

OSCE High-Level Conference on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination  
Session 2: Combating Anti-Semitism

Intervention

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My name is Chantal McGill from the Interfaith Youth Core, an international NGO based in the United States. Young people are a key to combating anti-Semitism, and I'd like to tell you a brief story that highlights the power young people have to live out OSCE commitments not only to promoting tolerance, but also to embracing diversity by working together.

This year, two of our young leaders at Stanford University in California, Anand who is Hindu and Ansaf, who is Muslim, stood together to combat anti-Semitism and promote positive interfaith relationships. Recently an extremist anti-Semitic religious group targeted the Hillel Jewish student group through hateful demonstrations outside of their place of worship. Anand and Ansaf, who had built strong relationships with Jewish student leaders on campus, mobilized over 1,000 students of all different faith traditions and beliefs to stand in solidarity with their Jewish friends. These students spontaneously held a celebration of diversity in the same location, with musical performances from the Christian choir, the Jewish Klezmer band, and a Muslim vocalist. Their celebration was so powerful that it drowned out the anti-Semitic protesters' voices. They took a divisive, anti-Semitic situation and showed the power of unity in action. As a background to the story, the Interfaith Youth Core trains young leaders to make interfaith cooperation and diversity a social norm in society. We are privileged to be part of the U.S. delegation, comprised of government, civil society, and faith leaders.

We urge government and civil society partners to continue combating anti-Semitism with a particular focus on educating young people to take positive action. Young people can combat anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance by promoting respect for religious identity, building mutually inspiring relationships amongst people of different beliefs, and working together to solve local problems and performing charity.