SIDE EVENT
ROUNDTABLE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Thursday, 6 NOVEMBER 2008
9:00-12:00 am

Hofburg, Vienna

Taking place prior to the opening of the
SUPPLEMENTARY HUMAN DIMENSION MEETING ON
DEMOCRATIC LAWMAKING
6-7 NOVEMBER 2008

The Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting (SHDM) on Democratic Lawmaking will be preceded by a side event: Roundtable for Civil Society. The side event will take place on **Thursday, 6 November, from 9:00 am till 12:00 am in Hofburg**.

All representatives of civil society attending the SHDM are strongly encouraged to take part in the Civil Society Roundtable discussion.

English-Russian simultaneous tranlsation will be provided during the side event.

This will be a unique oportunity for civil society representatives to raise issues, discuss priorities and concerns, exchange information as well as compile a report to be presented at the opening of the Meeting. The Roundtable is organized by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

The purpose of the side event is to:

- provide civil society with an opportunity to prepare recommendations to be presented at the opening of the SHDM later that day;
- discuss current issues and priorities in the OSCE region in general and in individual countries, in particular, related to democratic lawmaking;
- facilitate networking and information exchange between civil society representatives from different participating States of the OSCE.

Submission of recommendations and discussion

The main objective of the civil society side event is to formulate recommendations for the SHDM. The side event will last three hours. Participants are therefore encouraged to submit their suggestions on recommendations that could be adopted during the side event well in advance.

All submissions should be sent to Natalya.Seitmuratova@odihr.pl **before 29 October 2008.**

Proposed recommendations should focus on the three subjects that are outlined in the SHDM annotated agenda:
- o Lawmaking in a democratic system of government: transparency and efficiency
- o Ensuring inclusiveness in democratic lawmaking
- o Access to law.

They should not be country specific, but should rather highlight trends and patterns as regards the methods, instruments and policies in use for preparing, enacting and disseminating legislation and for overseeing its proper implementation. They should suggest among other issues ways to ensure a greater role of civil society experts in the process of lawmaking and draw attention to good practices and lessons learnt.

A compilation of all proposed recommendations will be made available at the outset of the civil society roundtable to all those attending. Compiled recommendations will be then discussed and adopted at the end of the side event.

Participants are encouraged to speak freely during the side event discussion and focus not only on the specific issues of concern to them, but also comment on the text of the proposed recommendations.

Report of the Civil Society Roundtable

A rapporteur will compile a report on the side event discussion. Such a report will reflect the key points addressed during the roundtable and offer a list of recommendations to all participants of the SHDM.

Following the format of previous OSCE Conferences and Meetings, the final report with recommendations should be twofold and should include:

- areas of concern;
- concrete recommendations to the participating States, OSCE Missions and Institutions, including ODIHR, as well as civil society.

The report will be presented by the rapporteur during the opening session of the SHDM, which will start at 3 pm on 6 November 2008.

Organizational matters

All civil society representatives taking part in the side event can pick up their passes for the meeting venue in advance on 6 November 2008 from 8:00am at the Hofburg Congress Centre in the main entrance hall.

In order to facilitate the registration process, we encourage all participants to register on-line at http://meetings.odihr.pl if at all possible. On-the-spot registration will be also available.