



Human Dimension Implementation Meeting ODIHR activities

Thursday October 12.

Working session 16 and 17:

Promotion of tolerance, non-discrimination, and mutual respect and understanding: the implementation of OSCE commitments

Violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, and manifestations of hate and intolerance threaten stability and security in the OSCE region. While OSCE participating States have undertaken numerous commitments since 1990 to combat racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and related intolerance, including against Muslims, much work remains to be done to foster democratic and pluralistic societies, where ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity is not only tolerated, but is truly respected and valued.

Hate crimes, the most insidious manifestation of intolerance involve violent expressions of biases that may take the form of assault, murder, threats, or property damage, such as arson, desecration, or vandalism. Responding to hate crimes is problematic for a number of reasons. To begin with, most states lack accurate data about the nature and extent of hate crimes, which means that law enforcement and criminal-justice agencies are not appropriately armed with the information needed to analyse and therefore understand the root causes of such crimes. This is often compounded by an absence of legislation specifically on hate crimes, making it difficult to prosecute such cases.

ODIHR activities relating to this Working Session/issue

1) Monitoring, reporting on, and following up on responses to hate-motivated crimes and incidents

- The ODIHR monitors and reports on incidents motivated by racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance, including against Muslims.
- In 2005, the ODIHR published the report: *Combating Hate Crimes in the OSCE Region: An Overview of Statistics, Legislation and, National Initiatives*. Apart from providing an overview of statistical and legislative frameworks used by participating States to report and measure hate crimes, the report also provides states with concrete recommendations and an overview of ODIHR tools available to support states in their efforts to combat hate-motivated crimes.
- In line with the tasking the ODIHR was given to closely follow incidents motivated by racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and related intolerance, including against Muslims, the ODIHR has prepared a report on "*Challenges and Responses to Hate-Motivated incidents in the OSCE Region*" for the period January-June 2006. The report will be presented during working sessions 16 and 17.

- In order to serve as a collection point for legislation, statistics and good practices related to the combat of hate and promotion of respect and mutual understanding, the ODIHR has developed a newly developed on-line database library of resources and practical initiatives. The Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Information System will be launched during a side event on 12 October.
- In order to support OSCE participating States in strengthening their efforts to collect data on hate crimes and incidents, the ODIHR will convene a meeting on 9-10 November with the Nominated National Points of Contact on Hate Crime.

2) Educational activities to promote tolerance, respect, and mutual understanding including promoting remembrance of the Holocaust.

In 2006, the ODIHR published the study *“Education on the Holocaust and on Anti-Semitism: An Overview and Analysis of Educational Approaches”*.

- Together with Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, ODIHR has developed guidelines on *“Preparing Holocaust Memorial Days: Suggestions for Educators”*.
- In close cooperation with the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, the ODIHR has developed a pilot programme on teaching material on Anti-Semitism for seven OSCE states. In consultancy with experts from the Netherlands, Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine, Germany, Denmark and the Croatian Ministry of Education, country-specific teaching materials on anti-Semitism based on historical and social background of each of those countries has been developed. The material is available in the respective languages and is now being tested in schools by each country.
- In the area of addressing intolerance against Muslims, the ODIHR is currently developing a project to provide media professionals with an increased understanding of Muslim communities and Islam.
- The ODIHR is also producing an assessment report on diversity education in the public school sector which is based on a questionnaire distributed to all participating States. The report will contain country reports as well as recommendations on how to strengthen diversity education. A preliminary copy of the report will be presented at a special side event on 9 October.

3) Legislative assistance in the area of hate crimes

- The ODIHR evaluates existing legislation in the field of crimes motivated by hate and assists States with developing new legislation.
- In order to support states in strengthening their laws, the ODIHR will co-ordinate the drafting of guidelines for the review of hate-crimes legislation.

4) Civil Society Capacity Building

The ODIHR supports civil society in its efforts to address and to monitor, and report on hate crimes and violent manifestations of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance, including

against Muslims. In this regard, the ODIHR has developed three main activities.

- Building the capacity of civil society representatives combating hate motivated violence. For this purpose, the ODIHR is developing a training programme that will assist civil society to address hate motivated incidents and hate crimes. In 2007, the ODIHR will carry out trainings in the CIS for civil society representatives and support them with starting or strengthening existing activities in this field.
- In 2007, the ODIHR will develop a new activity with a view to build local or regional institutions addressing hate motivated violence. These institutions should work as consultative mechanisms with the main aim of assembling relevant stakeholders including civil society representatives in an institutional setting.
- The ODIHR reaches out to NGOs throughout the OSCE region, supporting small scale initiatives with a potential to set examples in the region. These activities are in order to to increase the participation of civil society at OSCE events and subsequently to identify priority areas for the OSCE to focus on. The ODIHR will continue to support civil society representatives in their efforts to provide recommendations to the OSCE participating States on matters of concern. Civil society roundtables, particularly those prior to OSCE conferences or expert meetings, will further be supported and facilitated by the ODIHR.

5) Law enforcement officer training for combating hate crimes

- The ODIHR has developed a *Law Enforcement Officer Training Programme for Combating Hate Crimes*. The programme, which was developed by police for police, aims to increase the capacity of police officers to identify hate crime occurrences and be able to mobilize appropriate resources, including community and NGO resources to assist victims and victim communities.
- In 2005, the Programme was piloted in Hungary and Spain and in 2006, the full and updated version of the Programme was implemented in Croatia. In 2007, the ODIHR plans to implement the programme in an additional number of participating States and to also provide technical support to two states in establishing a national office for the prevention and investigation of hate crime.
- In mid-November, the ODIHR will organise a training session on combating hate crime for interested police trainers.