



**OSCE, 2012, HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING
Warsaw, 25 September**

Human Rights Education

Dear Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentlemen

The Norwegian Helsinki Committee would like to use this opportunity to remind to all participating states that UN General Assembly adopted on Dec. 19th 2011 a Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, with that reaffirming that States are duty-bound to ensure that education is aimed at strengthening respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and acknowledging the fundamental importance of human rights education in contributing to the promotion, protection and effective realization of all human rights.

Article 1 of the Declaration says that everyone should have access to human rights education and training.

Article 5 of the Declaration repeats the same right.

Article 7 says that the states and relevant governmental authorities have the primary responsibility to promote and ensure human rights education and training, asking states to create a safe and enabling environment for the engagement of civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders, fully protecting the fundamental freedoms of all engaged in the process.

Through the work of the Norwegian Helsinki Committee, together with a series of partner organizations from Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and the Balkans in the field of human rights education, the following aspects concerning the present situation in human rights education are evident:

1. There is an alarmingly weak interest from government agencies throughout the world to facilitate the implementation of human rights educational measures.
2. In most countries, it is the non-governmental organizations that serve as the main driving force behind concrete human rights education activities.
3. Several countries, instead of cooperating with the national human rights institutions, make the daily operating of such actors challenging, if not impossible. One example is refusal to issue visas to particular individuals or whole society groups, e.g. students, to attend human rights schools.
4. Many countries aim to censor the information given to audiences about human rights and fundamental freedoms.

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That is why the Norwegian Helsinki Committee calls upon all participating states to familiarize themselves with the newly adopted UN Declaration on Human Rights Education

and Training, and take all possible measures to strengthen their countries' implementation of the obligations stated therein.

The only way to protect and enjoy human rights is to know them. Human Rights education programs and activities provide that knowledge.

Thank You