

520th Plenary Meeting

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**DECISION No. 621
TOLERANCE AND THE FIGHT AGAINST RACISM,
XENOPHOBIA AND DISCRIMINATION**

The Permanent Council,

Taking into account the forthcoming OSCE Conference on Tolerance and the Fight against Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination in Brussels on 13 and 14 September 2004,

Recalling the Maastricht Ministerial Council Decision on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination (MC.DEC/4/03), the OSCE Conference on anti-Semitism in Berlin on 28 and 29 April 2004 as well as the OSCE Meeting on the Relationship between Racism, Xenophobic and anti-Semitic Propaganda on the Internet and Hate Crimes in Paris on 16 and 17 June 2004 and their results,

Reaffirming the participating States' existing commitments related to the promotion of tolerance and non-discrimination, and

In order to reinforce our common efforts to fight manifestations of intolerance across the OSCE region,

Decides,

1. The participating States commit to:
 - Consider enacting or strengthening, where appropriate, legislation that prohibits discrimination based on, or incitement to hate crimes motivated by, race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status;
 - Promote and enhance, as appropriate, educational programmes for fostering tolerance and combating racism, xenophobia and discrimination;
 - Promote and facilitate open and transparent interfaith and intercultural dialogue and partnerships towards tolerance, respect and mutual understanding and ensure and facilitate the freedom of the individual to profess and practice a religion or belief, alone or in community with others, including through transparent and non-discriminatory laws, regulations, practices and policies;

- Take steps to combat acts of discrimination and violence against Muslims in the OSCE area;
 - Take steps, in conformity with their domestic law and international obligations, against discrimination, intolerance and xenophobia against migrants and migrant workers;
 - Consider undertaking activities to raise public awareness of the enriching contribution of migrants and migrant workers to society;
 - Combat hate crimes, which can be fuelled by racist, xenophobic and anti-Semitic propaganda in the media and on the Internet, and appropriately denounce such crimes publicly when they occur;
 - Consider establishing training programmes for law enforcement and judicial officials on legislation and enforcement of legislation relating to hate crimes;
 - Encourage the promotion of tolerance, dialogue, respect and mutual understanding through the Media, including the Internet;
 - Encourage and support international organization and NGO efforts in these areas;
 - Collect and maintain reliable information and statistics about hate crimes motivated by racism, xenophobia and related discrimination and intolerance, committed within their territory, report such information periodically to the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and make this information available to the public;
 - Examine the possibility of establishing within countries appropriate bodies to promote tolerance and to combat racism, xenophobia, discrimination or related intolerance, including against Muslims, and anti-Semitism;
 - Endeavour to provide the ODIHR with the appropriate resources to accomplish the tasks agreed upon in the Maastricht Ministerial Decision on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination;
 - Work with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to determine appropriate ways to review periodically the problems of racism, xenophobia and discrimination;
 - Encourage development of informal exchanges among experts in appropriate fora on best practices and experiences in law enforcement and education;
2. To task the ODIHR to:
- Follow closely, in full co-operation with other OSCE institutions as well as the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD), the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) and other relevant

international institutions and NGOs, incidents motivated by racism, xenophobia, or related intolerance, including against Muslims, and anti-Semitism in the OSCE area making use of all reliable information available;

- Report its findings to the Permanent Council and to the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting and make these findings public. These reports should also be taken into account in deciding on priorities for the work of the OSCE in the area of intolerance;
 - Systematically collect and disseminate information throughout the OSCE area on best practices for preventing and responding to racism, xenophobia and discrimination and, if requested, offer advice to participating States in their efforts to fight racism, xenophobia and discrimination;
 - Support the ability of civil society and the development of partnerships to address racism, xenophobia, discrimination or related intolerance, including against Muslims, and anti-Semitism;
3. To ask the Chairman-in-Office to bring this decision to the attention of the participants of the upcoming Conference in Brussels and to incorporate it into his declaration concluding the Conference;
 4. To forward this decision to the Ministerial Council for endorsement at its Twelfth Meeting.