

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF SERBIA AMBASSADOR VUK ŽUGIĆ AT THE WORKING  
SESSION 1

22 September, Warsaw

Madame Moderator,

We would like to thank ODIHR Director Mr. Link for his comprehensive statement.

Let me reiterate Serbia's unequivocal support for ODIHR's election observation methodology that is applied in professional and in impartial manner. We believe that ODIHR's observation reports, first of all serve to Participating States to improve their election procedures and legislation. At the same time subsequent voluntary reporting of Participating States at the Human Dimension Committee Meetings contributes to sharing experiences on best practices. As it is already mentioned, we welcome the role of the OSCE in several electoral processes in Kosovo which took place this year. In regard to same calls for bringing Kosovo to this table, let me repeat our very known position that such request goes beyond the Brussels agreement.

If we all take this positive stand point on ODIHR elections activities we believe many misunderstandings would dispel. Elections are only one aspect of democratic processes in each of our countries.

Madame Moderator,

Let me stress some other important elements:

During the past, we have committed ourselves to endeavor in order to strengthen democratic participation and institution building, to develop cooperation among entire OSCE region and to share our experience on the functioning of democracy at a local and regional level.

We recognize a vital role of civil society in promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. We believe that Civil Society Organization's participation in political and public life is an integral component of strong civil society and it is important to create stronger linkage between civil society organizations and political institutions, in our national capacities.

We believe that transparency in public affairs is an essential condition for accountability of States. Transparency increases the predictability of, and confidence in decision-making process based on adequate legislation and with full respect of rule of law.

We consider that modern democratic systems should be inclusive and to ensure full political participation, without discrimination based on sex, age or any other criteria.

In that context we should pay a special attention on how to encourage and support equal opportunity for full participation by women in all aspects of political and public life, in decision-making process and in international co-operation in general.

On the other hand, we believe that youth is a crucial part of society and represent an indispensable element for its further socio-economic and democratic development. We trust that Participating States should stay devoted to improving

possible legislative measures which would facilitate a more balanced participation of women and youth in political and public life and especially in decision-making.

It is our joint responsibility.

In conclusion, I would like to stress the importance of the OSCE Institutions, as well as the OSCE field operations with regard to these very important issues, both on local and regional level. Their dedication and close cooperation among them will help to participating states in better implementation of our commitments.

Thank you for your attention.