

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODHIR)

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[Commentator] It's led by the ODHIR, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights in Warsaw. The ODHIR is one of several institutions and structures that allow the OSCE to follow up in debate and in action the political decisions of the participating States.

[Gérard Stoudmann] Despite progress which undoubtedly have been accomplished over the last ten years in the field of democratisation and respect for human rights in many cases, there is still a very long way to go and there is no reason to stop and rest. We have human rights violation everywhere: in my country, on the other side of the Atlantic, in long-established democracies, as well as in countries in transition. Of course, if, in the field of democratisation, we have a certain number of clients, if I may say so, in the field of respect for human rights, we should, if we want to maintain our credibility, continue to look at violations whenever and wherever they happen.

[Commentator] The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights is mandated to ensure full respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. It works to build, strengthen and protect democratic institutions, as well as to promote tolerance throughout society. Its Warsaw office employs 50 staff members and is active throughout the OSCE region.

[Gérard Stoudmann] I must say I have a staff which is highly motivated. People come here not for the money and not for the career. They come because they want to do the job they have been applying for.