

532nd Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 532, Agenda item 5

**DECISION No. 633
PROMOTING TOLERANCE AND MEDIA FREEDOM
ON THE INTERNET**

The Permanent Council,

Reaffirming the commitments made at the Ministerial Council Meeting in Maastricht to combat hate crimes, which can be fuelled by racist, xenophobic and anti-Semitic propaganda on the Internet,

Reaffirming the importance of fully respecting the right to the freedoms of opinion and expression, which include the freedom to seek, receive and impart information, which are vital to democracy and in fact are strengthened by the Internet,

Recalling the commitments to collect and maintain reliable information and statistics about hate crimes motivated by racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and related discrimination and intolerance, to report such information periodically to the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and to make this information available to the public, as contained in the Permanent Council Decisions on Combating Anti-Semitism (PC.DEC/607) and on Tolerance and the Fight against Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination (PC.DEC/621),

Stressing the importance of promoting tolerance, mutual respect, dialogue and understanding, including through the Media and the Internet within strategies based on a variety of measures,

Decides that:

1. Participating States should take action to ensure that the Internet remains an open and public forum for freedom of opinion and expression, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and to foster access to the Internet both in homes and in schools;
2. Participating States should investigate and, where applicable, fully prosecute violence and criminal threats of violence, motivated by racist, xenophobic, anti-Semitic or other related bias on the Internet;

3. Participating States should train law enforcement agents and prosecutors on how to address crimes motivated by racist, xenophobic, anti-Semitic or other related bias on the Internet and should share information on successful training programmes as part of the exchange of best practices;
4. The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media will continue an active role in promoting both freedom of expression and access to the Internet and will continue to observe relevant developments in all the participating States. The Representative will advocate and promote OSCE principles and commitments. This will include early warning when laws or other measures prohibiting speech motivated by racist, xenophobic, anti-Semitic or other related bias are enforced in a discriminatory or selective manner for political purposes which can lead to impeding the expression of alternative opinions and views;
5. Participating States should study the effectiveness of laws and other measures regulating Internet content, specifically with regard to their effect on the rate of racist, xenophobic and anti-Semitic crimes;
6. Participating States should encourage and support analytically rigorous studies on the possible relationship between racist, xenophobic and anti-Semitic speech on the Internet and the commission of crimes motivated by racist, xenophobic, anti-Semitic or other related bias;
7. The OSCE will foster exchanges directed toward identifying effective approaches for addressing the issue of racist, xenophobic and anti-Semitic propaganda on the Internet that do not endanger the freedom of information and expression. The OSCE will create opportunities, including during the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, to promote sharing of best practices;
8. Participating States should encourage the establishment of programmes to educate children and youth about expression motivated by racist, xenophobic, anti-Semitic or other related bias they may encounter on the Internet. Also, as appropriate, participating States and Internet service providers should take steps to increase parental awareness of widely available filtering software that enables parents to exercise greater supervision and control over their children's use of the Internet. Materials on successful educational programmes and filtering software should be widely disseminated as part of the exchange of best practices;
9. Participating States should welcome continued and increased efforts by NGOs to monitor the Internet for racist, xenophobic and anti-Semitic content, as well as NGOs' efforts to share and publicize their findings.

PC.DEC/633
11 November 2004
Attachment

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER PARAGRAPH 79
(CHAPTER 6) OF THE FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE HELSINKI CONSULTATIONS**

By the Delegation of Turkey:

“I would like to point out that Turkey joins consensus on the decision ‘On Promoting Tolerance and Media Freedom on the Internet’ with the understanding that the measures foreseen therein are to be implemented within the means and resources available to the participating States.

I would like to request that this interpretative statement be attached to the Journal of the Day.”