



## **Confronting Anti-Semitism in Public Discourse**

A High Level Meeting hosted by the Foreign Minister of the Czech Republic and generously supported by the Remembrance, Responsibility and Future (EVZ) Foundation

Expressions of anti-Semitism in public discourse remain a serious issue of concern as they exacerbate hostile attitudes towards Jews. They have the potential to fuel anti-Semitic incidents, leading to greater insecurity in the Jewish communities and in societies across the OSCE region. The purpose of the meeting is to consider the role that media and public discourse may play in promoting tolerance and preventing hate crimes, and to raise awareness of the existence of anti-Semitic expressions in public discourse, to increase the understanding of this phenomenon and of its impact on security, and identify practical measures to counter it.

The OSCE has spearheaded international co-operation with regards to fighting anti-Semitism, notably with their Ministerial Council Decisions in Maastricht and Sofia. In this context, OSCE participating States adopted a comprehensive set of commitments related to preventing and responding to anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance. They have also equipped the organization with mechanisms and tools aimed at supporting their efforts in tackling anti-Semitism. These efforts have led to measurable results, in particular in the response to the most insidious form of anti-Semitism, hate crimes.

Despite these efforts, there are still issues that have not been fully addressed by governments and civil society. The expression of anti-Semitism in public discourse has not gathered the attention it deserves everywhere in the OSCE region, and often governments are slow or even fail to respond properly. The meeting will provide a forum for representatives of OSCE participating States, the media, political and civil society actors to debate sensitive issues related to anti-Semitism in public discourse. How can anti-Semitism in public discourse be identified and how to draw the distinction between acceptable and unacceptable speech? Is it possible to prevent anti-Semitic statements without infringing on the right to free expression and freedom of the media? Which good practices can be identified that encourage free debates in society while at the same time confront and combat anti-Semitic expressions?

## Confronting Anti-Semitism in Public Discourse: Annotated Agenda

The objectives of the meeting are threefold: it aims at

- addressing expressions of anti-Semitism in public discourse, including in the media and political speech;
- analyzing current occurrences of traditional and new forms of anti-Semitic discourse; and
- sharing good practices and gathering a set of recommendations on how to prevent and respond to anti-Semitism in public discourse. Participants will be asked to focus on concrete measures that can be highlighted in order to assist participating States in shaping a constructive and respectful discourse in society.

The high-level meeting will commence with an opening session to be followed by three working sessions. Discussions should be interactive, allowing for an exchange between the panelists and the participants. The first session will address ‘traditional’ forms of anti-Semitism and stereotypes that are still seen today. The second session will explore more modern manifestations of anti-Semitism such as those identified by the OSCE 2004 Berlin Conference, when the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office stated, *inter alia*, that “international developments or political issues, including those in Israel or elsewhere in the Middle East, never justify anti-Semitism”. The third panel will examine effective ways to combat anti-Semitism in public discourse, aiming to showcase some practical examples for addressing the issue at hand.

Please find the meeting’s tentative itinerary and panelists below.

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### Wednesday, 23 March 2011

17:00 Registration

18:00 Opening Session

**Mr. Jiří Schneider**, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

**H.E. Ambassador Janez Lenarčič**, Director, OSCE/ODIHR

**Rabbi Andrew Baker**, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating anti-Semitism

**Mrs. Asta Skaisgirytė Liauškienė**, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania

18:45 Exhibition Opening. “The Jewish World of Yesterday, the Hope of Today: Pictures and Stories from the Centropa Interviews in Lithuania.”

19:00 Reception hosted by H.E. Minister Karel Schwarzenberg

## Confronting Anti-Semitism in Public Discourse: Annotated Agenda

**Thursday, March 24, 2011**

9:00 Session I: Traditional Anti-Semitic Themes and Stereotypes

Panelists: **Dr. Sarunas Liekis**, Professor, *Vilnius University*, Lithuania  
**Mr. Petr Brod**, Journalist, Czech Republic  
**Mr. Konstanty Gebert**, Journalist, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Poland  
**Dr. Kathrin Meyer**, Executive Secretary, *Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research*, Germany

10:45 Coffee Break

11:30 Session II: International Developments as a New Factor Related to Manifestations of Anti-Semitism

Panelists: **Mr. Jose Maria Ridaó**, Journalist and Editorial Board Member, *El País*, Spain  
**Ms. Sylke Tempel**, Editor in Chief, *Internationale Politik*, Germany  
**Ms. Esther Voet**, Editor in Chief, *Dutch Jewish Weekly*, Netherlands

13:15 Lunch

14:45 Session III: Effective Practices

Panelists: **Mr. Richard Lobo**, Director, International Broadcasting Bureau, United States  
**Rep. Christopher Smith**, United States Congress, United States  
**Mr. Danny Stone**, Director, All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism, United Kingdom  
**Mr. Alexey Zenko**, Deputy Director of the Department for Interethnic Relations, Ministry for Regional Development of the Russian Federation, Russian Federation

16:15 Coffee Break

17:00 Closing Session

Key Recommendations from Sessions

Moderator: **H.E. Ambassador Renatas Norkus**, Chairman of the OSCE Permanent Council

Remarks: **Mr. Emanuelis Zingeris**, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania

19:00 Closing Reception hosted by **H.E. Ferdinand Trauttmansdorff**, Ambassador of Austria to the Czech Republic