



Rappresentanza Permanente d'Italia
OSCE

AMB. STEFANO BALDI

**ITALY'S STATEMENT AT THE WARSAW HUMAN DIMENSION CONFERENCE
OPENING SESSION**

Warsaw, 2 October 2023

Mr Chair,

Italy aligns with the statement delivered by the European Union and would like to add some remarks in a national capacity.

At the outset, allow me to reiterate our gratitude and full support to the North Macedonia Chairpersonship for convening this Conference and to ODIHR for its contribution to the organisation.

In 2010 in Astana, OSCE participating States reaffirmed “categorically and irrevocably that [OSCE] commitments undertaken in the field of the human dimension are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned”.

This is why the work of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and other Autonomous Institutions, OSCE human dimension mechanisms like the Moscow Mechanism and meetings and events like the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting are of crucial importance to enhance dialogue and cooperation among participating States and with civil society. They are essential to hold each other accountable and to strengthen the implementation of our joint commitments.

It is therefore very much regrettable that once again this year it was not possible to reach consensus on the mandated decisions to organise the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting due to the opposition of the Russian Federation. HDIM is an

integral part of the architecture of dialogue and cooperation of this Organisation and as such it must be preserved.

Mr Chair,

it is not by chance that the human dimension of security is enshrined in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and subsequent documents. The respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, open and inclusive democratic societies and the rule of law are the foundations of our common security. Human rights are not a “Western agenda”, as it is sometimes claimed by some participating States. They are – and I quote from the Helsinki Final Act – an “essential factor for the peace, justice and well-being necessary to ensure the development of friendly relations and cooperation” among participating States.

There can be no common security when dissenting voices are silenced and the right to freedom of expression is curtailed. When civilians, and in particular women and children, suffer the consequences of war. When the safety of journalists and independent media actors is threatened. When the right to a fair trial is denied and human rights defenders are sentenced to jail for their peaceful activism. When intolerance and discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, religious belief, gender, sexual orientation and disability are condoned.

The horrific crimes committed during Russia’s illegal war of aggression against Ukraine and the repressive actions of Russian and Belarussian authorities against their peoples, which have been well documented by the Moscow Mechanism reports launched over the last two years and strongly supported by Italy, remind us that more needs to be done to ensure the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the OSCE area.

To this end, Italy confirms its full and unwavering support to the work of ODIHR and other Autonomous Institutions. It is our common duty and responsibility to protect them, enhance their independence and provide them with adequate resources. They offer invaluable assistance to all participating States in the implementation of our shared commitments and in addressing new challenges and threats as well as persistent shortcomings to the protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

Thank you.