

OSCE Conference on the relationship between racist, xenophobic and antisemitic propaganda on the Internet and hate crimes in Paris, June 16 – 17, 2004.

**Intervention during the closing session on June 17,
by Suzette Bronkhorst,
Secretary-General of the International Network Against Cyber Hate (INACH)**

During the last two days the basis has been laid for lasting and productive co-operation. We like to view this conference as the first of a series, we've scratched the surface and now need to look at issues in depth.

As freedom of speech goes hand in hand with the responsibility to have respect for the rights and/or reputations of others, we need to be extremely careful when setting boundaries to freedom of speech. Some concerns have been expressed about the inappropriate use of such boundaries for the elimination of dissident voices. We share this concern because history has proven that censorship lurks around the corner. Forbidding publications or other expressions before they have been made public is a powerful tool for oppression. Therefore in our view expressions should only be assessed *after* publication.

We applaud the commitment and leadership the OSCE participating states have shown, dealing with this extremely important and difficult subject during this conference. We think this conference has created a bigger understanding on all sides.

We recommend that OSCE participating states:

- Consider the possibilities of a follow-up conference on Hate speech and the Internet;
- Promote and support initiatives to set up mechanisms and bureaus for monitoring, collecting and sharing comparative data and statistics;
- Promote and support initiatives to set up mechanisms and bureaus for countering Internet-hate speech;
- Support existing bureaus and Networks which counter hate on the Net;
- Promote and support educational projects directed towards countering hate on the Internet;
- Promote Industry codes of conduct.