



REPRESENTATION PERMANENTE DE LA FRANCE
AUPRES DE L'O.S.C.E

**French Delegation's Statement on Tolerance and non-discrimination II
(working session 2)**

Translated from the French

I fully back the declaration of the European Union.

France is particularly concerned about the rise in intolerance, racism and discrimination in the OSCE area, as well as about the acts of violence committed for these motives, including in our country. All these movements of hate, be they racist, anti-semitic, islamophobic or homophobic, are contrary to all values of human rights and are the source of conflict. They must be fought with determination and effectiveness.

The French Government has fully apprehended the rise in acts of intolerance in the context of the economic and social crisis which is currently affecting France. As the Minister of the Interior recalled on 2 August, the fight against all forms of discrimination is “a long-term combat which needs more than words and clever slogans. Work is needed on the ground, to explain and reach out, to counter the insidious mechanisms that can sow the seeds for the worst ideas in the minds of the susceptible. And lead to the worst acts being committed.”

In accordance with EU regulations and the commitments France has signed up to at the OSCE, France has a solid legal framework to combat discrimination. In this struggle, the French authorities do not give precedence to any form of discrimination in particular, nor do we neglect any. Under French law, any show of hatred, regardless of its basis, must be prosecuted. Racist language and incitement to hatred on the basis of origin, race or religion, like sexual orientation, are punishable by law.

An action programme was adopted on 26 February 2013 to supplement the 2012-2014 national action plan against racism and anti-semitism, strengthening the effectiveness of interministerial efforts and bolstering the enforcement aspect. Its main goal is to tackle stereotypes and the formation of prejudice. A major place is thus given to education and outreach.

Moreover, the Prime Minister launched a vast project to reform integration policy, whose conclusions are expected due at the end of the month. The goal is notably to achieve a “change of image for immigrants and their descendants, in the sense of highlighting the value of mutual enrichment of citizens” and framing new public policies aimed at “achieving social cohesion in the long term, combating all forms of discrimination”, in the sense of “universal access to ordinary law”.

Lastly, the Government adopted on 31 October last year an interministerial action programme to combat violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

This form of discrimination is all too often little known or denied, leading to stigmatization and violation of the human rights of LGBTI persons. It is the responsibility of the public authorities to ensure that all citizens enjoy the same fundamental rights and exercise these rights freely, without discrimination. On 24 June, the EU adopted Guidelines to Promote and Protect the Enjoyment of all Human Rights by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) Persons. France will continue to participate actively in these efforts.

In conclusion, and as a recommendation, France reiterates its call for full complete implementation of OSCE commitments in the fight against hate crime and to combat all forms of discrimination and intolerance, regardless of their motives. As such, letting it be believed or said that certain motives of discrimination and hate crimes are less worthy of being fought is contrary to our commitments to equal dignity for all human beings. /.