



BRINGING THE ONLINE IN LINE WITH HUMAN RIGHTS

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Intervention by Ronald Eissens on behalf of the International Network against Cyber Hate (INACH) on Tuesday, October 4, 2011 during Working session 13, Tolerance and non-discrimination II: Review of the implementation of commitments on promotion of mutual respect and understanding, 3 – 6 pm.

**OSCE HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING
26 SEPTEMBER to 7 OCTOBER 2011
Warsaw, Poland**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Populism, ultra-nationalism and xenophobia are on the rise, creating a growing acceptance for intolerance and hate speech with the mainstream public. Discrimination and incitement to hatred or even violence, have become an everyday occurrence. Especially the Internet with its web forums, Blogs and social networking sites like Twitter, Facebook and Youtube are the battleground where the haters of Islam, Jews, Lesbians and Gays, Blacks, Roma, liberals, left-wingers and others spread their poisonous rhetoric.

By now, society has accepted hate speech as a normal part of life. It is not. Hate speech is *not* normal, and the acceptance of it by the mainstream ultimately tells people that it is ok to take matters into their own hands, with violent and sometimes deadly consequences. Examples of this we have seen in recently in Norway, and more recently in Bulgaria.

There is no magic solution to get rid of online hate speech and incitement to hatred. Education and removal of hate speech and incitement from the Internet are two solutions that do work. Since 2002 INACH and its members in 18 countries have been very busy with removing thousands of instances of hate speech and incitement to violence from the Internet, and on education. Most of our members have little resources and the network itself has no funding at all. Still, we are rather successful, but this is not enough. The amount of cyber hate has grown to enormous proportions. To curb internet hate and to bring the online inline with human rights, resources are needed.

Sadly, the commitments made by the OSCE and its Participating States on follow-up of the work on Internet and hate Crime since 2004 have, except for practical support from ODIHR in organizing training workshops, not solidified into tangible results.

We therefore strongly urge the OSCE and its participating states to:

- Start efforts to incorporate media awareness in national school curricula
- Tangibly and structurally support NGOs like the INACH network and its members, but also others, to do their work.
- Promote and support educational projects by INACH –and others- directed towards countering hate on the Internet.