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Report of OSCE-ODIHR Roundtable

Combating Anti-Semitism: Current Trends and Challenges in the OSCE Region

Vienna, 17 March 2009

Agenda

09:30-10:15	<p>Opening session</p> <p><u>Welcome Remarks</u></p> <p>Mr. Dionyssios Kyvetos, Deputy Head of Mission, OSCE Chairmanship</p> <p>Ms. Jo-Anne Bishop, Head of the ODIHR Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department, ODIHR</p> <p>Rabbi Andrew Baker, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism</p> <p><u>Opening Address</u></p> <p>Mr. Morten Kjærum, Director of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights</p>
10.15-13:00	<p>Working Session I:</p> <p>Recent Manifestations of Anti-Semitism across the OSCE region</p> <p><u>Violent Attacks against Persons and Property</u></p> <p>Moderator: Rabbi Andrew Baker, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism</p> <p>Introducer: Mr. Norbert Hinterleitner, ODIHR Adviser on Anti-Semitism Issues</p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p> <p><u>Anti-Semitism in Public Discourse</u></p> <p>Moderator: Ms. Jo-Anne Bishop, Head of the ODIHR Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department, ODIHR</p> <p>Introducers: Mr. Miklos Haraszti, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media Mr. Ronald Eissens, Magenta Foundation</p>

	<p><i>Discussion</i></p> <p><u>General Trends and Patterns</u></p> <p>Moderator Rabbi Andrew Baker, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism</p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p>
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13:00 – 14:00 Lunch Break (Hosted by the ODIHR in the Foyer to Segmentgalerie I)

14:00 – 15:00	Working Session II: Responses from Governmental Institutions
Moderator	<p>Ms. Jo-Anne Bishop, Head of the ODIHR Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department, ODIHR</p> <p>Participants will be asked to report on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses from governmental bodies, law enforcement bodies and judicial bodies to recent manifestations on anti-Semitism • Gaps to fill: How can governmental institutions and law enforcement bodies further strengthen their response to anti-Semitic acts?

15:00 – 16:00	Presentation: The Work of the Task Force on International Co-operation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (ITF) and its Role in Combating Anti-Semitism
	<p>Ambassador Ferdinand Trauttmansdorff, Chair of the ITF</p> <p>Dr. Kathrin Meyer, Executive Secretary of the ITF</p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p>

16:00 – 16:20 Coffee Break

<p>16:50 – 17:20</p> <p>Moderator</p>	<p>Working Session III: Recommendations</p> <p>Rabbi Andrew Baker, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism</p> <p>Participants will present and discuss suggestions and recommendations to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating States • OSCE Institutions and Field Operations • Participating States • Civil society
<p>17:20 - 17:30</p>	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <p>Rabbi Andrew Baker Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism</p> <p>Ms. Jo-Anne Bishop, Head of the ODIHR Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department</p>

Foreword by Rabbi Andrew Baker
Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism

In the first months of 2009 we witnessed an increase in anti-Semitic incidents and anti-Semitic discourse throughout the OSCE region in large measure triggered by the conflict in Gaza.

Until this year government and civil society monitors had recorded a leveling and even a decrease in anti-Semitic events in a number of countries, although the problem has remained uniformly more severe than at the beginning of the decade.

In light of the ongoing concern as well as the more immediate developments the Roundtable discussion provided a timely opportunity to take stock of the persistent problem of anti-Semitism in many of the OSCE member states.

Jewish community leaders and representatives of major NGOs described the present conditions, and their accounts are found in their written contributions. It was also particularly valuable for the Roundtable to include the Director of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), which had recently issued its own updated report, and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, who focused on explaining the problem of anti-Semitic discourse particularly as it relates to the State of Israel.

Many of the participants stressed the value in making use of the “working definition” of anti-Semitism which was developed by the European Monitoring Centre (EUMC), the FRA’s predecessor, and is part of the ODIHR materials on the subject.

They also voiced concern that the looming world financial crisis is likely to exacerbate the situation in the coming months.

Despite repeated commitments from governments, very few OSCE member states monitor and compile data on anti-Semitism, which hampers the ability to analyze and fully understand the extent of the problem.

The summary report which follows while offering a sober but troubling picture concludes with a set of pragmatic recommendations for the OSCE, ODIHR, individual governments and representatives of civil society. The success of the Roundtable will depend on whether these recommendations are taken to heart and put to use.

I want to thank Ambassador Lenarčič and the ODIHR staff for their critical work in preparing the Roundtable and this report, the Ambassadors and representatives from various diplomatic missions for their participation, and the Greek Chairmanship for its continued support.

Rabbi Andrew Baker
Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism

Introduction

OSCE participating States¹ have repeatedly condemned anti-Semitism, recognizing that it can increase political and social tensions and undermine international stability.² In 2004, participating States committed themselves to collect reliable information on anti-Semitic hate crimes.³ Also in 2004, the Chairperson-in-Office first appointed a Personal Representative on Combating anti-Semitism.

Despite these political commitments, anti-Semitism has continued to be a challenge for participating States. Anti-Semitic hate crimes, including violent attacks on Jews and desecration of cemeteries, have occurred in many States. Anti-Semitic hate speech has been common, and has sometimes featured as an element of public marches and demonstrations. The problem has been fueled by anti-Semitic websites and postings on the Internet. According to some NGOs and Jewish leaders, the worldwide economic downturn has also contributed to a resurgence in anti-Semitic sentiments and negative stereotypes of Jews. A particular concern has been an increase in anti-Semitic incidents and discourse throughout much of the OSCE region in the early months of 2009, in reaction to the conflict in Gaza.

In response to these developments, ODIHR and the Chairperson-in-Office's Personal Representative on Combating anti-Semitism, Rabbi Andrew Baker, jointly organized a roundtable discussion in Vienna on 17 March 2009. Its main purpose was to review the current situation and consider steps that might be taken by the OSCE and others to counter the problem. The roundtable was opened and moderated by Rabbi Baker, and Ms. Jo-Anne Bishop, Head of the

¹ The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is the world's largest regional security organization, encompassing 56 states from Vancouver to Vladivostok. The ODIHR is the OSCE institution responsible for the *human dimension* and is active in the field of human rights, democratic development, election observation, tolerance and non-discrimination and rule of law.

² Anti-Semitism was first specifically condemned in the Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE in 1990. Anti-Semitism was recognized as a danger to international stability in the document of the Fourth Meeting of the CSCE Council of Ministers, "CSCE and the New Europe - Our Security is Indivisible", held in Rome in 1993.

³ OSCE Ministerial Council Decision No. 12/04, "Tolerance and Non-Discrimination", (Sofia, 2004), <http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/2006/06/19330_en.pdf>

ODIHR Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department. The opening address was delivered by Mr. Morten Kjærum, Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). Participants included representatives of governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and community groups. In addition to the general discussion, the roundtable included a presentation of the work of the Task Force on International Co-operation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (ITF).⁴

This report presents a summary of the main topics of discussion during the roundtable. The positions presented at the roundtable and in this report do not necessarily reflect the policy or position of the OSCE or of ODIHR.

Written contributions of some of the participants can be found on the ODIHR's Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Information System (TANDIS) – <http://tandis.odhr.pl>

To the extent possible, the recommendations emerging from the roundtable will be followed up by ODIHR.

Manifestations of anti-Semitism

The issue of anti-Semitic activities of extremist groups was of great concern to roundtable attendees and generated considerable discussion. Several participants drew attention to the existence of extremist right wing political parties, saying that their strength and popularity was often underestimated. Some of these groups have been responsible for direct attacks on Jews, including anti-Semitic attacks in sports arenas. Right wing extremists were also involved in racist slurs, Holocaust trivialization, blaming the Jewish community for the economic crisis, and propagating anti-Semitic ideology on the Internet.

⁴ The ITF includes representatives of 27 governments, as well as governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations. Its purpose is to place political and social leaders' support behind the need for Holocaust education, remembrance, and research both nationally and internationally. <http://www.holocausttaskforce.org/about-the-itf.html>

A number of participants pointed out that anti-Semitism is not solely the purview of right wing groups. Political groups on the left in some instances have taken extreme positions against Israel – recently in regard to the Gaza conflict – that in their view have bordered on or crossed the line into anti-Semitism. In this regard, they say there is a link between anti-Zionism, anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial.

Many speakers drew a connection between recent anti-Semitic incidents in Europe and events in the Middle East, including especially the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, but also the tension between Lebanon and Israel. Public discussion about the forthcoming Durban Review Conference⁵ was used by some to express anti-Semitic sentiments. Another troubling trend that was noted by some speakers is the growing problem of anti-Semitic sentiments among Muslim youth.

The difficulty of identifying the perpetrators of anti-Semitic crimes has been a problem in many participating States. A result of this is that many crimes go unpunished. Another problem leading to low levels of convictions for anti-Semitic crimes is that prosecutors in some countries do not have sufficient training, capacity or resources to investigate hate crimes. Several speakers, however, commented that governments and law enforcement bodies in some countries have been paying more attention to such cases in recent years. Nonetheless, additional training for law enforcement officers is needed.

The Internet has become a major method and source for the spread of anti-Semitism, xenophobic political discourse and negative stereotyping. This poses an especially serious challenge to authorities, who must balance the requirement for freedom of expression with the commitment to combat anti-Semitism and other manifestations of hate. The Internet poses a particular challenge because, unlike traditional media, there is no responsible editor for many websites, there is little or no regulation or self-regulation, items can be posted anonymously, and material on the Internet easily crosses national boundaries.

⁵ The Durban Review Conference took place between 20 and 24 April 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland, to evaluate progress towards the goals set by the United Nations World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001.

Some traditional media has also continued to propagate anti-Semitism. Participants stressed that many publishing houses are producing anti-Semitic books and hate literature. Some television and radio stations broadcast programs with anti-Semitic content. Even the mainstream media may inadvertently contribute to stereotypes; for example, one participant noted that during the 2006 Israeli election virtually every photo published in the Western media depicted only Orthodox Jews.

Regarding new methodologies, FRA described its work to compile the biggest victim survey ever carried out in Europe, which involved 30,000 individuals from minority groups in six or seven countries. Surveys of this nature are a valuable tool in understanding the extent and nature of anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance. (However, this survey did not identify Jews as one of the surveyed victim groups.)

Monitoring

One of the topics raised most frequently during the discussion was the issue of monitoring instances of anti-Semitism. Participants pointed out that OSCE participating States had committed themselves at the OSCE Ministerial Council in Maastricht to monitor hate crimes, including anti-Semitic crimes, but the implementation of this commitment has been uneven, at best. Many OSCE States have not yet introduced legislation to monitor and report hate crimes. As a result, there is very little systematic monitoring by official bodies.

Monitoring is often conducted by police or other law enforcement services, which may not be adequately trained for the task and may not recognize hate crimes when they are encountered. In some countries, according to one intervention, governments monitor only hate crimes committed by extremist groups. In many cases, the results of monitoring are not published, so the information is not available to the public.

Some international organizations, such as FRA, the Council of Europe and the United Nations are involved in aspects of monitoring hate crimes, including anti-Semitic crimes.

Data Collection

It was clear from the presentations that a major gap in the effort to combat anti-Semitism is the absence of adequate data on anti-Semitic incidents and crimes. Speakers pointed out that only four OSCE participating States (France, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom) are undertaking comprehensive data collection on anti-Semitism. ODIHR informed participants about its methodology for collecting hate crime data, including data on anti-Semitic crimes, from participating States through the National Points of Contact appointed by governments. Some participants advocated that NGOs should make greater efforts to fill in the gaps left by official figures.

Participants questioned the reasons for the absence of adequate data. Is it a lack of money, a lack of resources or a lack of interest? Or, is there a need for a proper Europe-wide methodology for data collection? If the absence of an appropriate methodology is the problem, should participants be going from government to government to urge agreement on a common methodology? Many participants agreed that there is a need for a better consensus on how to collect data. Some urged a public political discussion among participating States on to how to collect data more effectively.

Another challenge to data collection is that anti-Semitic crimes and incidents are often under-reported. Therefore, even if governments improve their data collection methodologies, attention will need to be given to ensuring that victims report hate crimes and that the authorities record them as hate crimes. This will require more sensitivity by law enforcement personnel and, especially, more training for police. Compiling victim surveys is one way to help ascertain whether official statistics capture the full extent of anti-Semitic incidents and crimes.

Working definition

Many participants referred to the working definition of anti-Semitism prepared by FRA (formerly known as European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia – EUMC),⁶ regarding it as a

⁶ The working definition is: “Anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.” <http://www.european-forum-on-antisemitism.org/working-definition-of-antisemitism/english/>.

valuable tool. The working definition has been translated into more than 30 languages by the European Forum on anti-Semitism and is now used by organizations including ODIHR and FRA. However, concerns were expressed that the working definition is not used more widely since it can be of substantial assistance in combating anti-Semitism. Some participants wondered if the definition needed to be further refined in order to increase its acceptance for general use. Others questioned whether the lack of data on anti-Semitic hate crimes was connected to the absence of a widely agreed working definition.

International Task Force

The Chair and the Executive Director of the Task Force on International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (ITF) gave presentations on the ITF and its work, which was followed by a discussion. The ITF was established more than ten years ago at the initiative of the Swedish Prime Minister, together with a number of interested delegations and institutions. The idea was for the ITF to assess and address key issues, on the understanding that there was a lack of knowledge about the Holocaust and insufficient understanding about the importance of remembering the Holocaust both at present and in the future. The ITF was designed to be a flexible task force, where scholars, NGO activists and governmental representatives could work together to assess problems and propose strategies. A diplomatic track was developed to promote policies with governments and to encourage inter-governmental cooperation. However, the ITF uses quiet diplomacy to address problems and does not issue press releases; this approach has worked well.

At this time, the ITF has 27 members. Since 2008, the ITF has benefited from a permanent secretariat. Although combating anti-Semitism was not originally the main task of the ITF, Holocaust denial and Holocaust trivialization are usually closely linked to anti-Semitic attitudes. The ITF's agenda, therefore, has expanded to include how to respond to contemporary forms of anti-Semitism. Strengthening Holocaust education contributes to the goal of combating anti-Semitism. The ITF takes a long-term perspective on this. In regard to programs, the ITF considers ODIHR's programs on Holocaust education to be a serious and constructive approach to guide countries on how to deal with Holocaust education.

Roundtable Recommendations

The following provides a summary of recommendations that were put forward by roundtable participants. The recommendations were not adopted by the participants and they do not necessarily reflect the consensus of participants at the roundtable. They are directed to participating States, OSCE institutions and civil society.

Recommendations to Governments, International Organizations and NGOs

1. Improve monitoring of anti-Semitic incidents and crimes, as well as monitoring of hate crimes in general;
2. Develop better systems for collecting data on anti-Semitic incidents and crimes, including data disaggregated by type of crime and victim. Work collaboratively to ensure that comparable systems of data collection are used in as many countries as possible;
3. Devote greater attention to developing and implementing programs of public awareness against anti-Semitism;
4. Expand educational programs on anti-Semitism and Holocaust remembrance;
5. Make better use of the working definition of anti-Semitism.

Additional Recommendations to Governments

1. Speak out more forcefully against anti-Semitism and respond publicly to any manifestations of anti-Semitism;
2. Expand cooperation and dialogue with civil society to combat anti-Semitism;

3. Review legislation to ensure that hate crimes are criminal offenses or that bias motives are considered aggravating circumstances when passing sentences on “ordinary” crimes. If necessary, create task forces in cooperation with civil society to develop legislation on hate crimes, including anti-Semitic crimes;
4. Further expand enforcement of laws against anti-Semitic crimes and ensure that offenders are prosecuted and punished appropriately if found guilty;
5. Provide training for police, prosecutors, and judges on anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic crimes;
6. Ensure that police and other authorities are aware of and use the working definition of anti-Semitism;
7. Ensure that local and municipal authorities – as well as national authorities – are trained and equipped to deal with instances of anti-Semitism;
8. Provide financial support for programs to counter anti-Semitism, including programs implemented by ODIHR.

Additional Recommendations to OSCE Institutions

1. Continue to use and promote use of the working definition of anti-Semitism;
2. Ensure that participating States are aware of their commitments to combat anti-Semitism and inquire about their progress in implementing these commitments;
3. Continue to develop and implement programs aimed at reducing anti-Semitism, particularly in cooperation with civil society;

4. Strengthen institutions dealing with anti-Semitism, including especially the Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department of the ODIHR.

Additional Recommendations to NGOs and Community Organizations

1. Bring instances of anti-Semitism to the attention of the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;
2. Develop interaction and cooperation between Jewish and Muslim community groups and NGOs;
3. Develop programs of anti-prejudice education for young perpetrators.

List of Participants

REPRESENTATIVES OF CIVIL SOCIETY / JEWISH COMMUNITIES

- 1) Prof. Wolfgang Benz, Director, Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung, Germany
- 2) Ms. Deidre Berger, Managing Director, American Jewish Committee (Berlin Office), Germany
- 3) Ms. Graciella Bourla, Personal Assistant and Interpreter, Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece
- 4) Mr. Alexander Brod, Director, Moscow Bureau for Human Rights, Russian Federation
- 5) Ms. Suzette Bronkhorst, Director, Magenta Projects, Magenta Foundation, Netherlands
- 6) Mr. Moses Constantinis, President Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece
- 7) Mr. Ronald Eissens, General Director, Magenta Foundation, Netherlands
- 8) Mr. Raimund Fastenbauer, General Secretary, Jewish Community of Vienna, Austria
- 9) Mr. Eric Fusfield, Director of Legislative Affairs, B'nai B'rith International, USA
- 10) Dr. Galina Kozhevnikova, Deputy and Main Expert, Sova Center, Russian Federation
- 11) Mr. Stephan Kramer, General Secretary, Central Council of Jews in Germany
- 12) Dr. Tomas Kraus, Executive Director, Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic
- 13) Mr. Samuel Laster, International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism (LICRA), Austria
- 14) Mr. Paul LeGendre, Senior Associate, Interim Director, Discrimination Initiative, Human Rights First, USA
- 15) Mr. Jonathan Leman, Lecturer, Swedish Committee Against Antisemitism (SKMA) Sweden
- 16) Ms. Elzbieta Petrajtis O'Neill, Board Member Open Republic Association against Anti-Semitism and Xenophobia in Poland
- 17) Ms. Natalia Rykova, Moscow Bureau for Human Rights, Russian Federation
- 18) Ms. Barbara Sahab, Coordinator, Law Enforcement Program Anti Defamation League in Austria
- 19) Mr. Nebojsa Samardžić, Expert for Legal Affairs, Federation of Jewish Communities in Serbia
- 20) Ms. Deniz Baler Saporta, Press and Public Affairs, The Jewish Community of Turkey
- 21) Ms. Robin Sclafani, Director CEJI - A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe, Belgium
- 22) Mr. Michael Thaidigsmann, Spokesman, World Jewish Congress, USA
- 23) Mr. Erez Uriely, Director, Center Against Antisemitism, Norway
- 24) Mr. Aurel Vainer, President, Member of Parliament, Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania
- 25) Mr. Aleksander Verkhovsky, Director, Sova Center, Russian Federation
- 26) Dr. Juliane Wetzel, Academic Advisor, Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung, Germany
- 27) Mr. Michael Whine, Director, Government and International Affairs, Director of Communications, Community Security Trust, UK

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- 28) Mr. Morten Kjærum, Director, EU Fundamental Rights Agency
- 29) Mr. Stephan Dahlgren, Programme Manager, Freedoms and Justice, EU Fundamental Rights Agency
- 30) Ambassador Ferdinand Trauttmansdorff, Chair of the Task Force on International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (ITF)
- 31) Dr. Kathrin Meyer, Executive Secretary of the Task Force on International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (ITF)

GOVERNMENTAL REPRESENTATIVES

- 32) Dr. Mischa E. Thompson, Policy Advisor, United States Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission)
- 33) MMag. Esther Jakubowicz, Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- 34) Gesandter Thomas-Michael Baier, Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- 35) Mr. Razvan Rotundu, Head of Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania

OSCE CHAIRMANSHIP

- 36) Mr. Dionyssios Kyvetos, Deputy Head of Mission, OSCE Chairmanship
- 37) Rabbi Andrew Baker Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE on Combating Anti-Semitism

OSCE INSTITUTIONS

- 38) Mr. Miklos Haraszti, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media
- 39) Ms. Jo-Anne Bishop, Head of ODIHR Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department
- 40) Ms. Floriane Hohenberg, Deputy Head of ODIHR Tolerance and Non-discrimination Department
- 41) Ms. Nora Kovacs, Adviser, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media
- 42) Mr. Norbert Hinterleitner, Adviser on Anti-Semitism Issues, ODIHR Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department
- 43) Ms. Rima Dadenji, Intern, ODIHR Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department