

## The Human Dimension of the OSCE: Reviving Key Principles from the Past, Looking into the Future

### *The 2021 Warsaw Declaration of the Civic Solidarity Platform*

13 October 2021

The Coordinating Committee of the Civic Solidarity Platform,

DEEPLY ALARMED by the failure this year of the OSCE to hold the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, in violation of a long-standing joint decision of participating States to annually hold this event,

NOTING that this deprives the states as well as the citizens in the OSCE region of a key mechanism for reviewing the state of the human dimension, which is an indispensable and inseparable element of the OSCE concept of comprehensive security,

GRAVELY CONCERNED that as a result of having no HDIM for the second year in a row, much less attention than merited will be given to a range of persistent human dimension problems, including

- the undermining of democratic institutions and standards by introducing changes in constitutions, weakening the system of checks and balances and perpetuating the rule of current leadership,
- the twisting of the outcome of elections, suppressing genuine independent civic election observation and failing to provide workable conditions for ODIHR monitoring missions,
- the submission of the judicial branch of government to the will of the executive,
- the narrowing of space for active citizens to participate in public life by placing ever increasing and harsh restrictions on the work of civil society groups and persecuting NGOs and government critics,
- the limiting of pluralism of the media, the marginalisation of media not closely adhering to governmental narratives, and the active distribution of misinformation and propaganda,
- the suppression of peaceful assemblies and disproportional use of force by law enforcement bodies,
- the persistence of active and frozen conflicts, violating sovereignty and territorial integrity of states and affecting the human rights and security of millions of people,
- the abuse of security concerns relating to combating the threat of terrorism and violent extremism and the protection of state security, aimed at limiting fundamental rights and freedoms,
- the continued use of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment and enforced disappearances, and the lack of a determined approach to eradicating them,
- the persistence of gender discrimination and a lack of will to fundamentally prevent and fight gender-related violence,
- the persistence of pervasive discrimination based on race, ethnic or religious background,
- the implementation of ever stricter and in many ways inhumane refugee and migration policies;

CONCERNED that grave and systematic transgressions of human dimension standards have a detrimental effect on trust in societies and between societies and government, and will in turn negatively affect trust

between people across borders and between States, and are therefore an engine for repression and conflict,

CALLS on OSCE participating States to use all means available to strengthen the human dimension standards for which the groundwork has been laid in the 1990/1991 Copenhagen, Paris and Moscow Conferences, and to maintain the processes for the regular review of their implementation, based on the key OSCE principle agreed in Moscow in 1991, since then re-affirmed categorically and irrevocably, that human dimension commitments are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned,

URGES participating States, if the agreed review processes are being thwarted by the abuse of the consensus rule, to step up the use of non-consensus review mechanisms such as the Moscow Mechanism, including its repeated application in situations in which the reasons for invoking the Mechanism continue to persist, and CALLS for a redoubling of States' efforts to follow-up on recommendations of human dimension expert reports on election observation, assembly monitoring, trial observation, the Moscow mechanism reports, ODIHR legal opinions, and for an improvement in publicising the results of these follow-up steps,

CALLS on participating States to prioritise their cooperation with civil society, ensure more effective civil society engagement in the OSCE work and the protection of civil society space across the OSCE region;

EMPHASISES that tackling major new challenges to human rights of the current and future generations requires large scale international cooperation which is possible only if trust inside and between countries and societies is maintained on the basis of the adherence to OSCE principles. Such joint actions should include

- creating information and discussion spaces that favour achieving a fact-based understanding of the world and a nuanced rather than polarising expression and exchange of opinions, and preventing propaganda and hate speech from endangering peace and security of our societies,
- regulating and placing meaningful limits on the use of artificial intelligence and surveillance systems to spy on and control the life of members of the public,
- fighting corruption facilitated by the current world financial system, leading to extremes of uneven wealth distribution, to the building of kleptocratic and authoritarian government structures, and ultimately to a lack of human security for large sectors of the population,
- addressing the climate and biodiversity crises in ways that do not exacerbate existing inequalities and take into account the rights of those affected by the climate emergency outside our region and of persons who may arrive in our region as climate refugees.

INSISTS that the holistic OSCE doctrine of comprehensive security and the three Helsinki dimensions provide a unique framework to address the existing challenges and new threats and to work towards future human rights friendly governance systems and societal interactions,

CALLS for holding a systematic debate on addressing these persistent and new challenges, taking into account the ongoing discussions and resulting in the elaboration of forward-looking substantive proposals regarding the road ahead for the three Helsinki dimensions by the time of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act.