Bolzano

**Ms. Ana Nikolov**, Director of Planning Balkans, Central European Service for Cross-Border Initiatives & Coordinator for Balkans, Association of European Border Regions

**Mr. Milan Bošnjak**, Special Adviser for Croatian National Minorities Issues Abroad & Vice Co-Chair of the Intergovernmental Joint Committee for the Protection of Minorities between the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Hungary

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***Moderator:***

**Mr. Walter Kemp**, Visiting Fellow, Institute for Human Sciences

Ethno-cultural boundaries and State borders seldom overlap. Almost all States have minorities of some kind, with many belonging to communities which transcend State frontiers. Minority issues thus often engage the interest of more than one State and constitute a potential source of inter-State tension. Conversely, solutions to minority questions are often not only found within but also between States. States are under a dual responsibility to protect and promote the rights of persons belonging to national minorities under their jurisdiction and to act as responsible members of the international community with respect to minorities under the jurisdiction of another State. In dealing with issues concerning the protection of persons belonging to national minorities, States should be guided by the rules and principles established in international human rights documents, including those multilateral instruments and mechanisms which have been created specifically to support the implementation of standards and commitments relating to minorities, notably of the United Nations, the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the EU. In 2008 the HCNM published *The Bolzano/Bozen Recommendations on National Minorities in Inter-State Relations*. These recommendations provide representatives of States, national minorities and international organizations with guidance on how to address the questions concerning national minorities that arise in the context of inter-State relations in a way that protects and promotes the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, prevents conflict, maintains good inter-ethnic and inter-state relations. The Bolzano/Bozen Recommendations encourage States to co-operate across international frontiers within the framework of friendly bilateral and multilateral relations and on a territorial rather than an ethnic basis. Bi- and multi-lateral treaties offer vehicles through which States can share information and concerns, pursue interests and ideas, and further

support minority communities to serve as bridges between States, contributing to prosperity and friendly relations, and fostering a climate of dialogue and tolerance.

This session will address good practices in designing and implementing legal frameworks that do not only work to prevent or manage tensions but also to integrate diverse societies and foster and enable the bridge building role of minority communities.

**Questions for discussion:**

- **What are good practices with regard to legal and institutional frameworks allowing national minorities to contribute to friendly inter-State relations?**
- **What is the role of minority consultative and representative bodies in implementing and monitoring such legal frameworks?**
- **What can the OSCE do to foster the bridge building role of national minorities in inter-state relations?**
- **How have the OSCE participating States made use of the Guidelines and Recommendations issued by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities to foster the bridge building potential of national minorities across borders?**
- **What are the participating States' experiences with cross-border cooperation and the role of national minorities in such frameworks?**
- **Are there specific concerns of national minorities that cross-border and regional cooperation is particularly well placed to address?**

**DAY 2:**

<b>10:00-12:00 SESSION 2: Promoting the bridge building role of national minority issues across various policy areas</b>
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***Introducers:***

**Ms. Zora Popova**, Senior Research Associate & Head of Cluster Culture and Diversity, European Centre for Minority Issues

**Ms. Maria Golubeva**, Education Policy Consultant, Member of Access Lab & Owner of RHC Consulting

**Ms. Alessandra Argenti Tremul**, Journalist, RTV Slovenija, R-tv Koper Capodistria

***Moderator:***

**Prof. Joshua Castellino**, Dean of the School of Law, Middlesex University London

Over the years the High Commissioner on National Minorities has identified a number of crucial policy areas with significant influence on minority-majority relations, among others education, language, participation and minority languages in broadcast media. The most visible and prominent tools addressing these areas are the Recommendations and Guidelines elaborated in the course of the last 20 years. The most recent set of Guidelines, The Ljubljana Guidelines on Integration of Diverse Societies, draws upon the previous thematic recommendations, elaborating an overarching framework for integration policies. In a diverse society, tensions may emerge if communities become separated to the point of challenging the cohesion of society. Integration policies that promote and harness the positive effects of diversity and build inclusive societies are thus essential for sustainable peace and stability. The Ljubljana Guidelines recognize that integration policies should include measures that encourage cross-community dialogue and interaction based on tolerance and mutual respect. This covers a broad range of initiatives in various fields, including education, media and language policy. Education is a principle means to maintain and transmit essential elements of identity, and one of the most effective ways to promote intercultural contact and understanding and a shared sense of civic identity. Media as well as culture perform similar functions with a view to bridge building. They can serve as platforms for intercultural exchange, foster knowledge, interaction and understanding.

This session will evolve around best practices in diverse policy areas, highlighting concrete bridge building initiatives

**Questions for discussion:**

- **What are examples of good practice policies for the promotion of the bridge building role and potential of national minority issues?**
- **What role do minority consultative and representative bodies and minority communities play in making and implementing policies that promote friendly minority-majority relations?**
- **How can The Ljubljana Guidelines be used to support bridge building to the benefit of integration of diverse societies and sustainable peace and stability?**
- **How can the OSCE support the capacity of States to support the bridge building role and potential of national minority issues?**
- **What role can different policy areas play in building bridges?**
- **How can participating States ensure that bridge building opportunities extend to and reach specific groups, such as disabled people, women and youth?**

**12:00-14:00 Lunch break**

***Introducers:***

**Ms. Nina Bagdasarova**, Associate Professor, American University of Central Asia

**Ms. Britta Tästensen**, President, Youth of European Nationalities

**Ms. Alev Tuğberk**, Co-President, Association for Historical Dialogue and Research

**Mr. Loizos Loukaidis**, Educational Programmes Officer, Association for Historical Dialogue and Research

***Moderator:***

**Mr. Giorgi Sordia**, Director, Centre for Studies of Ethnicity and Multiculturalism

Recognizing that the responsibility to support the integration process and implement integration policies primarily lies with the State where national minorities reside, the Ljubljana Guidelines recommend that integration policies should make use of top-down and bottom-up approaches. Integration policies affect all sectors of society and thus require the engagement of a wide variety of actors. As a multi-actor and multi-level process, integration cannot succeed without the active engagement of civil society in the broadest sense, including non-governmental organizations, special-interest groups and academia. An independent, pluralist civil society can make valuable contributions to policy development by providing input on integration policies based on grassroots experiences. They are also potential actors in the implementation of policies and plans. Civil society actors can further perform an important function in monitoring the implementation of State commitments. They do not least take own initiatives and are driving forces behind many bridge building endeavors. The Ljubljana Guidelines emphasize that by working together in partnerships between the public and private sectors and civil society, actors can make better use of resources, influence and expertise to achieve greater impact and change. Good bridge building practices on the grassroots level are manifold within the OSCE and can serve to inspire policy and practice.

The final session shall thus be devoted to best practice examples at the grassroots level.

**Questions for discussion:**

- **What are civil society's experiences in building bridged and contributing to friendly minority-majority relations?**
- **What are good practices for public sector-civil society partnerships in making, implementing and monitoring bridge building policies?**
- **What are good practices for supporting civil society bridge building initiatives?**

- **How can the Ljubljana Guidelines be made use of to support bridge building on the civil society level?**
- **How to ensure the success and sustainability of bridge building initiatives?**
- **How can the participating States and the OSCE support grassroots bridge-building initiatives?**

**16:00-16:30 Break**

<b>16:30 -17:30 CLOSING SESSION</b>
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*Reports by the Moderators* of the Working Sessions

Comments from the floor

*Closing remarks:*

**Mr. Henrik Villadsen**, Director of the OSCE Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities

**Ambassador Eberhard Pohl**, Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council, Permanent Representative of Germany to the OSCE

**17:30 Closing of the meeting**