



Permanent Delegation of
Belgium to the OSCE

Wohllebengasse 6/3
A-1040 Vienna
Tel. 00-43-1-5056364
Fax 00-43-1-5050388
Email: viennaosce@diplobel.be
Web: <http://www.osce2006.be>

CIO.GAL/91/06/Rev.1
7 June 2006

Original: ENGLISH

Vienna, 7 June 2006

Please find in annex a revised version of the annotated agenda for the Tolerance Implementation Meeting on the Promotion of Inter-Cultural, Inter-Religious and Inter-Ethnic Understanding, taking place from 12 to 13 June in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

We kindly inform you that the meeting will start on Monday, 12 June 2006, at 10 a.m. instead of 9 a.m. and that a reception will be organized by the host country during the lunch break of the first day.



**OSCE TOLERANCE IMPLEMENTATION MEETING ON
PROMOTING INTER-CULTURAL, INTER-RELIGIOUS AND
INTER-ETHNIC UNDERSTANDING
(Almaty, 12-13 June 2006)**

ANNOTATED AGENDA

On 6 December 2005, the Foreign Ministers of the OSCE participating States adopted a decision on “Tolerance and Non-Discrimination: Promoting Mutual Respect and Understanding” at the OSCE Ministerial Council in Ljubljana. In that decision, OSCE participating States recalled the importance of promoting and facilitating inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue and partnerships aimed at tolerance, mutual respect and understanding and freedom of thought, conscience, religion of belief at both the national and the international levels.

The Decision also recalled the OSCE’s focus on promoting tolerance and non-discrimination, embodied in the 2003 Vienna Conferences on Anti-Semitism and on Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, the April 2004 Berlin Conference on Anti-Semitism, the June 2004 Paris Meeting on the Relationship Between Racist, Xenophobic and Anti-Semitic Propaganda on the Internet and Hate Crimes, the September 2004 Brussels Conference on Tolerance and the Fight Against Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, and the June 2005 Cordoba Conference on Anti-Semitism and on Other Forms of Intolerance. In the Decision, participating States decided, in implementing their commitments, to promote tolerance and non-discrimination, to focus their activities on legislation, law enforcement, education, media, data collection, migration and integration, religious freedom, inter-cultural and inter-faith dialogue, including through implementation-focused thematic meetings in 2006. Based on discussions with participating States throughout the first half of 2006, it was decided to hold this Tolerance Implementation Meeting at the level of Senior Officials/Deputy Ministers.

The aim of this Tolerance Implementation Meeting is to underline the importance of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democratic institutions in creating a context for inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-ethnic understanding. The Meeting will also focus on the role of governments and civil society in promoting inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-ethnic understanding with a view to ensuring inclusiveness, respect for diversity and freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief. Among the many important actors in this field, this meeting will also take into account the valuable role played by women’s organizations and networks in bridging inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-ethnic divides.

The Meeting will also provide an opportunity to:

- Identify ways to use inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogue and civil society partnerships as a means to promote conflict prevention/de-escalation;
- Explore inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-ethnic partnerships and dialogue as a means to combat prejudice and stereotypes in public and political discourse.
- Facilitate coalition-building across diverse cultural and religious communities and civil society groups;
- Identify the OSCE's role in promoting inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-ethnic understanding.

12 June 2006

10:00-11:30 Opening Session

Moderator: Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, H.E. Pierre Chevalier

Formal opening of the Meeting and keynote speeches;

Presenting the importance of inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogue and civil society partnerships

As host, the President of Kazakhstan, Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev will address the Meeting and declare it open. After a break of 2-5 minutes, opening statements will follow by the Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, H.E. Pierre Chevalier, H.E. Rolf Ekeus, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and H.E. Christian Strohal, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

Subsequent keynote addresses will be given by:

- Andrei Yurov, President of the Human Rights Youth Movement.
- Ms. Ninel Fokina, Chair of the Almaty Helsinki Committee, also giving a brief presentation of the recommendations of the 11 June NGO Preparatory Meeting.
- Prof. Valery Tishkov, Director of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences

11:30 – 11:45 Break

11:45 – 14:00 Session I: inter-cultural, inter-religious, and inter-ethnic dialogue in conflict prevention and post-conflict reconciliation

Moderator: Ambassador Rolf Ekeus, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities

Commentator/Rapporteur: Miklos Haraszti, OSCE Representative of Freedom of the Media

Note-taker: Jakob Schemel, Permanent Delegation of Austria to the OSCE

Speakers

- Andrew Baker, American Jewish Committee
- Mr. Shaarik H. Zafar, Senior Policy Adviser, Department of Homeland Security, Office for Civil Rights & Civil Liberties
- Markus Mueller, Head of OSCE Centre in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

Dialogue is a crucial tool of any effort aimed at conflict prevention and post conflict reconciliation. It is the means through which immediate tensions which could lead to conflict can be diffused, differences and disagreements discussed, misunderstandings and misconceptions corrected, compromises identified and solutions negotiated. Without intercultural, inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogue tensions may grow to the point where they create a climate in which some will perceive violence as the only way of resolving problems.

But dialogue alone will not prevent conflicts or bring about post conflict reconciliation. It is of fundamental importance that governments take concrete steps and carefully developed measures designed to create and preserve a harmonious and inclusive society. A harmonious and inclusive society in turn enables the individual to participate and to identify him/herself with the community as a whole. Such identification is a key factor in the prevention of future conflicts and in advancing post-conflict reconciliation.

Specific policies may be pursued to eliminate discrimination in the labour market and to promote social cohesion ensuring that all communities have a voice in decision making and opportunities to participate in political life. At the same time, state and local authorities ensure respect for diversity, for example through the protection of religious and cultural rights and the enforcement of anti-discrimination legislation. At the heart of such a policy is the balance between integration and respect for diversity.

It is clear that integration is not a new issue. There is a wide range of experience among OSCE participating States of different policies and measures for promoting integration. Further discussion of these experiences can assist states seeking to develop their policies by identifying successful practices.

14:00 – 15:30 Luncheon (and scheduled side events):

Reception hosted by the Kazakh Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. K. Tokaev

15:30 – 18:00: Session II: inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-ethnic partnerships as a tool to counter stereotypes and prejudice and to promote mutual respect and understanding in public and political discourse

Moderator: Ambassador Christian Strohal, Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

Commentator/Rapporteur: Anastasia Crickley, Personal Representative on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, including Discrimination against Christians and Members of Other Religions

Note-taker: Knut-Are Sprauten Okstad, Permanent Delegation of Norway to the OSCE

Speakers:

- Günther Nooke, Commissioner of the Federal Government for Human Rights Policy and Humanitarian Aid at the Federal Foreign Office, Germany
- Professor Joan Andreu Rocha Scarpetta, Professor of theology of religions at the Regina Apostolorum Pontifical University
- Dr. İbrahim Kalın, Director General of SETA (Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research) Ankara, Turkey

At the 2005 Ministerial Council meeting, the Foreign Ministers of the 55 OSCE participating States adopted *Decision No.10/05, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination: Promoting Mutual Respect and Understanding* which emphasized the need to:

- consistently and unequivocally speak out against acts and manifestations of hate, particularly in political discourse and work in favour of tolerance, mutual respect and understanding;
- reject the identification of terrorism and violent extremism with any religion or belief, culture, ethnic group, nationality or race;
- consider developing, in close co-operation with civil society, concrete measures which do not endanger freedom of information and expression, in order to counter xenophobic stereotypes, intolerance and discrimination in the media and to encourage programmes to educate children and youth about prejudice or bias they may encounter in the media or on the internet.

This session will focus on inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-ethnic partnerships as a means to promote more positive public and political discourse and to react to negative portrayals of different communities. In the context of respecting free speech, the session will be forward-looking in its approach and will identify ways in which media, political and civil society leaders can be mobilized to counter negative images and help promote a positive portrayal of the diverse multi-faith and multi-cultural groups that make up today's pluralistic societies. Music, sport, youth and environmental activities and programmes will also be examined as a vehicle for forging cross-cultural/religious/ethnic alliances and partnerships between difference communities. Participants of the session will be encouraged to focus upon the identification of practical policy recommendations and examples of best practices.

13 June 2006

9:30-12:00 Session III: national, regional and international initiatives to promote inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogue and civil society partnerships

Moderator: Ms. Eva Asmussen, Chair, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, Council of Europe

Commentator/Rapporteur: Professor Gert Weisskirchen, Personal Representative of the CiO on Combating anti-Semitism

Note-taker: Luis Francisco Martinez, Permanent Mission of Spain to the OSCE

Speakers

- Mr. Zh. Aliyev, Deputy Chairman, Kazakhstan People's Assembly
- Jozef De Witte, Executive Director of the Belgian Centre for Equal Opportunities
- Dr. Mohamed Charfi, Member of the High Level Group of the Alliance of Civilisations Initiative

Discrimination and intolerance represent a challenge to democratic societies built upon the principles of respect and equal rights. Where discrimination becomes entrenched or institutionalized, the social and cultural exclusion of groups from participation in 'mainstream' society is often witnessed. OSCE participating States have committed themselves to condemn discrimination against any religious group or individual believer, while ensuring and facilitating the freedom of the individual to profess and practice a religion or belief, alone or in community with others, through transparent and non-discriminatory laws, regulations, practices and policies. In order to promote the participation and integration of members of different cultural, religious, ethnic and other communities, governments must remove barriers. Partnerships and mechanisms for continuous dialogue between the various communities and with governmental authorities are essential.

This session will focus on national institutional mechanisms and practices, including existing specialised bodies and national strategies, to fight discrimination and foster inter-cultural inter-religious and inter-ethnic partnerships and dialogue. During the session, the activities of international and regional organizations will be presented in order for this session to contribute to the coherence of actions by the international community in this sphere. The UN Alliance of Civilizations initiative and the OSCE's contribution to it can also be presented and discussed. This session could also explore how governments and civil society can work together to implement UNSCR 1624, and what the OSCE role should be.

12:00 – 13:30 Luncheon (and scheduled side events)

13:30 – 16:00: Session IV: the way forward: strengthening the role of the OSCE in facilitating inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-ethnic understanding through dialogue and partnerships

Moderator: Ambassador Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, OSCE Secretary General

Commentator/Rapporteur: Ambassador Ömür Orhun, Personal Representative of the CiO on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims

Note-taker: Mustafa Osman Turan, Permanent Mission of Turkey to the OSCE

Speakers:

- Dr. Anna Kreikemeyer, Centre for OSCE Research
- Aaron Rhodes, Executive Director of the International Helsinki Federation
- Professor Cole Durham, ODIHR Advisory Panel of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief

This forward-looking session will focus on the identification of priority areas within today's existing work where further efforts and additional activities can be pursued by the OSCE. These could include co-operation among participating States as well as with civil society and inter-governmental organizations in order to promote inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-ethnic understanding with the assistance of relevant OSCE structures and institutions.

The session will also look at the implementation of OSCE commitments by participating States related to fighting discrimination and the promotion of respect and mutual understanding, as well as the role of OSCE institutions and OSCE field missions in supporting the implementation of these commitments. This session will also identify concrete projects, activities and tools available to support participating States and civil society in promoting inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-ethnic understanding such as the ODIHR's Advisory Panel of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief and the OSCE Action Plans for the Promotion of Gender Equality and on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area.

The results of this session will be transferred to the Working Group on Human Protection and Non-Discrimination for the development of recommendations in order to further reinforce the work of the OSCE and its participating States in fighting intolerance and promoting inter-cultural/religious/ethnic understanding through dialogue and partnerships and identify possible ways for the Brussels Ministerial Council to strengthen and improve OSCE commitments in this regard.

16:00-18:00 – Closing Session:

Moderator: Ambassador Doulat Kuanyshev, Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the OSCE

Commentators/Rapporteurs give a summary and their findings on the discussions

Reactions from the floor

Closing Remarks

- Secretary-General of the OSCE, H.E. Marc Perrin de Brichambaut
- First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, H.E. Rakhat Aliyev
