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United States Mission to the OSCE Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's Closing Remarks at the OSCE Anti-Semitism Conference in Vienna

June 20, 2003

Thank you very much for organizing such a successful conference on anti-Semitism. The hard work of the Dutch Chairmanship of the OSCE help to ensure the excellent speakers, and the significant participation at this conference is truly historic. I am delighted and heartened by the suggestions of our colleagues from Germany to hold a Conference in Berlin next year on this topic. That would accomplish many things, including making certain that the things that were said here are just not words. It would be a shame to relegate a historic conference like this and to a one-time event. Instead, let's make it become something realistic and something that we can follow up on. I can't think of anything more fitting than a first meeting in Vienna and a second meeting next year to assess our progress, held in Berlin. I want to thank the German delegation and to offer our support for that very important recommendation.

It would also be very useful in the interim to establish a mechanism within the OSCE for gathering statistics on anti-Semitism as they exist in the different 55 member nations, so that during that period of time they can be assessed. I am sure there will be different levels of complexity, different levels of completeness, and in some cases maybe no statistics at all. Therefore, at least some recommendations can be made on a uniform way of gathering statistics on anti-Semitism so that we can evaluate where the problems exist and where progress has to be made. The time between this meeting and the next meeting in Berlin could be usefully utilized to assess those statistics and develop them. It is important to recognize that anti-Semitism is a singular problem. It has its own history, it has a pernicious and distinct history from many prejudicial forms of bias that we deal with, and therefore singular focus on that problem and reversing it can be a way in which both Europe and America can really enter the modern world. Dealing with anti-Semitism can form a basis for us to handle other problems that are similar, but very different. Frankly, this can be a basis on which the United States and Europe can cooperate and work together because we have a common problem and we have solutions that we can share with each other. What an excellent way for us to re-establish and solidify our strong friendship. You can see how strong our friendship is because I am seated at my place next to Germany.

I would also like to very briefly -- and I have to commend the representative of Armenia because I never heard anyone, even in New York, speak as fast as the representative of Armenia; the translator had to concede that he could no longer translate because she was going so fast -- so now I will very quickly finish my statement.

I would like to thank Congressman Hastings and Congressman Smith, and our Ambassadors who have done so much work on this, Ambassador Minikes and Ambassador Bell, and our delegation because they really have put in a tremendous amount of work. I would like to thank each of the participating nations. All of you have shown a genuine interest in this topic by being here and participating in this conference. I would like to reiterate that what should follow from this are very specific things in which we can show progress and report on in Berlin -- hate crime statistics, hate crime legislation, regular annual meetings that assess anti-Semitism. The education that has been talked about -- disciplining our political debate so we do not have anti-Semitism masquerading in the form of disagreements over the Middle East or using anti-Zionism as a way of promoting hatred and anger -- and it really can be done. You can really separate our disagreement over politics from the kind of hate language and invocation to hate that is now, unfortunately, so common. We should all participate, including heads of states, in refuting appeals to hatred and remembering the Holocaust effectively.

One last point that I think is very important. We should set up diverse group to respond to hatred. The most effective way to respond to anti-Semitism is to have members of the Islam community or member of the Christian community, depending on where the source of the anti-Semitism is, standing up and speaking about it and trying to educate his community. And frankly, the most effective way to deal with racism is to have people from that group speak out against it. If we can accomplish that, I think we can accomplish a great deal.

Again, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. The leadership of the Dutch was critical in having this historic conference and once again I thank the German delegation for their historic offer to host next year's conference.

Thank you very much.