



United States Mission to the OSCE

Closing Plenary Session: Conclusions, recommendations and the way ahead. Consolidating Progress and Facing New Challenges

As prepared for delivery by the United States Delegation
to the OSCE Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Conference,
Tirana, Albania, May 21, 2013

As this conference comes to a close, we call on participating States to join us in reaffirming our resolve to fully implement *all* already agreed OSCE tolerance and non-discrimination commitments.

During our discussions, speakers representing governments and civil society have identified areas where there remain serious shortcomings in the implementation of our TnD commitments – in some cases, outright violations of them. Here in Tirana, we also have described our national experiences, shared best practices, and surveyed the many available tools that can inform and assist good faith efforts to improve implementation going forward.

As is the case in all other aspects of the OSCE, in the area of Tolerance and Non-Discrimination, what is needed from participating States is the political will to meet implementation challenges. Generally speaking, my delegation most welcomes ideas aimed at strengthening implementation of the rich and wide-ranging body of existing commitments - for example, efforts to guide the activities of the participating States, and direct the onward work of OSCE institutions, toward practical measures that can advance implementation.

My delegation therefore supports practical efforts such as, but not limited to, the following:

In furtherance of commitments to combat hate crimes: Participating States should monitor and evaluate the results of their national policies and initiatives aimed at preventing hate crimes. In keeping with their OSCE commitments, they should ensure that they systematically provide disaggregated national data on crimes motivated by hate to the Tolerance Unit. Better data will help states assess the problem and shape and apply more effective strategies. To that same end, we urge participating States to better utilize ODIHR's Tolerance and non-Discrimination Unit's capacity building and training programs for civil society and law enforcement. Additionally, we urge participating States to utilize the good offices of the three Personal Representatives of the Chair in Office (CiO), of the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues, and of the High Commissioner on National Minorities. States are encouraged to enact, where appropriate, legislation and law enforcement strategies to combat hate crimes. They also should, where appropriate, set up and maintain support services for victims of such crimes and ensure that they have access to the justice system for violations of their rights, irrespective of their status.

In furtherance of the Roma Action Plan: When we reconvene later this year for the Supplementary Human Dimension on the Roma Action Plan, participating States should include in their prepared presentations relevant information on budgetary resources they are devoting and how inputs from Roma were incorporated in their national implementing plans. Armed with this information, we will be in a better position to assess how the OSCE can most effectively partner with Roma to advance the goals of the Action Plan.

In furtherance of efforts to combat Anti-Semitism: As we approach the 10th anniversary in 2014 of the seminal Berlin Declaration, public officials and opinion leaders should take every opportunity to speak out in condemnation of anti-Semitic expressions and prosecute the perpetrators of anti-Semitic violence whenever it occurs. They should also take practical steps within their national systems and partner with civil society to teach new generations the history and lessons of the Holocaust, and to recognize and reject anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance. States should be prepared to work closely with Personal Representative Rabbi Baker and take part in the upcoming meeting in Berlin on the Security of Jewish communities.

In furtherance of commitments on Racism and Xenophobia: To mark the tenth anniversary of the OSCE's "*Conference on Tolerance and the Fight Against Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination*," the participating States in cooperation with ODIHR and other relevant OSCE institutions should elaborate an OSCE action plan, and direct ODIHR to publish a report on, Racism and Xenophobia in the OSCE region that includes a focus on African descendants.

In furtherance of public-private partnerships on TnD: Participating States individually, and collectively via OSCE structures, should engage with civil society to promote tolerance and inclusion and combat hate crimes, including by establishing, where appropriate, consultation mechanisms and other channels of communication that facilitate understanding and cooperation among diverse communities and between communities and authorities.

Increasing funding for ODIHR's work on TnD: We all recognize the difficult economic times that the OSCE region and indeed the world at large faces. But we also note that ODIHR's budget has unfortunately been held to zero nominal growth over the last few years. In order to effectively support participating States and their efforts to implement our commitments on tolerance and non-discrimination, ODIHR must have sufficient resources. We encourage all participating States to call for an increase to ODIHR's allocation in the Unified Budget, and to consider providing additional funding for extra-budgetary projects.

My delegation thanks the Chairman in Office for convening this meeting on the pressing issue of Tolerance and Non-Discrimination and expresses its deep appreciation to the Government and people of Albania for being such welcoming and accommodating hosts.