

UK highlights the importance of civil society in the OSCE region

Mr Chair,

As participating States we regularly extoll the virtues and stress the importance of the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security. A key element of that approach includes a strong and unique commitment to engagement with civil society.

In the field of transnational threats, discussions on many topics frequently lead to an acknowledgement of the key role that civil society can play. For example, in helping to counter and prevent violent extremism or radicalisation. In the Second Dimension, discussions on economic and environmental issues are greatly enhanced by expertise and insights from civil society actors – sharing insights on how communities are affected by corruption, or the importance of urgent action on climate change.

In the human dimension, civil society plays a particularly important role in helping us implement our shared commitments. By reporting and documenting actions by authorities that are in direct contradiction to our political commitments, they help hold governments to account, with the aim of ensuring that our fine political words translate into tangible benefits for our citizens.

Of course, this week we should be gathered with civil society organisations in Warsaw to participate in the annual [Human Dimension Implementation Meeting \(HDIM\)](#). It is an important event in the calendar of the OSCE, and helps demonstrate our shared commitment to the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security. It is a disappointment that certain Decisions related to HDIM continue to be blocked. Holding a meaningful HDIM should be a key priority for all participating States, and Permanent Council Decisions related to HDIM should have been agreed in a timely manner.

We thank Sweden for choosing "civil society" as a special topic for this month, and for your determination to involve civil society in your activities throughout the year. Through their expertise and independence, civil society organisations bring unique perspectives to this organisation. Recognising their contribution, and safeguarding their participation in the OSCE should be a priority, not only for the Chairpersonship, but for all participating States.

Thank you Mr Chair