



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA TO THE UN,  
OSCE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN VIENNA

**Statement by the Delegation of the Republic of Latvia  
at the 2006 OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting  
Warsaw, 12 October 2006**

Working Session 16: Promotion of tolerance, non-discrimination and mutual respect and understanding: the implementation of OSCE commitments

Thank you, Mr. Chairman for the opportunity to speak at this session on the issues of such a great importance for all the OSCE Participating States.

I would like to express once more the support of Latvia to the OSCE attitude keeping high on agenda the issue of combating discrimination and intolerance, including racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism. Acts of intolerance and discrimination pose a threat to democracy and, therefore, to overall security. Fighting those acts we influence positively the relationship between international security and human rights.

The primary responsibility for addressing questions connected with intolerance and discrimination rests with each Participating State. We believe the education is key, and the knowledge and understanding of history makes education effective and motivated.

Latvia has approached the questions with a due attention. Under the auspices of the President's office, a Historical Commission has worked since 1998, conducting research and rising public awareness. Quite recently the Commission published its 17<sup>th</sup> volume of research.

Mr. Chairman,

The OSCE Conferences on anti-Semitism, held in Berlin in April 2004 and in Cordoba in June 2005 have highlighted the need for Participating States to promote remembrance and education about the tragedy of the Holocaust.

Latvia has on many occasions made clear its attachment to the role of education in combating intolerance. There can be mentioned a long list of measures taken by Latvian Government in implementing those commitments.

But we are aware also that none of measures can be effective enough without support of civil society.

It is the reason why we are paying due attention to the conference's work with support and active involvement of NGOs. In July this year the International Conference titled "Holocaust: Remembrance and Lesson" held in Riga, was the latest one of such important events. The Conference was gathering participants from 24 countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me finish my short intervention with a quotation from the Conference's opening - the speech by our President H.E. Vaira Vike-Freiberga characterising importance attached to its work "the Holocaust is a lesson, in what it means to be human or to be inhuman. It is a choice that was made at the time. It is a choice that we must continue to make, every year and every day, in every country of the world, children, adults alike."

Thank you.