

10th Anniversary of the OSCE's Berlin Conference on Anti-Semitism

High-Level Commemorative Event

Berlin, 12-13 November 2014

Swiss OSCE Chairmanship conclusions

Distinguished delegates,

Ten years ago, OSCE participating States met here in Berlin and committed to undertake a range of actions to combat anti-Semitism, including to, “strive to ensure that their legal systems foster a safe environment free from anti-Semitic harassment, violence or discrimination in all fields of life,” to “combat hate crimes,” to promote “educational programs for combating anti-Semitism” and “education about the tragedy of the Holocaust,” and to “collect and maintain reliable information and statistics about anti-Semitic crimes and other hate crimes.”

The disconcerting events that took place in the summer of 2014 – attacks on Jewish people, on synagogues, Jewish schools and other buildings as well as anti-Semitic threats expressed during assemblies, on the Internet and elsewhere - have highlighted that anti-Semitism remains a challenge to stability and security in the OSCE region.

Against this background, let me sum up the proceedings of what I would like to call the *Berlin Plus Ten Conference*.

During discussions, OSCE participating States

Recalled the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 and the commitment of participating States to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion;

Reaffirmed the 2004 Berlin Declaration on Anti-Semitism and the commitments made by OSCE participating States at subsequent Ministerial Councils;

Welcomed the recommendations developed by the Civil Society Forum that took place on 12 November 2014;

Acknowledged the essential contribution made by civil society to preventing and responding to anti-Semitism and the importance for States to engage with civil society;

Reaffirmed that international developments, including those in the Middle East, never justify anti-Semitism;

Expressed deep concern about recent violent and deadly attacks on Jewish individuals, by threats against Jewish people and institutions, and about reports which indicate that Jewish people no longer feel safe in parts of the OSCE region to visibly express their religion and publicly identify as Jews;

Expressed deep concern about anti-Semitic expressions, online and in other settings, including in the context of conflicts in the Middle East and during times of economic crisis, about Holocaust denial and trivialization and by attempts to reference the Holocaust in order to offend, intimidate and threaten Jews;

Expressed deep concern about attempts to use anti-Semitism as a political instrument, and about initiatives that reveal a lack of awareness of, sensitivity towards and respect for Jewish religious practices;

Called on political, religious and civil society leaders to use the freedom of expression, the freedom of the media and the freedom of peaceful assembly as a starting point for dialogue, coalition-building and open debate, including about conflicts in the Middle East, without justifying or resorting to anti-Semitism;

Anticipated the seventieth anniversaries of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and the end of the Second World War and the need for governments to step up their efforts in identifying effective ways to promote Holocaust remembrance and education and address attempts to distort, trivialize and deny the Holocaust;

Noted that the Working Definition of Anti-Semitism, disseminated by the EUMC in 2005 and employed by monitoring organizations in various OSCE participating States, remains a useful document for governments and civil society in explaining how anti-Zionism is frequently a mask for anti-Semitism, and Jewish communities are often targets for anti-Israel animus;

Recognized the need for governments to provide political and financial support to the work undertaken by civil society in the area of countering anti-Semitism and the importance of strong partnerships with non-governmental organizations;

Emphasized the need for co-operation and coordination among intergovernmental bodies in this area.

During the 2014 High Level commemorative OSCE Berlin Conference on anti-Semitism, the OSCE participating States discussed ways to:

- Encourage government leaders to speak out strongly and quickly when anti-Semitic incidents and other hate crimes occur to send a signal to the embattled communities and a message to the general public that anti-Semitism should not be tolerated.
- Urge law enforcement agencies to address the very real threats to Jewish community security, which also include attacks from extremists.
- Review existing legislation that addresses anti-Semitism and other hate crimes and enforce existing regulations and revise or adopt legislation where necessary.

- Provide to police and prosecutors appropriate training to enable them to better understand and respond to anti-Semitic crimes and other hate crimes.
- Redouble efforts to meet their already-stated commitments to monitor hate crimes and collect data and provide ODIHR with disaggregated information on anti-Semitic hate crime.
- Effectively investigate and prosecute perpetrators of anti-Semitic hate crime.
- Develop educational programs designed to deal with the special challenges that anti-Semitism poses and provide young people with opportunities to learn about anti-Semitism together.
- Establish channels of communication and co-operation with Jewish communities and experts on freedom of religion or belief in order to ensure that Jewish communities are systematically consulted on legislative and policy initiatives pertinent to Jewish religious practices, and to sensitize relevant government officials for the specific concerns Jewish people may have with regard to freely practicing their religion.
- Welcome the visits of the three Personal Representatives on tolerance issues and follow-up on the recommendations presented in the respective country reports.
- Encourage ODIHR to:
 - support participating States in their efforts to counter anti-Semitism by consulting civil society to develop tools that enable governments to effectively identify and address contemporary manifestations of anti-Semitism;
 - support participating States in their efforts to respond to, prosecute and collect data on anti-Semitic hate crime, in co-operation with civil society;
 - encourage the establishment of channels of communication and co-operation between governmental officials and civil society on issues related to anti-Semitism as well as hate crime, Holocaust remembrance and freedom of religion or belief;
 - provide a forum for dialogue among governmental and non-governmental experts on effective educational approaches and ways to raise awareness about anti-Semitism and overcome challenges to Holocaust education; and
 - support initiatives promoting dialogue and strengthen the capacity of civil society to promote mutual respect and understanding in order to foster co-operation and coalition-building among different communities.