

Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
WORKING SESSION 14

Tolerance and non-discrimination, including: combating racism, xenophobia and discrimination, discrimination against Christians and members of other religions, combating anti-Semitism, combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims

Reply to Azerbaijan

As delivered by

Mr. Davit Knyazyan, Deputy Head of the Permanent Delegation of Armenia to the OSCE

Ms. Moderator,

Yesterday we referred to the recommendations of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance of the Council of Europe, addressed to Azerbaijan, which were left unanswered by the Azerbaijani delegation. There are many challenges, which Azerbaijan faces in the field of tolerance and non-discrimination, such as hate crime and its glorification, racist public discourse, discriminatory practice of denying entrance to Azerbaijan on the ground of ethnic and national origin, youth radicalization. The latter challenge was acknowledged by the Azerbaijani Delegation to the OSCE. One of the reflections of such radicalization is Azerbaijani youth filling the ranks of the ISIL and other terrorist organizations.

We realize that all our concerns will remain unanswered by the Azerbaijani delegate. The aim of his window-dressing is to hide serious problems in the sphere of tolerance in Azerbaijan.

The value of HDIM is in engaging of participating States with civil society, which can reflect the challenges in taken countries and provide alternative view to the official position. Regrettably, this is the first HDIM, which is taking place in the absence of Azerbaijani civil society, which could raise its voice on the above mentioned challenges.

What encourages us is that a wide part of the Azerbaijani independent civil society does not share the racist anti-Armenian rhetoric of its leadership. On the other hand, we are concerned by the policy of silencing of those representatives of civil society in Azerbaijan, who dare to openly advocate peace, tolerance and reconciliation between our peoples.

Thank You.