



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT OF NORWAY IN RESPONSE TO THE ADDRESS BY AMBASSADOR JANEZ LENARCIC

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
8th November, 2012

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

Let me first join previous speakers in expressing our gratitude to Director Lenarčič for his report and for the opportunity to discuss with him lessons learned from and advices given at this year's Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw.

Mr. Chairman,

The statistics now given to us prove beyond doubt that the HDIM remains the largest regional conference on a whole range of human rights and democracy issues. Just as important, the HDIM remains a crucial forum in which lively debates contribute to mutual understanding and to progress in the third dimension. I and my delegation took active part in it by making 12 statements and by co-organizing two side events. On top of this, Norwegian NGOs were engaged both in plenary sessions and in side events.

Mr. Chairman,

As pointed out by Director Lenarčič, there was little time left between the decision on the HDIM agenda and the meeting, obviously causing unnecessary complications for the organizers. One lesson learned is that the Permanent Council has to agree on the agenda at an earlier stage and that we have to agree on a standing agenda for future HDIMs in order to prevent similar, unwanted situations.

Another lesson learned is that we have to improve on the choices of topics, making sure that we have sufficient time to discuss those topics that truly interest the majority of participants. More than 90 speakers in the most popular session versus only 9 in another is too much of a difference to be acceptable. We know where lack of implementation of

commitments exists and we must be willing to discuss those problem areas with the civil society at the HDIM.

A third lesson learned is that two weeks is hardly enough to cover all the topics we need to address during a HDIM. This more than anything answers the questions raised about the length and the duration of the HDIM.

Mr. Chairman,

Director Lenarčič gave participating States clear advices on all topics discussed at HDIM but one. The one exception was the session on Democratic elections where there was criticism of ODIHR's methodology as well as strong support for the election observation activities. My government belongs to those who regard the ODIHR election observation methodology a gold standard that no other organization is even close to. We must stand firmly united in defending this gold standard against any attempt to weaken or reduce this methodology. This appeal goes not only to the participating States, but to all branches of the OSCE family that participate in election observation. The 1997 Co-operation Agreement between ODIHR and the PA must be respected by both branches, and we must avoid what we just saw in the US where the PA decided to hold their own press conference. We are one family; we must speak with one voice.

Mr. Chairman,

This year's HDIM was well conducted and it has given us useful impulses for the work ahead. We thank Director Lenarčič and his able team for the way in which they organized the HDIM and we stand ready to support him and the incoming Ukrainian chairmanship in the preparations for the next HDIM. In this process we have two clear priorities.

First, and foremost, the idea behind the HDIM is to review commitments and their implementation. In that respect we must pay more attention to the reports from the institutions, and we must show a willingness to spend more time on controversial themes than on the less controversial ones. The other priority is to preserve the HDIM as by far the most important forum for debates between NGOs and authorities in the OSCE area.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your attention.