

**Working Session 4 – Freedom of thought, consciousness, religion or belief
and Freedom of movement – 26 September 2007**

Right of reply by the delegation of Romania to statement by the representative of the NGO *Soteria International* concerning allegations of discrimination against the Romanian Yoga School M.I.S.A.

Romania is surprised by the strange accusations formulated by Soteria International, according to which the OSCE Conference held in Bucharest last June – the positive role of which in combating discrimination has been acknowledged during the Human Dimension Meeting by many speakers – would have caused what Soteria International called “one of the most severe cases of discrimination and abuse in the post communist Romania” in the particular case of the yoga movement MISA.

For the information of Soteria International, as well as of all participants to this meeting, the Romanian competent authorities called to provide answers to demarches related to MISA did proceed to investigations and, as a result, in June 2007, the Prosecutor’s Office sent to Court a number of cases regarding supposedly illegal activities of certain individual members of MISA – and in no way, as it was suggested by Soteria, the yoga movement at large or the MISA organization as such.

Since it is a judicial procedure under way, Romanian authorities refrain from any comment that might be contrary to the independence of the judiciary.

As for the claims against a supposedly politically animated campaign of discrimination and abuse, it is difficult to understand the reasoning behind this perception, since the chronological landmarks mentioned by the representative of Soteria make things look as if all Romanian Governments, from left to right, let aside the Communist regime, seem to have strangely re-united in a common strive to discriminate MISA and to discredit the movement by manipulating the media, with means that they seemed less able to master to their own political advantage.