



Working Session No 14
Specifically Selected Topic:
Tolerance and Non-Discrimination II: Combating Racism,
Xenophobia and Discrimination, also Focusing on Intolerance and
Discrimination against Christians and Members of other Religions

OSCE / ODIHR
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Thank you madam moderator, ladies and gentlemen,

On the meaning of tolerance when $2 + 2 = 5$, returning to Orwell's
"doublethink" in *1984*:

Doublethink means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them.

The very act of holding two contradictory views simultaneously forces a negation of the idea being opposed. It is the forced imposition of the Hegelian dialectic. It is an attack on reason. It is an attack on identity. There are negating consequences for religions that are forced to understand themselves in terms of the dialectic imposed on them.

One example is the repurposing of the word "tolerance" to mean its opposite when used in the facially neutral language of diplomacy to justify the imposition of harsh consequences for the actual expression of religious and national values in the name of suppressing hate in the

name of the “other” in one’s own domain. As the theme for today is religious tolerance, I will use Pope Benedict’s explanation of the new tolerance:

A new intolerance is spreading, that is quite obvious. ... These are then announced in terms of so-called “negative tolerance”. For instance, when people say that for the sake of negative tolerance [they mean] “not offending anyone”. ... With that we are basically experiencing the abolition of tolerance. ... In the name of tolerance, tolerance is being abolished; this is the real threat we face. The danger is that reason – so-called Western reason – claims that it has now really recognized what is right and thus makes a claim to totality that is inimical to freedom. [Pope Benedict, *Light of the World*, 52-53]

Using Pope Benedict’s construction, “negative tolerance” denies the right to define one’s own faith, not to mention one’s own national or cultural values, even to one’s own self in the name of suppressing “hate”. In the name of the “other”, we are confronted with demands to deny one’s own self in furtherance of a self-induced existential void.

When the self-loathing seek to silence national and religious expression - as well as dissent - by selectively persecuting some while remaining silent on the practices of others - or declaring national self expression as hate - all in the name of tolerance that is not tolerance, it may be time for citizens to start taking an inventory of what their politicians and diplomats are assenting to in their name. This includes a close look at the narratives and language used to impose that will.

The Center for Security Policy recommends that the OSCE and participating States juristically define the terms they seek to impose on the citizens of participating States. Where appropriate, definitions should include identifying terms that have taken on divergent – even Orwellian – double meanings when used in official forums as opposed to their common and often defined use. When terms turn out to lack precise definition, their use when suppressing speech in the interest of hate should be suspended. Thank you!