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**OSCE Conference on anti-Semitism
EU intervention in session 2:
The role of Governments and Civil Society**

The EU recognises that Government action is fundamental in democratic societies to initiate change, establish mechanisms and set the context for broader engagement by civil society in the fight against racism, xenophobia, discrimination and anti-Semitism. Government action also highlights the seriousness the EU attaches to combating these phenomena. The EU acts individually through its Member States and at an institutional level through its Councils, by the actions of the European Commission and European Parliament and through its independent agencies.

In response to racist and anti-Semitic incidents in early 2002, the EU undertook political action. For example, the Council meeting on Justice, Home Affairs and Civil Protection on 25-26 April 2002 condemned racist violence and anti-Semitism and outlined activities to strengthen EU level action.

The EU has established an anti-racism mechanism. The EU's European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) set up in 1997, is tasked with collecting data on racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism in the EU Member States, monitors the situation of these phenomena and reports its findings to the EU institutions and Member States. It conducts research, shares good practice and provides expert advice to the EU and its member states. The Council of Europe Commission against racism and intolerance (ECRI) also conducts relevant work in this area.

The European Commission administers a Community Action Programme against discrimination focusing on analysis and evaluation, capacity building of principally NGOs and information and awareness-raising activities.

The European Commission also works to combat racism, xenophobia and discrimination against minorities in its external actions. Through cooperation with NGOs, activities are carried out under the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights to promote and improve enforcement of the rights of persons belonging to minorities. Improved inter-cultural and inter-ethnic understanding are also objectives of these actions.

The EU and its member states have also launched various initiatives to promote inter-cultural dialogue such as the three separate Round Tables on the issues of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and inter-cultural cooperation in 2002-2003.

In this respect, it is worth mentioning the hosting by the Government of Sweden of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust and subsequent follow up initiatives. Under the French chairmanship of the International Task Force for Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (February 2002-February 2003), a Ministerial Seminar, co-organised with the Council of Europe, launched a remembrance and crimes against humanity prevention day.

The Acceding Countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia and the Associated Countries Bulgaria and Romania align themselves with this statement.