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PC.SHDM.DEL/8/19
3 April 2019

ENGLISH only



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations in Vienna

Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting
“Upholding the Principles of Tolerance and Non-Discrimination, including the
Promotion and Protection of Freedom of Religion or Belief”, Closing session
(Vienna, 2 April 2019)

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Delegation of Ukraine would like to commend the introducers, participants and organizers of this Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting as well as the rapporteurs of its three sessions for maintaining the open discussion and providing preliminary thought-provoking findings.

At the same time, we regret that in order to prepare this Meeting the OSCE Institutions did not provide, well in advance, food-for-thought paper on the topic to be discussed according to para 9 of chapter II of Modalities for the OSCE Meetings on Human Dimension Issues (Annex 2 of PC Decision 476).

We also took note that some participants got access and floor without due and timely registration as well as statements of some CSOs were published contrary to the standard rules of conduct of meetings.

We will seek clarifications of the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship that is responsible for the organization of SHDM about the grounds for such decisions.

Dear colleagues,

During Ukraine’s OSCE Chairmanship in 2013 my country significantly contributed to strengthening the implementation of the OSCE human dimension commitments, including those on freedom of religion or belief. Our joint efforts with the participating States and OSCE Institutions were crowned with the adoption of the Kyiv Ministerial Council Decision 3/13 on Freedom of Thought, Conscience, Religion or Belief, which, inter alia, underlines the importance of fostering a climate of mutual tolerance and respect between believers of different communities as well as between

believers and non-believers, and to promote dialogue between religious or belief communities and governmental bodies.

This Decision also aims at preventing intolerance, violence and discrimination on the basis of religion or belief, including against Christians, Jews, Muslims and members of other religions, as well as against non-believers.

If there is an interest to develop its provisions further and draft any separate documents on discrimination against members of one religion, it is necessary to make sure that various aspects of discrimination against Christians, Jews, Muslims and members of other religions under the conditions of occupation are duly reflected and addressed. It is the regrettable reality for the OSCE that a part of territory of one participating State is being occupied by another participating State and the gross violations of freedom of religion and belief are perpetrated by the occupation authorities in flagrant defiance of its international obligations and OSCE commitments.

I thank you.