

Madame Minister,

I would like to start by thanking Norway for chairing the NDPHS for the last two years and for organizing and hosting this meeting. Let me also give special thanks and express my appreciation for Ms. Toril Roschner-Nielsen for her involvement and efforts as the CSR Chair. I thank also Ms. Hilde Sundrehagen for continuing this and good work during the last months.

I think we all welcomed with satisfaction the fact that the regional cooperation within the Northern Dimension is being developed and new partnerships (in culture and in transport and logistics) are being established. It shows that our countries are ready to effectively cooperate in different areas.

Also within the NDPHS we are ready to work together in order to achieve further progress. The main expression of that is the development of Partnership's new Strategy. Here I want to emphasize the SWG's work. Countries participating in this work, among them Poland, dedicated their efforts to elaborating recommendations aimed to ensure the Partnership's further progress, efficient functioning and achieving concrete results. When it comes to the above issues I want to assure you that Poland is strongly committed to all project-based activities and undertaking other actions aimed at bringing tangible benefits for all the Partner countries and their inhabitants. When implementing the new Strategy we should remember that the Partner countries depend on one another and that their cooperation is to be of benefit for all of them.

When speaking about efficient functioning of the Partnership, one has to mention the Secretariat's legal capacity. Poland was ready to sign the previously proposed Agreement and now we are hoping that the final Agreement will be made soon.

Finally let me express satisfaction with yesterday's Conference and with adopting the Declaration on prison health. I would also want to thank the PH EG for its work to prepare this event.

I believe that the Declaration expresses our common view on prisoners rights concerning health care and our willingness to work for ensuring realization of these rights. The Conference helped us realize that our countries face similar challenges and that we need to share our experience and work together to successfully cope with these challenges. The NDPHS gives us an excellent opportunity for such cooperation, not only when it comes to prison health but also within every thematic area of public health and social well-being.

Thank you.