

Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

23 September- 4 October 2013, Warsaw

Statement of the Republic of Serbia

Monday, 23 September 2013, Working session 2: Tolerance and non-discrimination

Madam Moderator,

The overall objective of the Government of Republic of Serbia is to harmonise the legal framework with international standards, prevent violations of the prohibition of discrimination through legislative and regulatory reforms, and adopt policy documents.

Republic of Serbia adopted the Strategy for the prevention and protection from discrimination in June 2013. This document is dedicated to the prevention of discrimination and improvement of the status of 9 vulnerable groups that are most often exposed to discrimination. This is the first strategic document that contains measures designed to improve the status of LGBT persons, namely, the first document adopted by the government related to LGBT persons and improvement of their position for the period until 2018.

Set of practical measures were introduced to implement the Strategy. Training for judges and prosecutors were organized in order to acquire knowledge about the application of the recently introduced institute of hate crimes in practice and respective manual was created. This topic will be included in a regular training program of the Judicial Academy for judges and prosecutors from all over Serbia .

The Government of the Republic of Serbia is showing willingness to ensure the right to freedom of assembly for citizens with different sexual orientation and gender identity. Practice has shown professional progress of members of the police in protecting LGBT persons from violence. At the same time, the level of confidence of LGBT community in the work of the police has increased.

The Yogyakarta Principles were published and were distributed to the general public and to the participants of the conference "Combating Discrimination on the Grounds of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity", which was organized by the Office for human and Minority Rights in December 2012, in Belgrade within the LGBT project of the Council of Europe with the same title. Serbia has joined this project of the Council of Europe, together with five other countries in the beginning of 2012.

The Office for Human and Minority Rights organized a meeting at which the Center for Advanced Legal Studies presented the Model of the Law on registered same-sex partnerships, prepared by LGBT organizations.

The Office for Human and Minority Rights will, in cooperation with the LGBT association "Rainbow/Duga" and with the support of the Council of Europe and the UK Embassy, from September conduct trainings for 500 employees of the Centers for Social Work throughout Serbia for work with LGBT persons and their families. In this way will be ensured that employees of the Centers for Social Work, which in case of problems LGBT people often turn, are adequately trained to deal with LGBT people and their families, which is of great importance for the quality of their lives. At the same time, this would be the first such program in the region, which could serve as an example of good practice.

At the end, let me emphasize valuable assistance that we are receiving from the OSCE in fighting all forms of discrimination, Thank you Madam Moderator