



PC.DEL/1026/12
15 November 2012

Permanent Mission of Hungary to the OSCE

ENGLISH only

Statement of the Permanent Mission of Hungary to the OSCE
at the 930th Meeting of the Permanent Council
as delivered by Mrs. Bernadett Kollár, Deputy Head of Mission

Vienna, 15 November 2012

Mr Chairman,

First of all, I would like to thank Justice Catherine McGuinness, Senator Adil Akhmetov, and Rabbi Andrew Baker, Personal Representatives of the OSCE Chair-in-Office for their respective statements.

Hungary fully aligns herself with the statement made earlier on behalf of the European Union. This time I would like to take the opportunity to inform Participating States on some of the measures taken by my Government with regard to combating discrimination and anti-Semitism.

Hungary highly appreciates the work of the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairmanship in Office on Combating Anti-Semitism, Rabbi Andrew Baker. We share his concerns on the growing anti-Semitism and hate crime incidents in many countries of the OSCE region.

It is important to see that this is not an isolated phenomenon. As the HDIM discussions held in September in Warsaw made it clear, numerous countries have to fight against anti-Semitism. For this reason we support that the Personal Representative continues to monitor all the countries facing this problem. Unfortunately, anti-Semitic incidents and crimes do happen in Hungary but the political leadership gives clear responses to them. Hungary condemns and rejects any



Permanent Mission of Hungary to the OSCE

form of hatred against Hungarian Jewish Community, which has been recognised also by our international partners.

The Hungarian Government goes beyond condemning such actions and firmly steps up against any form of crime, and takes a stand against the mass events of extremist and paramilitary organizations, and has the firm intention to sell them off. We have launched a monitoring system to collect, store, and follow up on the governmental responses and judiciary consequences of all violent actions against persons and objects. The operation of this monitoring system is based on the similar one run by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. It also monitors the anti-Semitic remarks among public figures.

Mr. Chairman,

We do raise the awareness of people, especially the young generation of what happened through different phases of history to the Jewish community. During the first Orbán-government (1998-2002) the Holocaust Remembrance Day (16th April) was introduced in schools, and also the Holocaust Memorial Centre was established in Budapest according to a governmental resolution in 1999. The present government declared 2012 the Raoul Wallenberg Year, initiating numerous commemorative programs in Hungary and in many countries with the contribution of our embassies.

Hungary is determined to make it widely known what the Jewish communities in Hungary contributed to our culture and scientific knowledge in the past centuries. We also promote Jewish culture. It is to be noticed, that the Jewish cultural life in Hungary has been living its renaissance in the past couple of years. The Jewish Summer Festival for example, has been organized every year since 1998, with more and more



Permanent Mission of Hungary to the OSCE

participants (over 120 thousand in 2010). Students from Israel arrive to Hungary in growing number for university studies. The Jewish religious life flourishes.

I think that a right and balanced picture about the situation cannot be made without the recognition of the fact, that Hungary, in particular its capital has become an important European centre of Jewish cultural and community life, where participants of the Jewish cultural life are not only operating freely but Jewish culture is being promoted and becoming more and more popular.

Mr. Chairman,

I would also like to emphasise that the Hungarian Government has the firm intention to give positive responses to Rabbi Baker's recommendations. In the spirit of transparency, my Government has circulated the Rabbi's report on his March visit to Hungary among several Jewish organizations and consulted them thereon. The report was also put on the agenda of the last session of Jewish Communities' Roundtable at the end of August. The participants thoroughly studied and discussed the findings of the document.

The Ministry of Interior and the Hungarian Police Department hosted the ODIHR trainers in Budapest, on 25th October this year. The experts provided training to Hungarian police officers and investigators of hate crimes coming from all parts of the country, in the frame of the TACHLE program. The training was very successful and we would like to continue to take advantage of this valuable tool also in the future. We commend ODIHR for having provided the training and for the readiness to continue with it.



Permanent Mission of Hungary to the OSCE

We appreciate very much and count on the work of OSCE-ODIHR in developing teaching materials on anti-Semitism. As a follow-up to the relevant recommendation of Rabbi Baker we decided to take part in the ODIHR/Anne Frank House project. After the Hungarian versions of the teaching materials had been finalized, ODIHR presented this tool to the Hungarian Government. The Government is currently considering the modalities of the introduction of these materials to the relevant stakeholders. We hope to be able to come back to ODIHR with a concrete proposal on the date of the launching event at the earliest possibility.

Mr. Chairman,

Recent legislative developments also contributed to the efficiency of the fight against anti-Semitism. In 2011 the Criminal Code was amended regarding the crime of violence against a member of the community by a subparagraph which renders it punishable by imprisonment for up to 3 years, if someone displays an anti-social conduct against another person because of being part of a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, or of certain groups of the population and this conduct is able to incite threat. Therefore not only the assault against another person or applying coercion or duress to do, not to do, or to endure something for the same reasons constitutes a criminal offence any more.

I thank you, Mr Chairman.