

Romania's Statement in the Working Session 11

Romania fully subscribes to the Statement delivered on behalf of the European Union, but we would like to make just a few remarks in our national capacity.

Romania joins the international efforts in fighting against any form of extremism, racism, intolerance, xenophobia and discrimination.

We would like to recall that Romania is currently chairing the *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance* (IHRA) until March 2017. The Romanian IHRA Chairmanship has guided its work based on 3 main priorities: consolidation of Holocaust education in member countries and beyond as this is a traditional IHRA activity; promotion of cooperative academic research on the history of the Holocaust and focusing on its relevance to present challenges; work with the media and social media in promoting dialogue, mutual understanding and tolerance.

Combatting Antisemitism has been an overarching principle that has guided the Romanian IHRA Chairmanship and a working definition on Antisemitism was adopted on May 26th by the IHRA Plenary in Bucharest. The definition sets an example of responsible conduct for other international fora and hopes to inspire them to consider adopting this definition as well. We commend the current German Chairmanship-in-Office of the OSCE for the diligent efforts to conclude the adoption of a working definition based on the one adopted by IHRA, at its ministerial council in Hamburg in December this year. We call on all OSCE participating states to consider with responsibility this important initiative and to acknowledge the critical need to ensure the most effective tools for combating any form of Antisemitism.

An important step forward on Holocaust education in Romania was taken by the organisation of two training sessions dedicated to Romanian magistrates and police officers on combatting antisemitism, discrimination and xenophobia, in June and July this year. The two training sessions aimed at providing understanding of such actions as well as means and tools to prevent and combat them. We are grateful for the wide expertise of trainers sent by ODIHR but also by other relevant structures such as the American Jewish Committee, the Manchester Metropolitan Police and the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights. We think such initiatives for better educating public servants, police, magistrates, should be extended and become a component of the permanent professional education for these professionals.

Finally, the Romanian IHRA Chairmanship would like to highlight the very good cooperation between the IHRA and ODIHR. As an example, on the occasion of the day of commemoration of the genocide against Roma and Sinti, on August 2nd this year, a joint IHRA-ODIHR statement was issued, calling for greater efforts to protect endangered memorial sites related to Roma and Sinti genocide during World War II, as well as for the inclusion of this part of history in the civic and human rights mainstream education.

We will continue to promote during our IHRA Chairmanship the importance of joining efforts for addressing the challenges of xenophobic public rhetoric, racism, Antisemitism and discrimination.

Thank you!