

MAGENTA

bites the hands that feed discrimination

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**Statement by *Ronald Eissens*, representing Magenta Foundation/Stichting Magenta,
during the HUMAN DIMENSION SESSIONS OF THE 2010 OSCE REVIEW
CONFERENCE, 30 SEPTEMBER - 8 OCTOBER 2010, WARSAW, POLAND;
WEDNESDAY, 6 OCTOBER - 10:00-13:00 WORKING SESSION 7:
Tolerance and Non- Discrimination I including Implementation of the OSCE Action
Plan on Roma and Sinti, National minorities & Preventing aggressive nationalism,
racism and chauvinism**

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

The OSCE institutions are doing excellent work. During the last 10 years achievements were made in strengthening the rule of law, in election monitoring, in the Protection of Human Rights, Media Freedom and many other issues. The establishment of the Tolerance and Non-Discrimination department at ODIHR and the 3 Personal Representatives of the Chair in Office were landmarks in the pursuit of Human Rights and the countering of Intolerance. Important subjects were discussed at length during the High level Tolerance conferences of the last decade. But, the OSCE Participating States itself are not doing so well.

All over the region, populist and racist sentiments are growing, countries move away from internationalism towards nationalism. We see countries where hate crime, human rights abuses and discrimination have become the rule rather than the exception. It is a long list, both west and east of Vienna: persecution of Roma, hate against Muslims, Antisemitic hate Crime, Holocaust denial, the persecution of human Rights defenders, hate crimes against LGBT persons and last but not least, hate on the Internet.

We are happy with last weeks' opening speech of Ambassador Lenarcic, director of ODIHR, who recognized most of these problems, stating that the "uneven and incomplete" implementation of commitments remained a serious problem".

The sad reality is that 65 years after the Holocaust, we are going downhill, seemingly choosing to forget or even unlearn the lessons of the past.

It is still possible to stem the tide. But for that, our International institutions, like the EU, the Council of Europe and indeed the OSCE must make haste. We must prevent the loss of the progress made during the last decade in the field of Tolerance. During the last 7 years participating states have, by way of a number of OSCE ministerial council decisions, reiterated their commitment to the tolerance agenda, but we need to go a step further now; the tolerance agenda needs to be established as a formal and permanent part of the OSCE mandate.

We note another worrisome development at the OSCE. Presently, the position of NGOs has come under pressure. Some states are even of the opinion that any criticism of Civil Society is equal to 'defamation of the state', a laughable but dangerous delusion.

We are recommending the OSCE participating states to:

- Take fast and visibly action, including speaking out, against Humans rights abuses, racism, discrimination, antisemitism, hate against Muslims, discrimination and persecution of Roma, any hate crime, any extremism, be it religious, right wing or left wing.
- Use the upcoming Astana High Level summit on tolerance to discuss making Tolerance a full, permanent and official part of the OSCE mission and mandate, not only an underlying factor to security.
- Ensure the free and unhindered input of Civil Society, including full access, rights to organize meetings and speak freely, both here, at the Astana summit and at any other OSCE event.