



## **SUMMARY REPORT**

### **FIRST ROUNDTABLE MEETING TO PROMOTE THE *GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATORS ON COUNTERING INTOLERANCE AND DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MUSLIMS:***

#### **Countering Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims through Education for Societies in Transition**

**6 September 2012, Vienna**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

A roundtable meeting was held in Vienna on 6 September 2012 on “Countering Intolerance against Muslims through Education for Societies in Transition”. This was the first of a series of three roundtables convened by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in co-operation with the Council of Europe (CoE) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) aimed at promoting use of the publication *Guidelines for Educators on Countering Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims: Addressing Islamophobia through Education*<sup>1</sup>. The *Guidelines* were jointly published by the three organizations in 2011. The objective of the publication is to empower educators to challenge intolerance and discrimination against Muslims in schools. The *Guidelines* are a resource with examples of good practices and a list of websites where further information and resources can be found.

The purpose of the first roundtable was to present the *Guidelines*, share regional experiences and obtain recommendations on effective ways to implement this new educational tool within the context of societies in transition. The Vienna meeting brought together representatives of ministries of education, educational institutions, pre- and in-service teacher training institutions and civil society organizations whose projects are implemented in educational systems.

The *Guidelines* were developed in line with the commitment of OSCE participating States to promote tolerance, mutual respect and understanding for different cultures and to counter prejudice, intolerance and discrimination, including against Muslims, through the development of comprehensive educational policies, strategies and awareness-raising measures. OSCE Ministerial Council decisions encourage participating States to consider drawing on ODIHR expertise and assistance in designing methods and curricula for tolerance education.<sup>2</sup>

This report provides a summary of the discussions at the Vienna meeting and the recommendations emerging from the meeting. The other two planned roundtable meetings are the following:

- “Globalization, Diversity and Social Cohesion in Educational Settings” (5 November 2012, Paris); and
- “Challenging Anti-Muslim Prejudice and Promotion of Mutual Understanding in Multicultural Societies through Education”.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The *Guidelines* are available both in print and on-line in English, French, German, Russian and Spanish at <http://www.osce.org/odihhr/84495>.

<sup>2</sup> See, in particular, OSCE Ministerial Council Decision No. 10/05 on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination: Promoting Mutual Respect and Understanding (MC.DEC/10/05), 6 December 2005 Ljubljana, <http://www.osce.org/mc/17462>, and OSCE Ministerial Council Decision No. 13/06 on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination and Promoting Mutual Respect and Understanding (MC.DEC/13/06), 5 December 2006 Brussels, <http://www.osce.org/atu/23706>. Annex II provides a summary of OSCE commitments on these issues.

<sup>3</sup> Date and venue to be confirmed.

## II. SUMMARY OF THE SESSIONS

Approximately 30 participants representing ministries of education, pedagogical agencies and non-governmental organizations active in the field of tolerance education attended the event. The representatives of several permanent delegations to the OSCE also participated in the meeting. In the meeting's opening statement, Azra Junuzović, Deputy Head of ODIHR's Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department, spoke about the impact of intolerance and discrimination on students in the classroom. She explained also that ODIHR works on promotion of mutual respect and understanding in order to lend support and assistance to participating States. She highlighted a number of ODIHR projects in this field, including country-specific versions of the Teaching Materials on Combating anti-Semitism<sup>4</sup>, a manual for teachers on combating discrimination in education as part of the EU-funded project on the Best Practices for the Integration of Roma in the Western Balkans<sup>5</sup> and a pilot project on training to combat bias and prejudice in the classroom.

**Session I** focused on the role of education in promoting tolerance, mutual respect and understanding for societies in transition. In an opening statement, Ms. Zhulieta Harasani, UNESCO's National Professional Officer in Albania, highlighted that education is one of the four pillars of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations initiative. UNESCO closely cooperates with this initiative and carries out activities aimed at fostering a culture of peace in South-Eastern Europe.<sup>6</sup> Ms. Harasani underlined that anti-discrimination policies in school and training of teachers on tolerance can contribute to countering intolerance and discrimination, including against Muslims. She mentioned the importance of review and revision of textbooks to ensure they are free from bias.

Mr. Rolf Gollob, Co-Head of International Projects in Education at the Zurich University of Teacher Education, pointed out in his opening remarks the necessity to address the root causes of intolerance through education for societies in transition. He stressed the need to consider how social, economic and political developments may affect education and a sense of security in schools.

Following the opening statements, participants discussed how the violent conflicts that followed the collapse of communism in some participating States created biases and stereotypes among different groups. Speakers pointed out in particular that intolerance against Muslims became a more complex issue in the aftermath of the tragic events of 11

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<sup>4</sup> The Teaching Materials on Combating anti-Semitism are available at <http://tandis.odihr.pl/?p=ki-as,tm>; information on the Roma project is available at [http://www.bpri-odihr.org/single-news/items/ODIHR\\_trains\\_teachers\\_to\\_combat\\_discrimination\\_against\\_Roma\\_in\\_South-Eastern\\_European\\_schools.html](http://www.bpri-odihr.org/single-news/items/ODIHR_trains_teachers_to_combat_discrimination_against_Roma_in_South-Eastern_European_schools.html).

<sup>5</sup> See "OSCE/ODIHR trains teachers to combat discrimination against Roma in South Eastern European schools" ODIHR News letter, 31 August 2012, <[http://bpri-odihr.org/single-news/items/ODIHR\\_trains\\_teachers\\_to\\_combat\\_discrimination\\_against\\_Roma\\_in\\_South-Eastern\\_European\\_schools.html](http://bpri-odihr.org/single-news/items/ODIHR_trains_teachers_to_combat_discrimination_against_Roma_in_South-Eastern_European_schools.html)>.

<sup>6</sup> See particularly, Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, (Adopted by the UNESCO General Conference at its Eighteenth Session) Paris, 19 November 1974, [http://www.unesco.org/pv\\_obj\\_cache/pv\\_obj\\_id\\_656F6201FAE928FB778591AFDFC8C99CB5C60000/filename/Peace\\_e.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/pv_obj_cache/pv_obj_id_656F6201FAE928FB778591AFDFC8C99CB5C60000/filename/Peace_e.pdf), UNESCO Guidelines on Intercultural Education, Paris, 2006, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001478/147878e.pdf>, UNESCO World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-Ongoing), <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/programme.htm>.

September 2001 in the United States. Some participants underlined that a human rights-based approach, as promoted by the *Guidelines*, can help to raise awareness of equal rights for everyone and foster appreciation of diversity as a positive value. Participants raised concerns that many teachers did not believe they had the necessary skills to counter manifestations of intolerance and discrimination in schools. Some speakers made the point that training programmes to demonstrate how teachers could use the *Guidelines* would be crucial in overcoming this obstacle.

**Session II** was dedicated to sharing examples of good educational practices and lessons learned on how to counter intolerance against Muslims. Ms. Kate Hollinshead, Education Worker at the organization Show Racism the Red Card, used her opening statement to describe classroom activities designed to challenge stereotypes, bias and intolerance. Such activities included name association games, discussions with students to analyze media headlines, challenging myths and providing facts, as well as dealing with difficult scenarios for students and teachers. Ms. Hollinshead explained that an important part of the work of Show Racism the Red Card focuses on recognizing and responding to incidents against Muslims. In this regard, she mentioned the “Islamophobia Education Pack”, which is accompanied by a DVD on Islamophobia, as a useful teaching material developed by her organization.<sup>7</sup> She underlined that this package is not intended to provide education on Islam, but help students at primary and secondary schools to challenges stereotypes and prejudice towards Muslims. She noted that the “Islamophobia Education Pack” can be easily tailored to other countries.

The second introductory statement of the session was delivered by Ms. Angeliki Aroni, teacher at the Intercultural Elementary School of Fairo in Athens, who stressed that teachers need practical tools and methods. As an example, she described a three-month extra-curricular project implemented in middle schools in Greece to encourage educational authorities to address intolerance and discrimination against certain groups. In this project students born in Greece were put together with newly arrived immigrant students in the same physical education course, where they were asked to engage in several sporting activities in co-operation with each other. Initially students from both groups were reluctant to participate, but in the last two weeks of the project when they were asked to be separated again, they did not want to leave their classmates. Ms. Aroni also drew attention to a number of other extra-curricular activities suggested in the *Guidelines* as a reminder of the importance of holistic approaches that encompass all facets of school life.

During the subsequent discussion, participants underlined that educational approaches need to go beyond cognitive learning; they need to promote empathy among students and contextualize stereotypes in order to challenge them. Speakers emphasized the significance of political support if such initiatives were to be sustainable, in particular for societies in transition. Participants agreed that the *Guidelines* provide a useful framework. However, a number of interventions pointed out that country-specific teaching materials would be needed to assist teachers and to reflect more adequately on the specific situation in a country, particularly for societies that had experienced ethnic conflicts. Some participants also stated that educational initiatives targeting intolerance against Muslims would be more effective if they were introduced within a broader framework that also addresses racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance against other religions or beliefs.

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<sup>7</sup> The Islamophobia Education Pack is available at <http://www.srrtc.org/uploaded/ISLAMOPHOBIA%20ED%20PACK%20FINAL%20PDF.pdf>.

**Session III** focused on development of recommendations to implement the *Guidelines*. The opening speaker was Mr. Darko Tot, Assistant Director of the Education and Teacher Training Agency in Zagreb, who described the implementation of teaching materials on combating anti-Semitism, developed by ODIHR in co-operation with the Anne Frank House. He underlined that the implementation of this project presented a good example on how to implement the *Guidelines*. He stated that the teaching materials on combating anti-Semitism were used in schools in Croatia thanks to the support of the Ministry of Education. He pointed out that since societies are becoming increasingly diverse, educational specialists need to be equipped with better skills to address diversity in the classroom. Mr. Tot also presented projects aimed at integrating national minorities in education.

The second introductory speaker of the session was Ms. Zorica Trikić, Programme Director of Centre for Interactive Pedagogy in Belgrade, who pointed out the importance of peace education, post-conflict rehabilitation and human rights education as foundations for the implementation of the *Guidelines*. She also discussed two projects: “Non-White and Non-Black”, which is an anti-bias education project, and “Kindergarten Adapted to the Needs of Local Communities”, which is a programme for Roma children.<sup>8</sup> Based on these projects, she identified three components that tolerance education activities need to include: acknowledging the problem of intolerance, empowering vulnerable communities and presenting intolerance and discrimination as a global challenge affecting all of us.

During the discussion which followed, participants offered a number of recommendations for action, which are outlined in Section III.

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<sup>8</sup> Further information on these projects is available at <http://www.issa.nl/network/serbia/serbia.html>.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

Participants made a number of practical suggestions on how the *Guidelines* can be implemented in the educational systems of societies in transition. The bullets below summarize recommendations made by participants. The recommendations were not formally adopted and have no official status. Nevertheless, participants considered that the recommendations provided useful suggestions for follow up and implementation of the *Guidelines*.

- Create a network of educational experts on intolerance and discrimination against Muslims in order to promote the *Guidelines* across the OSCE region;
- Explore the possibilities to allocate funds for awareness-raising activities to promote the use of the *Guidelines* and their implementation;
- Encourage ministries of education to provide information about the *Guidelines* on their official websites;
- Support the translation of the *Guidelines* into the official languages of other participating States;
- Develop a promotion strategy for the *Guidelines*, including the use of social media;
- Compile more comprehensive and detailed information, especially from South-eastern Europe, on examples of good educational practices to counter intolerance against Muslims;
- Organize a regional conference about good practices used in different countries to combat racism, xenophobia and intolerance against Muslims in order to analyze how these can be adapted in local education settings to combat intolerance and discrimination more effectively;
- Hold in-service training for teachers to empower them to counter intolerance against Muslims;
- Raise awareness about effective approaches to combat intolerance and discrimination in schools by taking action against intolerance and promoting empathy among students and teachers;
- Promote the integration of tolerance education activities into all school subjects, including history, mathematics, music and physical education;
- In addition to the *Guidelines*, develop more customized tools, such as training manuals, lessons plans, curricula, cross-curricular links and extra-curricular activities, as well as analysis of textbooks;
- Evaluate and monitor the dissemination and implementation of the *Guidelines* on continuing basis, in consultation with a network of education experts;
- Conduct outreach to universities and teacher training institutions to ensure that tolerance education is introduced in in-service training;
- Collect and analyze information on incidents of intolerance against Muslims in schools;
- Encourage collaboration with non-governmental organizations and student associations dealing with intolerance against Muslims;
- Promote equal employment opportunities for minorities and consult with them on educational activities to counter intolerance and discrimination.

## IV. ANNEXES

### Annex I: Meeting Agenda

**Countering Intolerance against Muslims through Education for Societies in Transition**  
**6 September 2012, Vienna**  
**The Hofburg Congress Center, Bibliotheksaal**

**09:30            Opening Remarks**

- Azra Junuzović, Deputy Head, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination, ODIHR

**10:00 – 11:00   The Role of Education in Promoting Tolerance and Mutual Respect and Understanding for Societies in Transition**

*Education is a key to sustainable development, social cohesion and stability as well as an indispensable means for effective participation in society. Education without discrimination and bias in which diversity is valued remains a goal that is yet to be achieved. Combating intolerance and non-discrimination and countering prejudices is an important component of such educational approach. The large body of international commitments in the sphere of education provides a good basis for discussion on how to combat intolerance and discrimination. The recently published Guidelines for Educators on Countering Intolerance against Muslims present a new contribution to the efforts made by the international community and it is important to examine how they can contribute to the promotion of mutual respect and understanding in different educational contexts, including those concerning societies in transition.*

Moderator:    Azra Junuzović, Deputy Head, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination  
Department, ODIHR

Speakers:

- Zhuljeta Harasani UNESCO National Professional Officer, Tirana, Albania
- Rolf Gollob, Co-Head, International Projects in Education, University of Teacher Education (IPE), Zurich, Switzerland

11:00 – 11:30   Coffee Break

**11:30 – 13.00   Sharing Experiences: Approaches to Combating Intolerance against Muslims through Education**

*Combating intolerance, discrimination and bias through education for societies in transition can take different forms. National strategies and policies aimed at promoting reconciliation, equality and diversity may be developed for use in educational settings. Alternative teaching materials or supplementary curricula may be put in place to deal with stereotypes and discrimination. Schools may design extracurricular activities or create clubs aimed at*

*promoting human rights, critical thinking and mutual understanding. Guidelines for Educators on Countering Intolerance against Muslims present several different approaches on how to deal with prejudice through education. It is necessary to examine how this publication can supplement already existing good practices aiming at teaching about intolerance and discrimination in societies in transition.*

Moderator: Childerik Schaapveld, Head of Office, Council of Europe Office in Vienna

Speakers:

- Kate Hollinshead, Education Worker, Show Racism the Red Card, Nottingham, UK
- Angeliki Aroni, Teacher, Intercultural Elementary School of Fairo, Athens, Greece

**13:00 Lunch**

**14:30 – 15:30 Implementation of the Guidelines – Next steps**

*This session will provide an opportunity to identify next steps and will aim to give an answer to the question on how Guidelines for Educators on Countering Intolerance against Muslims can be used in different national and local contexts. The recommendations coming out of these discussions will address policy makers, educational institutions and intergovernmental organizations. What policies and strategies can be developed to promote mutual respect and understanding in education for societies in transition? What competencies, skills and knowledge are needed so that teachers can effectively counter prejudice and stereotypes? How can international organizations such as OSCE ODIHR, the Council of Europe and UNESCO support authorities in their efforts to counter intolerance, stereotypes and biases and to build an environment in which the rights of all are respected.*

Moderator: Taskin Tankut Soykan, Advisor on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims, ODIHR

Speakers:

- Darko Tot, Assistant Director, Education and Teacher Training Agency, Zagreb, Croatia
- Zorica Trikić, Programme Director, Centre for Interactive Pedagogy, Belgrade, Serbia

**15:30 – 16:00 Concluding Remarks**

## **ANNEX II: List of Participants**

### **Countering Intolerance against Muslims through Education for Societies in Transition**

**6 September 2012, Vienna**

#### **Panelists:**

1. Prof. Rolf Gollob Panelist Zurich International Projects in Education (IPE)
2. Mr. Childerik Schaapveld, Vienna Head of Office, Council of Europe Office
3. Ms. Kate Hollinshead, London, Show Racism the Red Card
4. Ms. Angeliki Aroni, Athens, Intercultural Elementary School of Fairo
5. Mr. Darko Tot, Zagreb, Education and Teacher Training Agency
6. Ms. Zorica Trikić, Belgrade, Centre for Interactive Pedagogy,
7. Ms. Zhulieta Harasani, Tirana, UNESCO Office in Albania

#### **Participants:**

8. Prof. Vladimir Simovic, Zagreb, Faculty of Teacher Education
9. Mr. Sasa Milic, Podgorica Pedagogical Center
10. Mr. Gjorgji Nikolov, Skopje, Ministry of Education and Science
11. Ms. Njomza Qerimi, Skopje, Ministry for Integrated education
12. Ms. Mira Grbic Banja Luka, Pedagogical Institute of Republica Srpska
13. Ms. Snežana Jovanova-Mitkowska, Shtip Faculty of Education, Stip State University
14. Ms. Ivanka Mijik, Skopje, Bureau for Educational Development
15. Mr. Predrag Lažetic, Belgrade Centre for Education Policy
16. Ms. Asja Korbar, Zagreb, Network of Education Policy Centers
17. Ms. Majlinda Hala, Tirana Institute for Development of Curriculum
18. Ms. Eva Ladanyi, Budapest, Ministry of Human Resources
19. Col. Dr. Istvan Kobolka, Budapest, Defense Ministry
20. Mr. Javier Rosón Lorente, Madrid Casa Árabe
21. Mr. Hayri Emin, Sofia Grand Mufti's Office of Bulgaria
22. Mr. Veysel Filiz, Paris, COJEP International
23. Ms. Milena Ceranic, Podgorica, OSCE Mission to Montenegro
24. Ms. Jelena Jokanovic, Belgrade, OSCE Mission to Serbia
25. Ms. Emilija Simonovska-Janackovska, Skopje, OSCE Mission to Skopje
26. Ms. Jasna Dobricik, Pristina, OSCE Mission in Kosovo
27. Mr. Henri Nickels Brussels, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
28. Ms. Cyrille Maurin, Brussels, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
29. Ms. Laura Katrine Gravesen, Copenhagen, Danish Ministry of Children and Education
30. Ms. Sigrid Steininger, Vienna, Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture of Austria
31. Prof. Dr. Seyfi Kenan, Ankara, Ministry of Education of Turkey
32. Ms. Azra Junuzović, Warsaw, ODIHR
33. Mr. Taşkın Tankut Soykan, Warsaw, ODIHR