



# Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

The Deputy Director

Warsaw, 8 May 2020

Ms. Nathalie Prouvez  
Chief Rule of Law and Democracy Section  
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights  
Geneva

Dear Ms. Prouvez,

Following your invitation, I am happy to inform that ODIHR would be honoured to contribute to the Third Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law to be held in November 2020. The issue of rule of law and access to justice is particularly relevant at a time when many countries have introduced measures to combat the effects of the pandemic.

Rule of law is an important part of ODIHR's work on human rights and democracy. ODIHR would be pleased to take part in OHCHR's Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law and to present the challenges affecting access to justice in the OSCE region, and possible solutions. The Forum will provide an opportunity to reflect on the challenges prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which is likely to have prolonged repercussions.

In response to your request, ODIHR would propose the following topics for discussion, which are further elaborated on in an enclosed document:

- **Functioning of courts during state of emergency**
- **Observance of the right to a fair trial and independence of the judiciary**
- **Functional independence of prosecutors**
- **Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel**
- **Access to justice for Roma and Sinti**
- **Access to justice in electoral matters - a core element of a rule of law based society**
- **Potential side event on need to support victims of hate crimes through rule of law procedures**

ODIHR has done substantial work on these subjects and could contribute to plenary session discussions and/or side events during the Forum. The contact person for issues pertaining to this Forum will be Deputy Head of Democratization Department, Ms. Meaghan Fitzgerald, [Meaghan.Fitzgerald@ODIHR.pl](mailto:Meaghan.Fitzgerald@ODIHR.pl).

I look forward to our continued cooperation.

Yours sincerely,



Katarzyna Gardapkhadze  
First Deputy Director