

**OSCE HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING**  
**Warsaw, 26 September – 7 October 2011**

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**Tuesday, 4 October 2011**

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**Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia**

**Working session 13: Tolerance and non-discrimination II: Review of the implementation of commitments on promotion of mutual respect and understanding:**

**Responses to and prevention of hate crimes in the OSCE area;**  
**Combating racism, xenophobia and discrimination, also focusing on intolerance and discrimination against Christians and members of other religions**

Mme. Moderator,

Hate crimes are complex phenomena that include many components which have direct and/or indirect implications for human rights. Hatred has many forms and manifestations, such as crimes committed against representatives of various ethnic groups, propaganda in the media or the Internet, destruction of historic-cultural-religious monuments etc. Unfortunately, 2010 and the beginning of 2011 were not exceptional in this sense: hate-motivated verbal and physical attacks against individuals – just because they are different – and their property, continued occurring.

Armenia appreciates the work done by the OSCE on the issues pertaining to hate crimes. While working on this subject and trying to address the manifestations of hatred, one should keep in mind that the most important and major factor is the response of the States and the specific measures that they take to prevent and adequately reprimand the perpetrators of hate crimes. In this regard, the preparation of annual reports which depict trends and problems associated with the struggle against hate crime in participating States is indeed a useful tool.

Mme. Moderator,

As was the case before, today we still witness massive and systematic hate propaganda of one OSCE member State against another, aiming to create an image of enemy among its own citizens. And if the true objective of the work done by the ODIHR, as reflected in its annual report is to serve as an early warning tool, then it is not clear why it has not addressed the ongoing massive and systematic hate propaganda masterminded by leadership of Azerbaijan. The facts are there: the mass media, school textbooks, and even official internet websites of the Government of Azerbaijan are full of racial and ethnic hatred towards everything Armenian.

The negotiations on the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh issue are accompanied with permanent anti-Armenian hatred and hysteria by the authorities of the

Republic of Azerbaijan. How can a State pretend to be genuine in its search for peace with a neighbor, if it systematically poisons its own citizens' hearts and minds by instigating racial hatred towards the neighbor?

Mme. Moderator,

We do understand that struggle against hate speech entails not exclusively condemnation but cooperation particularly amongst neighboring countries. It was with this spirit that Armenia submitted at Universal Periodic Review of Turkey a relevant recommendation which inter alia urges this country to eliminate the dissemination of hate speech including the threats of deportation of certain groups. This recommendation came amid the threats made by the Turkish Prime Minister concerning deportation of 100 thousand Armenian migrants on purely political grounds. We are glad to note that Turkey did not reject this recommendation. Though there were other instances of hate speech targeting Armenians, we believe that the dialogue within the Universal Periodic Review sets a good cooperative framework for fight against the hate speech.

Mme. Moderator,

The fight against hatred should be universal and cover not only intra- but also inter-State areas and cases that concern thousands and millions of people. This is not only a question of psychological pressure or physical danger against one person that victimizes a small group or a community, this is a matter of responsibility before future generations – to liberate them from the darkness of hatred, intolerance against other nations and any other forms of racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia.

I would like to thank the Lithuanian Chairmanship and the OSCE/ODIHR for dedicating one of themes of the Human Dimension Supplementary Meetings to the issue of prevention and responding to hate incidents and crimes against Christians. Unfortunately, recently we more often become witnesses of hate-motivated crimes and incidents targeting Christians and their property. Today such crimes become subtler and cover not only destructions of Christian monuments – such as the mass vandalism and destruction of the unique medieval Armenian cemetery in Julfa in Azerbaijan in 1998 and 2005 – but also physical violence and prosecution. Despite the fact that this act of hatred and vandalism towards cross-stones, just because they are silent testimony of ages-old Armenian culture, has been fully documented and filmed, Azerbaijan continues to negate not only the fact of their destruction but even of the existence of Armenian crosstones in Julfa. I am confident, that recommendations of the meeting will be not only properly considered, but become a basis for more proactive work aiming to prevent such crimes.

Mme. Moderator,

Creation of a negative image of ethnic, religious or other social groups as a rule is not only a result of targeted state policy, but also is a consequence of weakness of civil society. In this regard, Armenia recommends OSCE to continue its work to assist and strengthen civil society organizations who in the field of prevention and fight against any forms of discrimination based on national origin, race, religion, language or other status.

Thank you.