



## Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting

### Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association, with Emphasis on Freedom of Association

**16 -17 April 2015  
Hofburg, Vienna**

#### SCHEDULE AND OVERVIEW OF SIDE EVENTS

*The Helsinki Document of 1992 (Chapter IV) called for increasing the openness of OSCE activities and expanding the role of NGOs. In particular, in paragraph (15) of Chapter IV the participating States decided to facilitate during OSCE meetings informal discussion meetings between representatives of participating States and of NGOs, and to provide encouragement to NGOs organizing seminars on OSCE-related issues. In line with this decision, NGOs, governments, and other participants are encouraged to organize side meetings on relevant issues of their choice.*

*The side events below are organized and scheduled exclusively at the request of participants of the Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting. The descriptions have been provided by the organizers. They have been lightly edited by ODIHR for language but not for content. Responsibility for the content remains with the organizers. Neither the text below nor the events themselves necessarily reflect the views of the OSCE.*

<b>Friday, 17 April</b>	<b>Friday, 17 April</b>
<p><i>Title: Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association in the Russian Federation: Regional Perspective</i></p> <p><i>Convenor: Spiritual Board of Muslims of Tatarstan, Spiritual Board of Muslims of Crimea.</i></p> <p><i>Time: 12.00 – 14.00</i></p> <p><i>Venue: Ratsaal</i></p> <p><i>Language: Russian, English</i></p>	<p><i>Title: Human Rights Crisis in Belarus Continues Unabated: anticipation of a New Crackdown on the Eve of Presidential Elections</i></p> <p><i>Convenor: Civic Solidarity Platform</i></p> <p><i>Time: 12.00 – 14.00</i></p> <p><i>Venue: Room 201</i></p> <p><i>Language: English, Russian</i></p>

**OVERVIEW OF SIDE EVENTS**  
**as submitted by the organizers**

**Friday, 17 April**

**Time:** 12.00 – 14.00  
**Venue:** Ratsaal  
**Title:** Freedom of peaceful assembly and association in the Russian Federation: regional perspective  
**Convenor:** Spiritual Board of Muslims of Tatarstan, Spiritual Board of Muslims of Crimea  
**Language:** Russian, English

**Summary:** The convening organizations are willing to put the question of freedom of peaceful assembly and association in the Russian Federation under discussion. The discussion will touch upon the national legal framework as well as the practice, and the current situation of the protection of the mentioned freedoms and rights with a focus on the regional aspect.

**Time:** 12.00 – 14.00  
**Venue:** Room 201  
**Title:** Human rights crisis in Belarus continues unabated: anticipation of a new crackdown on the eve of Presidential Elections  
**Convenor:** Civic Solidarity Platform  
**Language:** English, Russian

**Summary:** In spite of the efforts of the international community and civil society actors, the human rights situation in Belarus remains extremely difficult and has not improved a bit since December 2010 which marked a start of a brutal wave of political repressions. In many ways the situation has deteriorated further, with the exception of the release of several political prisoners in 2011-2014. Freedoms of assembly, association, expression, right to fair trial, freedom from torture and enforced disappearances are among the key human dimension problems in the country. The situation in Belarus is the most recent case of application of the OSCE Moscow Mechanism. Recommendations in the MM report have not been implemented, and therefore the situation in the country remains an “unclosed file.” In light of presidential elections in autumn 2015, Lukashenka’s main tasks are maintenance of tight control over the society to prevent any challenge from political opposition and at the same time ensuring of recognition of legitimacy of his re-election in 2015 by the West. Anxiety about a new round of crackdown on the eve of the elections is growing among civil society activists. Participants of the briefing will discuss what the international community can do to address the systemic human dimension crisis in Belarus and prevent a new round of crackdown this year.

*Refreshments will be provided*