

ODIHR Update

No. 5, 6 July 2015



Director Link's Hungary visits focus on anti-Semitism and situation of Roma



ODIHR Director Michael Georg Link speaking with Roma residents of the Miskolc "numbered streets" neighborhood on his visit to Hungary

ODIHR Director Michael Georg Link was in Budapest on 1 and 2 July in a visit focusing on the need to improve the situation of Roma in Hungary. The trip followed an 18 and 19 June visit, centered on the need for greater efforts to counter anti-Semitism in the country.

The ODIHR Director met with Zoltán Balog, Minister of Human Capacities, and other senior government officials, on the first day of the Roma visit, and then visited the city of Miskolc, where he met with officials from the Mayor's Office, with the Chief of Police, and with representatives of the Roma Self-Government and Roma civil society. He also visited Roma settlements in the city.

After the Miskolc visit, Director Link stressed the responsibility and role of local Hungarian authorities in formulating and implementing non-discriminatory policies in the area of social housing.

He was accompanied on the earlier visit by Rabbi Andrew Baker, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism, for meetings with Minister of Foreign Affairs Péter Szijjártó and other officials, as well as with representatives of the Jewish community, to discuss what measures can be undertaken to implement the Prime Minister's stated zero-tolerance policy towards anti-Semitism in Hungary.

Trial-monitoring meeting spotlights monitoring administrative justice



Iris Petrela, National Legal Officer from OSCE Presence to Albania (l), and Vitaliy Razik, Director of Ukraine's Law and Democracy Foundation (r) at OSCE/ODIHR's annual trial-monitoring meeting in Warsaw on 29 June 2015

Monitoring administrative justice was the focus of this year's annual ODIHR trial-monitoring meeting, organized in co-operation with the Folke Bernadotte Academy, in Warsaw between 29 June and 1 July 2015.

The brought together more than 20 legal professionals from national NGOs and OSCE field operations, as well as administrative justice experts discussed theoretical and practical issues, such as the concepts and principles around administrative justice.

"Since their inception in 2002, the annual trial-monitoring meetings have become an important and valuable platform for OSCE staff and civil society representatives to share their experiences in trial monitoring, as a tool for assessing courts' compliance with the right to a fair trial," said Tina Gewis, Chief of ODIHR's Rule of Law Unit.

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Ensuring right to freedom of religion or belief vital to ensuring security and stability



Director making opening remarks at the Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting, on Freedom of Religion or Belief, in Vienna on 2 July 2015

Opening the year's second Supplementary Human Dimension, in Vienna on 2 July, ODIHR Director Michael Georg Link stressed that work by OSCE participating States with a broad range of actors, including at the national and international levels, and including religious and belief communities, to ensure the freedom of religion or belief is vital to ensuring security and stability across the OSCE region.

The ODIHR Director told the meeting that the practice in some OSCE participating States of limiting the full and free exercise of the right to freedom of religion or belief to a list of religious and belief communities pre-defined and approved by the state, and the rise in some places of "hostile social forces, born of prejudice, fear and contempt," which have created intolerable and dangerous environments for particular

religious or belief communities, were two issues of particular concern.

"Such governmental and social restrictions on the right to freedom of religion or belief are not conducive to the security and stability of our societies and point to the nature and scale of the effort required by us to address these very real, ever present challenges," the ODIHR Director said.

Latest recruitment notices at ODIHR

Associate Programme Officer, Roma and Sinti Issues

Location: Warsaw

Grade: P2

Closing date: 27 August 2015

[Full details](#) on OSCE website

Senior Election Advisor

Location: Warsaw

Grade: P4

Closing date: 9 July 2015

[Full details](#) on OSCE website

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