



United States Mission to the OSCE

OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism

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Workshop on Implementation of ODIHR's Tasking under Paragraph in
the Maastricht Ministerial Decision on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination
April 28, 2004

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am pleased that representatives of two of Europe's premier organizations for monitoring and fighting intolerance are, respectively, moderating and helping to introduce this workshop. Having Mr. Head and Dr. Winkler speak along with Ambassador Strohal is exactly the type of cross-fertilization and cooperation the United States hopes to see develop between ODIHR, ECRI, and EUMC as ODIHR develops its tolerance program.

I would like to thank our moderator and two introductory speakers for their remarks. We greatly value Ambassador Strohal's assessment of ODIHR's tolerance mandate and his vision for acting on it.

The issue before us is how to implement ODIHR's Maastricht mandate as outlined in paragraph seven of the Ministerial Decision on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination.

However, now that the Permanent Council on April 22 decided to build and elaborate on the Maastricht Decision with its Decision on Combating Anti-Semitism, it does not make sense to discuss the original Maastricht tasking in isolation.

Under the Maastricht Decision on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination, ODIHR is to:

- Serve as a collection point for data and statistics provided by the participating States
- Report regularly on these issues
- Promote best practices and lessons learned.

It is clear that action by states, under paragraph seven of the Maastricht Decision, is the basis for ODIHR's work. The United States calls on participating States to provide ODIHR with the raw materials for building a tolerance program. Those raw materials are information and statistics. Shortly before this conference, we provided a large package of information to ODIHR that we hope will serve as one of its building blocks for its collection of information on hate crime statistics and efforts to fight intolerance.

In the April PC Decision, participating States have now taken a great step forward with their new commitment "to collect and maintain information and statistics about anti-Semitism crimes, and other hate crimes," and report this information to ODIHR. Only four months ago, participating States had agreed only to "encourage" each other to do these things.

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The mandate given to ODIHR to report on its tolerance activities provides a built-in mechanism for the Office to remind participating States of their responsibilities under Maastricht and now, also under the April 22 PC Decision on Combating anti-Semitism. ODIHR should not be shy about reminding participating States about their obligations.

However, the April PC Decision also tasks ODIHR to “Follow closely . . . anti-Semitic incidents in the OSCE area” and to “systematically collect and disseminate information . . . on best practices.” In other words, the participating States now expect ODIHR to be proactive about pursuing its mandate. With time and appropriate resources, we hope ODIHR will build a small and expert staff able to organize the information it receives from participating States; advise states on practices to fight anti-Semitism; and report to OSCE fora like the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting and PC on significant anti-Semitic incidents and developments. We encourage ODIHR to provide as much information as possible about the human and financial resources it would require to make itself felt as a player in the struggle against anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance in the OSCE region.

Adequate resources are, of course, the key to building ODIHR’s tolerance program. That is why the United States has pushed so hard in the April 22 Decision on Combating Anti-Semitism for states to commit to “endeavor to provide ODIHR with the resources to implement its taskings under the Maastricht Decision on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination.” In light of the Maastricht and April 22 PC Decisions, tolerance activities should generally be funded from the core budget and performed by personnel on the permanent staff table. The United States will do its best to help meet ODIHR’s funding and staffing needs. We encourage participating States to do the same.

We very much look forward to cooperating with Ambassador Strohal as he builds ODIHR’s nascent tolerance program in the years to come. Thank you, Mr. Moderator.