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**SUPPLEMENTARY HUMAN DIMENSION
MEETING**

“HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION AND TRAINING”

FINAL REPORT

Vienna, 25-26 March 2004

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I. Executive Summary:

The first OSCE Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting for 2004 was devoted to human-rights education and training. The meeting took place on 25-26 March in Vienna, bringing together 190 participants, including 50 representatives of 44 non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The objective of the meeting was to consolidate ongoing efforts to promote human-rights education and training in the OSCE region. Meeting participants shared best practices, discussed persisting difficulties that undermine certain initiatives in the field of human-rights education and training, and suggested useful recommendations on how to improve the quality of human-rights education and training.

In his opening remarks, ODIHR Director Ambassador Christian Strohal welcomed the Bulgarian Chairmanship's attention to this important topic and called on the participating States to see human-rights education and training as an important means to promote and strengthen human security. He acknowledged that the OSCE's work is only a small part of the overall global effort aimed at the enhancement and promotion of human rights through human-rights education and training.

The topics selected for discussion in the sessions included formal human-rights education, human-rights education in school curricula, human-rights education and training of public officials, and informal human-rights education.

Session 1 participants discussed formal human-rights education in schools and examined different models of integrating human-rights education into school curricula. In addition to a wealth of concrete recommendations, country-specific examples and exchanges of best practices enriched the debate. Participants welcomed the specific focus on human-rights education as a means of fostering tolerance and countering racism, xenophobia, and discrimination.

When discussing a need for human-rights education and training for public officials in Session 2, participants agreed that such programmes should be carefully thought through and should guarantee sustainability and efficiency. The need for regular consultations and better co-ordination of efforts of numerous actors were repeatedly highlighted as priorities.

During Session 3, participants examined various examples of informal human-rights education and its indispensable role in forming a general human-rights culture in any society. The importance of media and other information-disseminating tools was discussed; the risk of using them to spread negative messages was stressed as something that should be kept in mind. Many participants stressed the need for greater numbers of good trainers and the importance of strategic thinking before launching any programme.

II. Recommendations:

This report focuses on concrete recommendations arising from the three sessions. These recommendations – from delegations of the OSCE participating States and partners for co-operation, international organizations, and NGOs – are wide-ranging and aimed at various actors (OSCE participating States, OSCE institutions and its field operations, as well as other international organizations and NGOs).

It should be emphasized that the OSCE cannot implement all of these recommendations. The recommendations have no official status, are not based on consensus, and the inclusion of a recommendation in this report does not suggest that it reflects the views or policy of the OSCE. Nevertheless, the recommendations are a useful indicator for the OSCE in deciding priorities and possible new initiatives aimed at human-rights education and training.

When compiling this report, the OSCE/ODIHR relied on notes taken by representatives of three Delegations of the OSCE participating States: Ms. Nilvana Darama, Counsellor of the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the OSCE; Timon Bo Salomonson, Second Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Belgium to the OSCE; and Giorgio Novello, First Counsellor of the Permanent Mission of Italy to the OSCE. Their substantive contribution to the preparation of this report is acknowledged and appreciated.

General recommendations for all three sessions and the opening and closing plenary:

General recommendations to the OSCE participating States:

- The OSCE participating States should perceive human-rights education and training as an everyday challenge that can contribute significantly to eliminating the difference between human rights enshrined in the constitutions and constitutional reality of the states, which are often far apart.
- The OSCE participating States should ensure that human-rights education includes implementing democratic education and promoting political involvement.
- The OSCE participating States should acknowledge that human-rights education is an indispensable element of any long-term strategy to prevent hate crimes and proactively address phenomena like racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and discrimination. Teaching tolerance should also include shedding light on the Holocaust and discouraging anti-Semitism.
- The OSCE participating States should therefore ensure that common values of humankind are promoted through human-rights education
- An ethical approach should be adopted in developing human-rights education programmes based on the awareness of one's human identity.

- Human-rights education should be a cyclical and life-long learning process.
- Human-rights education should be used as a means to cultivating a culture of tolerance and fighting prejudices and discrimination.
- Country-specific guidelines for human-rights education should be developed in accordance with the needs and priorities of individual countries.
- Members of vulnerable groups such as Roma and Sinti, migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers should receive equal access to education.
- Moreover, the OSCE participating States should give more attention to the specific needs of minority communities as part and parcel of the promotion of common international values and standards.
- A gender perspective should be an integral part of every human-rights education and training effort to ensure de-rooting of inherent biases that are counter-productive to the message that such efforts are trying to get across.
- Investing in formal and informal education and training of girls and women has proved to be one of the best means of achieving sustainable development and economic growth.
- The OSCE participating States should aim to adopt national plans of action for human-rights education and strive for their implementation.
- More human-rights education and training should be organized at the local level.
- Human rights should not be taught in an isolated way but should be part of a broader context. First, human-rights education should be part of a broader curriculum. Second, human-rights education programmes should be given to a mixed group of participants with different social and professional backgrounds (public officials, students, etc.).
- The OSCE participating States should provide their input for the Action Plan for a Second Decade on Human Rights Education.
- OSCE participating States should consider holding an international conference on education, with participation of all post-communist countries.
- OSCE participating States should follow the practice whereby every newly enacted law is assessed by a responsible state official on its compliance with human-rights principles and aims of human-rights education and training.

- OSCE participating States, international organizations, and NGOs are encouraged to contribute viable proposals to debate at the OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism in Berlin.

General recommendations to the OSCE, its institutions and field missions:

- The OSCE and the ODIHR should participate in the drafting of a new International Action Plan for Human Rights Education, along with UNESCO, UNICEF, and other international organizations, should the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and the General Assembly entrust the OHCHR with such an undertaking.
- In particular, the ODIHR should support the initiatives within the UN to launch a second decade of human-rights education and to elaborate an international convention on human-rights education.
- The OSCE should welcome the Council of Europe's initiative on the year of citizenship through education to start in 2005 and should co-operate with the Council towards its implementation.
- The ODIHR should co-operate with the Council of Europe and other relevant international actors in project activities like awareness-raising for Roma and Sinti and human-rights training for NGOs.
- The OSCE and its institutions and field operations should continue their function of bridging initiatives of governments and civil society aimed at human-rights education and training.

General recommendations to other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations:

- International organizations should work together and avoid duplication in the area of human-rights education.
- An action-oriented operational approach should be adopted by the international community in their work related to human-rights education.
- A second Decade on Human Rights Education should be seen by civil society and international organizations as complementary to an international Convention on Human Rights Education, instead of seeing them as conflicting issues.
- The concept of a Decade should be seen as a tool to mobilize and create opportunities to do better and to focus more on human-rights education. Its effect and success should be evaluated in a flexible way.

Outcome of Session 1: Formal Human Rights Education; Human Rights Education in School Curricula

Moderator: Steven Wagenseil, OSCE/ODIHR First Deputy Director

Introducers: Felisa Tibbitts, Director of Human Rights Education Associates

Olöf Olafsdottir, Head of the Department of School and Out-of-School Education; Directorate General of Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport, Council of Europe

In Session 1, some participants argued that human-rights education should be given as a separate course, while others underlined the importance of mainstreaming it into all subjects and activities in formal education, including non-traditional areas like science, health, and economics. The interdisciplinary nature of human-rights education was underlined, and the particular importance of history teaching was touched upon in this context.

A number of participants pointed to the different needs and priorities of each country and highlighted the necessity of developing country-specific guidelines rather than trying to apply general models of human-rights education. Others argued for the validity of universal guidelines as well. Human-rights manuals and teaching guides for trainers were identified as best practices in both cases. Similarly, while some participants stressed the need for elaborating an international convention on human-rights education, others cautioned about the possible drawbacks of adopting a narrow legal text at this stage and suggested that starting with a political declaration would be a useful idea.

There were diverging views on making human-rights education mandatory or optional. One participant stressed that, whether mandatory or optional, human-rights education would not be successful unless relationships between the teachers and students changed. Several other participants also called for a comprehensive approach to human-rights education, including interaction in the school environment and in informal school activities.

Emphasis was placed on the gap between political statements and practice, and calls were made for increased action. In this respect, the need for institutionalization of human-rights education was stressed. Better co-operation and co-ordination between states, international organizations, and civil society were also called for.

There were also calls for including or better integrating members of vulnerable groups, such as the Roma and Sinti, refugees, and asylum-seekers, into educational structures. Their particular problems like lack of legal status and funds were raised and support for their socio-economic situation was sought, in the context of their right to education.

The following recommendations were made in Session 1:

Recommendations to the OSCE participating States:

- OSCE participating States should view schools as places where skills are acquired to allow people to interact and fully participate in a just, equitable, and humane society.
- Human-rights education should be based on citizenship education with rights-based approaches. Such education should be inclusive and should not be substituted simply with citizenship education.
- Human-rights education should be included in all school curricula starting from the earliest years of education. It should be mandatory particularly for secondary-school education.
- The OSCE participating States should support a cross-curriculum approach in mainstreaming a human-rights dimension into all levels of formal school education.
- Diversity of school curricula should be recognized and respected.
- OSCE participating States should ensure that not only human-rights but also children's-rights education are mainstreamed into school curricula.
- The OSCE participating States should ensure that a human-rights aspect is taken into account not only in formal curricula but also in management policies and extracurricular activities in schools. It is vital that students experience school itself as a truly inclusive, non-discriminatory environment.
- The OSCE participating States should pay special attention to training teachers, as they are the most appropriate vehicles for reaching the population and transmitting human-rights values and principles.
- Apart from teachers, all school staff should be properly trained to deal with incidents of bullying, intimidation, and harassment of students, be it on the basis of sex, race, religion, social status, sexual orientation, or other reason.
- The OSCE participating States should identify, recognize, and support specifically trained, qualified instructors in the area of human-rights education.
- The OSCE participating States should aim to set up schools as a human-rights environment, which should be an essential component of formal human-rights education.
- Teaching about international humanitarian law should be incorporated into school curricula.

- The OSCE participating States should facilitate the establishment of human-rights centres at the university level to back up educational efforts in this area and should support their work.
- In human-rights education, particularly in promoting tolerance and countering discrimination, non-traditional methods such as dance and music should also be employed.

Recommendations to the OSCE, its institutions and field operations:

- The OSCE should always stress the crucial role of history in educational curricula.
- When working on human-rights education in schools, the OSCE should always stress the importance of raising awareness of international human-rights instruments and of the principles of international human-rights and humanitarian law.
- The OSCE should provide political support for initiatives to include human-rights education into curricula. Necessary technical assistance should be provided when appropriate.
- The OSCE should promote better exchange of information and best practices among OSCE participating States.

Recommendations to other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations:

- NGOs working in different countries should exchange their best practices with colleagues in other countries. Information, e.g., training materials, experiences of lobbying for human-rights curricula and textbooks to be adopted as part of official state programmes, should be exchanged on a regular basis.
- The role of civil society in training teachers and in awareness-raising should be further promoted by international organizations, and governments should be encouraged to support and strengthen civil society initiatives.

Outcome of Session 2: Human Rights Education and Training for Public Officials

Moderator: Steven Wagenseil, OSCE/ODIHR First Deputy Director

Introducers: Anna-Karin Lindblom, Head of Section, Ministry of Justice, Sweden

Ronald Hooghiemstra, Chief of Capacity Building Section, Human Rights Division, OSCE Mission in Kosovo

In Session 2, discussions focused on problems and good practices encountered by the OSCE participating States, NGOs, and international organizations when dealing with human-rights education and training for public officials. The objective of discussions was to learn from existing experience in the field and to try to filter out operational recommendations on how to improve the co-ordination and effectiveness of the undertaken initiatives. While participants highlighted many country-level best practices, a lot of continuing problems in the field were raised as well. A lot of methodological recommendations were made to improve human-rights education and training for public officials. Recurring themes were the need for better co-ordination between relevant actors on the international and national level and proposals on how to put this into practice. Many participants also stressed the importance of human-rights education and training for public officials to improve the level of respect for human rights in general. A recurrent observation was the need for public officials to be able to apply on the job what they learned through human-rights education and training.

The following recommendations were made in Session 2:

Recommendations to the participating States:

- The OSCE participating States should ensure that human rights are related to the environment in which a public official functions. Therefore, public officials should be provided with a practical understanding of how to apply human rights within that environment.
- The OSCE participating States need to show more goodwill and political will to establish human-rights-compliant public administrations and law-enforcement bodies.
- Human-rights education should be mainstreamed into the training of public officials to create a human-rights culture in public administration.
- The OSCE participating States should work closely together with NGOs in organizing training programmes for public officials.
- Human-rights training and awareness of public officials needs to be targeted to policy makers and service providers simultaneously.
- Interaction between public and civil servants should be part of human-rights education and training.
- Not only civil servants, but also citizens who need to take their responsibility should be aimed at for life long learning of human rights with a close link between training and information.
- Elected government officials should be offered the opportunity to take the same human-rights training as their public servants.

- Politicians should be trained in human rights to avoid ignorance of human rights in their political speeches.
- Judges and prosecutors should be trained in human rights. They are important not only for rule of law but also for human rights.
- The OSCE participating States should ensure professional training of all people dealing with persons deprived of their liberty with a view to the prevention of torture and ill-treatment.
- The police should be recognized as a forerunner in the promotion and protection of human rights.
- Police services should be able to carry out their own human-rights education and training programmes.
- Police officers should actively approach governments and relevant national human-rights institutions and request training and guidance for developing strategies for promoting human rights.
- Priority should be given to human-rights training for lower-ranking police employees, prison wardens, officials who work with asylum-seekers, etc.
- The OSCE participating States should ensure that, when trained, police officers or other public officials should be able to recognize that compliance with human rights is in their own interest. Getting that message through might make it actually “stick” in the longer term.
- There is a need for substantial, sufficiently long-term, and thorough follow-up after each human-rights training session.
- More attention should be paid to the training of trainers when targeting public officials.
- Pledging by responsible authorities at the end of a training session delivered by outside experts (e.g., international organizations, NGOs) should be integrated into training programmes, and implementation of the pledge should be evaluated after an agreed-upon period of time.
- Trainees coming back from human-rights training should be able to apply on the job what they acquired in their training. Therefore, a needs assessment of trainees should also be organized before providing training.
- Civil servants who become sensitive to human rights should be prevented from leaving their posts by giving them the opportunity to apply on the job what they

acquired through human-rights education and training. There is need of a critical mass of civil servants that are aware of human rights.

- Public officials should be involved in human-rights education at the university level to demonstrate how all levels of society are interlinked.
- The elimination of stereotypes among public officials should be one of the priorities of human-rights education and training, as it is seen as one of the biggest challenges in the OSCE region.
- Public officials who violate human rights should be recognized as victims who lack human-rights knowledge.

Recommendations to the OSCE institutions and field operations:

- The OSCE should provide recommendations based on the experiences of participating States and other countries in the sphere of human-rights education and training.
- The OSCE should co-operate with the Council of Europe and the United Nations to increase co-ordination on the topic of human-rights education and training for public officials.
- A textbook uniform to all OSCE countries for civil servants should be drafted, taking into account the experiences of relevant international organizations.
- A list of experts who can be involved in human-rights education and training for public officials throughout the whole OSCE region should be compiled by the OSCE.

Recommendations to other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations:

- The international community should work in a more co-ordinated manner on human-rights education and training of public officials. There is need of a more holistic approach.
- To promote human-rights education for public officials worldwide, co-operation is needed to set out realistic goals on shorter time frames to be monitored at the global and regional levels.
- A general evaluation tool for programmes on training of public officials in different countries should be developed to measure the degree of human-rights knowledge and awareness of trainees. This way, the effectiveness of different methods can be compared.

- All training programmes delivered to public officials should be subjected to thorough, unbiased, and co-ordinated evaluation.
- Training of public officials requires specific expertise and skills. When implementing projects, a strict selection process should be always carried out.
- Different actors involved in training should keep in mind that excessive finger-pointing at the police does not bring about the necessary results. Police officers, if chosen as a target group, should get the chance to share their experiences with human-rights violations as part of a human-rights training programme.
- Human-rights education for public officials should be seen by various project implementers as a course of action that is a part of a whole range of activities to increase respect for human rights, like institution-building and strengthening NGOs and civil society in general.

Outcome of Session 3: Informal Human Rights Education

Moderator: Steven Wagenseil, OSCE/ODIHR First Deputy Director

Introducer: Zuza Fialova, Consultant in Human Rights Education, Slovak National Centre for Human Rights

Discussions in Session 3 focused on informal human-rights education for the general public, including children and adults, to be reached by existing means, including both traditional (seminars, textbooks, courses) and new methods (awareness-raising programmes for journalists, websites, building networks, etc).

The main objectives of the session were to assess lessons learned and best practices; to discuss achievements and shortcomings; to underline the need to focus on the core functions of informal education, taking into account also the limited resources available; and to increase synergies by establishing networks based also on new information technologies.

The discussion was lively, with active contributions from all over the OSCE area and in particular from representatives of NGOs and civil society. In a way, this session was also used to summarize discussions of the two preceding sessions and benefited from the debates already held. Many speakers reported on governments' best practices or examples from NGO efforts. Several participants, especially those from new democracies, stressed that a realistic approach to human-rights education must take into account existing circumstances in each of the targeted countries and should foresee adjusting programmes to local realities.

Another crucial issue underlined was the scarcity of trainers. As a result of this problem, human-rights education initiatives are often devoted to training of trainers. In general,

emphasis was also put on practical, not just theoretical, training. Some participants also underlined the role of families and of children's-rights education.

The following recommendations were made in Session 3:

Given the specific nature of the subject dealt with during the session, it is not easy to distinguish between recommendations to the OSCE participating States, recommendations to OSCE institutions and field operations, and recommendations to others. Most recommendations put forward could actually be implemented by each one of the three categories of actors mentioned above and are therefore listed in one single group. A few recommendations, however, focus specifically on governments of OSCE participating States and NGOs and will therefore be mentioned under separate headings.

General recommendations:

- Informal human-rights education should be used to counteract some possible deficiencies of formal education, through instilling international human-rights values. It should be remembered that many more people than can be reached through formal human-rights education in schools can benefit from informal human-rights education.
- Informal human-rights education should reach out to disadvantaged sectors of society and individuals and provide learning opportunities to those who previously missed them.
- The domino effect resulting from informal human-rights education should always be highlighted and advertised: positive examples of asserting human rights by one person can encourage another person to become proactive in turn.
- Families play an essential role that should be recognized. Families and schools can and should co-operate to maximize the results of informal human-rights education.
- Long-term evaluations (ten years or so) should be made to monitor and assess the outcomes of projects and initiatives.
- Instruments used in education may also have their drawbacks (e.g., they could be misused to foment hatred under the guise of promoting human rights): this should be kept in mind, and ways to minimize their possible negative impact should be explored.
- Media should be involved in informal human-rights education, as they have the potential to have a considerable influence on the results of such education.
- Training of journalists should be perceived as a serious task and a great challenge. It should involve imparting information on international human-rights protection, raising human-rights awareness, and encouraging media co-operation with organizations such as Reporters Without Borders.

- Electronic media and electronic libraries should be extensively used in promoting and teaching human rights, and technical assistance should be provided where not available.
- International human-rights instruments should be widely disseminated in different languages as well as through magazines in each of the OSCE participating States.
- Rights and duties should be taught together: accountability of individuals is a crucial concept.
- Human-rights awards should be instituted in order to counteract the idea among the public that human rights are mentioned only when violated.
- A gender perspective should be included in every human-rights education effort.
- Youth camps should be widely used as excellent means to learn about the culture of co-existence.
- Public figures and celebrities should take an active role in promoting human-rights messages to the wider public.

Recommendations to the OSCE institutions and field operations:

- The OSCE should improve its strategy planning and ensure that each project has a vision. Target groups should be carefully identified. Training curricula should be accessible and elementary in order to be understood and absorbed.
- The OSCE should always aim to ensure that informal human-rights education is carried out with an objective of changing a society, mentality, and human-rights culture.
- The OSCE should consider supporting lobbying campaigns and public campaigns in target countries.
- Informal human-rights education can either aim at providing knowledge, delivering skills, or changing attitudes of target groups. If aimed at delivering skills, practical cases should be extensively used as a training tool.
- If organizing training-of-trainers programmes, they should be systematic and long enough to ensure sustainability.
- The OSCE should facilitate the exchange of information and compilation of best practices in order to guarantee the transfer of new methodologies from one country to another and from civil society to responsible government bodies.

- The OSCE should ensure that those who benefited from training provided by it do not suffer because of their new knowledge upon return to their home environment.
- Each training session should include an element on how theoretical knowledge can be transferred into practice.
- The OSCE should continue playing the role of reinforcing the capacity of civil society through providing regular opportunities, e.g., at human dimension meetings, to address the human-rights situation throughout the region.

Recommendations to civil society and NGOs:

- Civil society, individuals, and organizations should continue playing a key part in civic education.
- NGOs need a very clear strategy in order to rationally use available resources, which unfortunately are often quite scarce.
- NGOs should have a clear understanding of their strengths (e.g., understanding of the human-rights situation, training methodology for human rights, and the ability to disseminate human-rights materials to the proper target groups) and of their weaknesses (e.g., the ability to train trainers and to provide training sessions for government officials).
- NGOs should strive to create effective and efficient lobbying networks specializing in specific areas. Decision makers should be regularly approached by civil society actors and repeatedly lobbied.
- NGOs should avoid duplicating efforts of other actors and training those who have been trained already but should rather try to reach out to other segments of their respective societies.

• **III. ANNEXES:**

1. Agenda:

Day 1, Thursday 25 March 2004

15.00 - 16.00

OPENING SESSION:

Moderator: **Zahary Radukov**,
Representative of the OSCE
Chairmanship

Introductory remarks: **Ambassador Christian Strohal**,
Director of the OSCE/ODIHR

Keynote speeches:

Katarina Tomasevski, Professor, UN Special Rapporteur
on the Right to Education

Manfred Nowak, Professor, Director of the Ludwig
Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights in Vienna

Ioanna Kucuradi, Professor, Director of the Centre for
Research and Application of the Philosophy of Human
Rights, Hacettepe University in Ankara

Moderator for all three sessions: **Steven Wagenseil**, First
Deputy

Director of the
OSCE/ODIHR

Technical information

16.00 - 18.00

**Session 1: Formal Human Rights Education;
Human Rights Education in School Curricula**

Introducers: **Felisa Tibbitts**, Director, Human
Rights Education Associates
(HREA)

Olöf Olafsdottir, Head of the
Department of School and Out-of-
School Education; Directorate

General of Education, Culture and
Heritage, Youth and Sport, Council
of Europe

Discussion

18:30 **Reception offered by the OSCE Chairmanship**

Day 2, Friday **26 March 2004**

09.00 - 12.00 **Session 2: Human Rights Education and Training for
Public Officials**

Introducers: **Anna-Karin Lindblom**, Head of
Section, Ministry of Justice, Sweden

Ronald Hooghiemstra, Chief of
Capacity Building Section, Human
Rights Division, OSCE Mission in
Kosovo

Discussion

12.00 - 14.00 Lunch

14.00 - 16.00 **Session 3: Informal Human Rights Education**

Introducers: **Zuza Fialova**, Consultant in Human
Rights Education, Slovak National
Center for Human Rights

Discussion

16.00 - 16.30 Break

16.30 - 17.30 CLOSING SESSION:

Moderator: **Zahary Radukov**,
Representative of the OSCE
Chairmanship

Reports of the Moderator

Comments from the floor

17:30

Close of Day 2

2. Annotated Agenda:

OVERVIEW:

The meeting will focus on three main areas:

- **Formal Human Rights Education; Human Rights Education in School Curricula**
- **Human Rights Education and Training for Public Officials**
- **Informal Human Rights Education**

The meeting will seek to develop recommendations based on best practices across the OSCE region. Recommendations may be addressed to the OSCE participating States, the OSCE as a whole, its institutions including the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and its field operations, or other inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations.

SESSIONS:

Session I: Formal Human Rights Education; Human Rights Education in School Curricula

To include human rights education in school curricula from an early age is a vital step towards ensuring widespread knowledge and the emergence of a culture of human rights. Human rights education is ultimately about action for building human rights cultures in our own communities, leading in particular to tolerance and mutual respect.

There are a number of different models emerging on how to integrate human rights education into school curricula. Some countries opt to have it as a separate topic under headings such as ethics, other countries integrate it into already existing subjects such as political science and/or history. In this respect, attention should be given also to other cultures and religions, in the spirit of promoting better mutual understanding. The possibility of learning the language(s) of neighboring countries

and/or adjacent communities is also a powerful instrument in promoting mutual understanding and respect. History can provide an eminent opportunity to study manifestations of collective violence and discrimination, through which students can make the essential connection between history and the moral choices they confront in their own lives. History can also be a powerful tool for strengthening mutual understanding and confidence between peoples through methodologies aimed at eliminating prejudice and emphasizing positive mutual influence between different countries, religions and cultures. Well-developed curricula can promote the development of a more human and informed citizenry also through an examination of intolerance, xenophobia, racism, discrimination, and anti-Semitism and their causes.

Issues that can be discussed in connection with this topic are:

- The follow up among OSCE participating States on the UN recommendation on the creation of the National Human Rights Education Action Plans. If such plans exist, how are they implemented, supervised and contributed to by intergovernmental organizations? How are such National Plans implemented in States with provincial and local control over education?
- Examples from the OSCE region. Looking at different models on including human rights and tolerance education; as a separate topic or mainstreamed; relationship to other topics; is it a separate course or included into other courses?
- Interrelation between human rights education and tolerance/non-discrimination and the preventive role of human rights education as an indispensable element in a long term strategy to prevent hate crimes and phenomena like anti-Semitism, xenophobia, racism, genocide, etc. Lessons learned.
- What support can international organizations, including OSCE missions and institutions provide? How can international organizations advance human rights education in primary and secondary education in co—operation with local and provincial authorities?
- Teaching human rights in school cannot be done in a vacuum. How can principles of democracy, human rights and tolerance best be presented in textbooks if such concepts are ill-defined and not understood in popular culture, in particular when such values are just beginning to be evidenced in social and political practice. (This issue links to the discussions under session 3).

**Session II: Human Rights Education and Training for
 Public Officials**

An increasing number of institutions, including government agencies and intergovernmental organizations, are organizing human rights training programs for public officials. However, for training or educational programs to be consistent with human rights principles they should provide knowledge and information about human rights as well as seek to develop attitudes and behaviour respectful of those rights.

In order to be effective, the educational programs need to be sustained over a period of time, involve direct interaction between the trainer and the trainee, and include practical, hands-on learning. There should be a clear commitment to in-service training that includes human rights and tolerance issues, and field performance should be measured in accordance with human rights standards. In other words, the application of professional goals and ethics should be made consistent with human rights principles and theory.

Human rights training programs should also include the development of basic skills such as critical thinking, communication skills, problem-solving and negotiation, all of which are essential for the effective implementation of human rights standards. In some cases it might be necessary to implement separate human rights courses to compensate for the lack of any previous training on these issues, but ideally human rights concepts and values should be an integral part of all teaching practices and courses.

Problems arise when these programs lack serious prior analysis; use outdated training methodological approaches; lack solid integration with reform efforts or provide very little, if any, long-term follow up to ensure substantial improvements in the human rights situation.

Issues that can be discussed in connection with this topic are:

- Lessons learned from participating States
- Best practices from different international organizations, including OSCE institutions and field missions.
- How can we improve coordination and effectiveness of the undertaken initiatives?
- How does human rights and tolerance training for public officials improve the rule of law and good governance?

Session III: Informal Human Rights Education

Informal Education is a term that is used to describe non-formal grass-roots education, e.g. human rights education for the general public. It aims at educating

adults who have finished school or those who never had the opportunity to attend: it is not limited to educated elites or developed countries. It is a key element in modern human rights teaching. It promotes the idea of human rights as a unifying moral force that transcends national boundaries and empowers ordinary people everywhere to demand that their governments be accountable for the protection and promotion of their human rights.

Discussion points that arise from these topics include:

- Examples of informal education programs from the OSCE region.
- Has any impact research and/or evaluation been conducted on on-going informal education projects? In the absence of reliable studies of informal education programs, how can their effectiveness be assessed?
- How can international organizations better reinforce each other's activities; conduct better needs assessment; prevent States from fully transferring responsibilities to the international community and ensure a balanced approach of States towards cooperation with civil society?

3. Keynote speeches:

- **Speech of Katarina Tomasevski, Professor, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education:**

Roadblocks and pitfalls on the way to human-rights education

There is no central register of the many existing programmes in human-rights education, but all indications point to their multitude. This creates an image of human-rights education being broadly, if not universally, accepted and supported. Such an image would necessitate, as its basis, the universal acceptance and support for all human rights for all. If this image reflected reality, all human-rights work, including human-rights education, would be redundant. The need for human-rights education stems precisely from widespread resistance to all human rights for all. This resistance is evidenced in the roadblocks that have to be overcome and the pitfalls that have to be voided, so as to make human-rights education worthy of its name.

This text focuses on the obstacles to human-rights education for children and young people. These often include resistance to the very assertion that children are people with rights. Indeed, centuries of treating children as the property of their parents, worldwide, makes this resistance understandable. Thus, it is a challenge for human-rights education to recognize it openly and honestly and to counter it effectively. A parent's statement that

children “are uncontrollable because they know that they have rights”¹ reflects a widespread perception that human rights should not be taught, least of all to children. Where formal commitments have been made to human-rights education, such views are seldom voiced. As a consequence, they remain unchallenged and unchanged, are driven underground, and impede human-rights education. Children may be taught about human rights but not educated as people with rights. In practice, then, human-rights education may amount to no more than a recital of abstract terms culled from the international human-rights vocabulary. These are usually poorly translated, or not at all, from American English, which has become the language of globalization, including the globalization of human rights. When it remains at the level of a recital of abstract human-rights norms, human-rights education may come dangerously close to a secular religion, a set of universal truths that pretends to be self-evident, which it might be in an ideal world, but surely is not in ours. The distance from the lives of learners and their teachers is enormous; most cannot understand terms such as “empowerment” or “mainstreaming” (or “gender”, for that matter), or differences between “equality” and “equity”. The results of such a learning process are negligible, if not altogether absent. Worse, the results often confirm what Bishop Eamon Walsh has said about the abyss between words and deeds in dealing with prisoners: “The way we treat people forms the kind of people they become.”²

To bridge the gap between formal human-rights commitments and the real-life environment in which teaching and learning take place, a learning process of its own is necessary. More than anything, it requires courage, the courage to acknowledge that human rights are denied and violated everywhere, that human rights is not “what foreigners lack”,³ but, rather, that human rights is protection against abuse of power that has not yet been attained, anywhere; hence, we need to learn how to recognize and oppose it, so as to be able to prevent it in our own environment.

When asked about human-rights education, children inevitably say “show, don’t tell”, but they are very, very rarely asked. If we were to answer their questions honestly and openly, we would have to acknowledge that a great deal of change is needed to create space for human-rights education. The key changes that are needed can be summarized in five necessary steps.

1. Our education systems may themselves embody denial of equal rights for all

Education can be a means to retain and eliminate inequality. As it can serve two mutually contradictory purposes, two opposite results may ensue. Literature on discrimination abounds with assertions that prejudice breeds discrimination, yet the reverse is also true. Discrimination as a medium of indoctrination breeds prejudice; it is meant to do so. Children learn through observation and imitation. They are likely to start perpetuating

¹ Khumalo, G. - Corporal punishment lives on, *Natal Witness*, Pietermaritzburg (South Africa), 20 March 2003.

² *Newsletter for Irish Prisoners Overseas*, Issue No. 28, January 1999, p. 4.

³ Speech by Francesca Klug on the promotion of human rights, Human Rights in Education Conference, 26 September 2001, Department of Education and Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, January 2002, p. 49.

discriminatory practices much before they learn the word *discrimination*. By the time their curriculum includes the term *discrimination*, they are likely to have internalized the underlying prejudice. Prejudice is formed in late childhood and adolescence and is sustained from one generation to another through social usage. When it favours individual and group self-interest, it is easy to rationalize. Discriminatory practices can be countered by changing the rules of behaviour, while their underlying rationale usually remains unexplored. It is customary to label this underlying rationale as irrational and believe that its cause is ignorance, to be eliminated through education. However, this rationale often includes preservation of an assumed superiority, keeping privileges, or fear of competition. As early as 1957, the first United Nations study into discrimination in education highlighted the underlying rationale thus:

A policy based on fear of losing a privileged position necessarily entails measures to deny education to an entire population group, or to allow it access only to education at a lower level.⁴

In this area, our knowledge is inversely correlated with the importance of the object of study. We know a great deal about the wording of education policies and laws since these are available, in a codified form, and translated into English. We know less about the process of teaching and least of all about learning. Whether these two parallel processes, teaching and learning, translate human-rights objectives for education into reality depends on the congruence between these objectives and the operative guidance for teaching and learning, as well as the concordance - or discord - between in-school and out-of-school learning.

At the highest level of abstraction, national education policies include the language of human rights, peace, tolerance, sustainable development, social inclusion, gender equality, and environmental protection. Research into attitudes and values of graduates, the “products” of national education systems, often reveals an abyss between the postulated objectives of education and its outcomes. A good example is the European Union. On the one hand, “all European education systems aim to be inclusive”.⁵ On the other hand, Eurobarometer surveys in the past two decades have shown an increase in the proportion of Europeans self-declared as “quite racist” or “very racist”.⁶ The fact that this proportion has increased in the past two decades and reached one-third of Europeans highlights the necessity to ask why the abyss between the commitment to inclusiveness in national and European policies and self-assessments by the “products” of national education systems. Translation of abstract commitments to human rights, tolerance, and to cherishing diversity apparently fails to effectively guide education in the desired direction. Various steps in translating general principles into operative guidance for teaching and learning alter the meaning of commitments to human rights or tolerance.

⁴ Ammon, C.D. - *Study of Discrimination in Education*, United Nations, New York, No. 1957.XIV.3, August 1957, p. 10.

⁵ European Commission - *European Report on Quality of School Education*, Brussels, May 2000, p. 6.

⁶ European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia - *Attitudes Towards Minority Groups in the European Union. A Special Analysis of the Eurobarometer 2000 Survey*, Vienna, March 2001.

Although often introduced as the functional equivalent of human-rights education, citizenship education undermines human rights as properties of all members of humanity and substitutes “involvement in public affairs by those who have the rights of citizens”.⁷ Ultimately, citizenship education may underpin xenophobia. Gender equality may be present as a general commitment of education policies, but virtually all school teachers may be underpaid and overworked women, failing to get the ear of policy makers in education, who may all be men, and maybe also overpaid and underworked. It is teachers who translate abstractly defined aims of education into messages that children can recognize and internalize. With the advent of human-rights education, it is teachers who are required to help children learn about human rights. And yet, *their* rights are often denied or violated. Teachers introducing human-rights education are still criminally prosecuted in today’s world.

2. Educational messages are often self-contradictory

Where diversity and tolerance are explicitly addressed in educational curricula, the messages may be self-contradictory. School textbooks should be “accurate, neutral and fair”,⁸ as the Japanese Supreme Court has put it. And yet, the congruence between the contents of education and human rights may be questionable even in textbooks that bear “human rights” in their title. Cherishing “the esteem of the glorious Turkish history” and honouring “the great Turks whose services have made the great Turkish nation” forms part of the curriculum in Turkey.⁹ A textbook for human-rights education in Turkey ends its first chapter by suggesting homework. Pupils should go to the nearest military barracks to study the army’s enthusiasm and love for the country.¹⁰ It is as difficult as it is necessary to expose schoolchildren to abuses of power that have led to the development of human-rights protections. Individuals as well as countries tend to remember the pain they have suffered, not the pain they have inflicted on others, making perceived victimhood one-sided. History textbooks epitomize what David Tyack calls “the pedagogy of patriotism”.¹¹ They rarely describe abuses committed by one’s own government against populations of other countries or the people in one’s own country, although history abounds with such examples.

Colliding interpretations of the same event are common in real life but are routinely expunged from history textbooks. The one and only, objectively and/or scientifically true version of history is as impossible as it is widespread in school textbooks. In practice, that one and only version of history is only possible if alternative interpretations are

⁷ Qualifications and Curriculum Authority - *Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools. Final Report of the Advisory Group on Citizenship*, London, 22 September 1998, p. 9.

⁸ Supreme Court of Japan - *Ienaga v. Japan*, (O) No. 1428 of 1986, Judgment of 16 March 1993, para. 2.

⁹ Kazamias, A. M. - *Education and the Quest for Modernity in Turkey*, University of Chicago Press, 1966, p. 148.

¹⁰ Yamanlar, E. - *Vatandaslik ve insan haklari egitimi* (Education in Citizenship and Human Rights), Ders Kitaplari Anonim Sirketi, Istanbul, 2000, p. 62.

¹¹ Mondale, S. and Patton, S.B. (eds.) - *School: The Story of American Public Education*, Beacon Press, Boston, 2001, p. 5.

censored. As is typical in human rights, mobilization against censorship and self-censorship of history textbooks was triggered by abuses of history. It was found that, in 1914, historians had “placed their scholarship at the service of the war effort”¹² and, indeed, “all political systems have used history for their own ends”.¹³ Controversies regarding descriptions of wars, conflicts, and associated abuses occur daily, worldwide. Croatian textbooks were found in the 1990s to have included descriptions of “Serbian aggressors” as “merciless barbarians who ran amok”.¹⁴ In Serbia, the same events were, at the same time, described as “enforced expulsion of the Serbian population” from Croatia, reminiscent of the “genocide fifty years earlier”.¹⁵

Conflicting demands upon education affect the distortion of general commitments to human rights, diversity, and tolerance by prioritizing competition and income-earning skills. It would be difficult to imagine children learning to compete and co-operate at the same time. As they compete against each other for better test results and/or higher grades, as do their schools and their countries, the notion of co-operation remains abstract, as children learn by example, not exhortation. Although it is difficult to find many teachers who enjoy teaching-to-test, and most learners intensely dislike it, measuring learning outcomes is growing in scope and importance. The pressure of standardized testing converts children into “cookie-cutter test takers”,¹⁶ omitting from the operative definition of “relevance of education” all subjects that are not tested.

3. Our key message to children may be to imitate, to conform so as to gain adults’ acceptance

In 1978, UNESCO forged the concept of a right to be different, positing that “all individuals and groups have the right to be different, to consider themselves as different and to be regarded as such”.¹⁷ This concept was re-visited by Albie Sachs in 2000. Delivering a judgment in the name of South Africa’s Constitutional Court, he took that line of argument one step further, affirming “the right of people to be who they are without being forced to subordinate themselves to the cultural and religious norms of others”.¹⁸ In an ideal world, education would adapt to each child. In our imperfect world,

¹² Keynote address by Georg Iggers, in *The Misuses of History. Learning and Teaching about the History of Europe in the 20th Century*, Oslo (Norway), 28-30 June 1999, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg, July 2000, p. 13.

¹³ Council of Europe - Recommendation No. 1283 on history and the teaching of history in Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, 22 January 1996.

¹⁴ Pingel, F. - *The European Home: Representations of 20th Century Europe in History Textbooks*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, September 2000, p. 87.

¹⁵ Gachesha, N. et al. - *Istorija za III razred gimnazine prirodno-matematičkog smera i IV razred gimnazine opsteg i društveno-jezičkog smera* (History for 3rd grade of secondary school of natural science-mathematics orientation and 4th grade of secondary school of general and social science- linguistics orientation), Secretariat for Textbooks and Teaching Tools, Belgrade, Eighth Edition, 2000, p. 274 and 178.

¹⁶ Suh-kyung Yoon - South Korea: Lessons in learning, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 28 February 2002.

¹⁷ UNESCO - Declaration on race and racial prejudice, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO on 27 November 1978, Article 1 (2).

¹⁸ Constitutional Court of South Africa - *Christian Education South Africa v. Minister of Education*, Case CCT 4/00, judgment of 18 August 2000, para. 24.

the right of each child to be regarded as different remains a distant dream. Children are, in practice, reduced to the few denominators that are monitored and thereby inform education laws and policies. These are often only sex and age, rarely disability, and only sometimes the child's mother tongue, religion, or race. Because education encompasses huge numbers of learners and teachers, the emphasis is on numbers and, thus, statistical averages. Diverse children are reduced to the minimum common denominator, the individual child forced "to sink or swim within the mainstream environment".¹⁹ Diversity as a value then clashes against the assimilationist slant of most education systems through the teaching of one language, one version of history and geography, and one vision of the future. Much as national education policies may demand the adaptation of education to diverse society, in practice, it is those who do not conform to the dominant model that have to adapt. Immigrants, minorities, and indigenous people have to shed large parts of their identity - the language, name, dress code - to conform to the mainstream model. Indigenous, minority, and migrant children are placed in schools that provide instruction in an alien language and teach them history that denies their very existence. This process is often underpinned by inclusionary goals, albeit interpreted differently. Assimilation entails imposition of uniformity; integration acknowledges diversity. Nevertheless, learners may have to adjust to the "norm", which extrapolates key features of the earliest self-granted bearers of rights: male, white, adult, property owners.

4. We tell children not to cherish difference but merely to tolerate it

The objective towards which education should be moulded is often defined as tolerance. Setting the limits of the intolerable is the first necessary step towards creating space for teaching and learning tolerance. Tolerance implies acceptance, albeit passive, of "the other", and "the other" is constantly created and re-created. Shared humanity yields to the emphasis of differences in provenance, lifestyle, or status. The internationally prohibited division of humanity by race, sex, or colour has been expunged from educational curricula. An emphasis on provenance, however, defines "the other" as immigrants, and race is routinely the principal denominator. Marc Ferro has suggested to "begin by drawing up a list of taboos and look at them through the eyes of other people".²⁰

Schools reflect the surrounding setting and tend to reinforce prejudicial portrayals of victims of discrimination. Education is embedded in the existing values but also helps create new values and attitudes. Its goal may be defined as an affirmation of everybody's right to be different or merely as tolerance of departures from "the norm". As long as the goal remains defined as tolerance, it endorses an implicit "norm" and, thus, assimilationist strategies. Hence, human-rights law mandates the deliberate employment of education to eliminate discrimination, which requires a permanent process so that education can be adjusted to changes in society and foster its further change. In 1947, the first United Nations report on discrimination emphasized that "the whole field of action

¹⁹ Supreme Court of Canada - *Eaton v. Brant County Board of Education*, [1997] 1 S.C.R., 241, para. 67.

²⁰ Keynote address by Marc Ferro at the symposium *Towards a Pluralist and Tolerant Approach to Teaching History: A Range of Sources and Didactics*, 10-12 December 1998, Brussels (Belgium), Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg, November 1999, p. 125.

to prevent discrimination requires a vast programme of education”. Law cannot be effective, and may be counterproductive, unless it enjoys support by those whom it addresses; hence, the emphasis on education to engender such support. Looking back at the year 1947, it is worthwhile to recall that education is a capacious term, and its outcomes can be both positive and negative:

Forcing a prejudiced person to read or hear exhortations on tolerance may only increase his prejudice. Overenthusiastic appraisals of the contributions of a minority may create a reaction of distaste for members of that minority; and programmes improperly presented, even with the best intentions, may create an awareness of group difference that did not previously exist.²¹

Teaching about peace-making or human-rights violations without discussing concrete solutions and providing tools for action can do more harm than good. Learners can feel overwhelmed and helpless. Teaching about the prevention of violence in society may be undermined through inculcating obedience at school, where “punishment for children who misbehaved, however harsh, had to be accepted without question or complaint”.²²

At the intersection between school and society, conflicting messages may sow confusion. Formal schooling is only one message carrier, since education is, in the broadest sense of this term, the sum total of what children learn from their parents and peers, from the mass media, as well as from the hugely developed advertising and entertainment industry, much of which is specifically targeted at children. Studies into violence have revealed that “youth who observe adults accepting violence as a solution to problems are apt to emulate that violence”.²³ Catherine Bonnet has argued that violence against children was a taboo until the 1960s because it reveals the shameful behaviour of adults.²⁴ Children victimized by violence are likely to become violent adults, but this early link in the causation of violence is seldom explored. School-based programmes for the prevention of violence, where they exist, tend to be an optional add-on to the compulsory curriculum.

5. Adults’ teaching and children’s learning are often at odds with each other

Where diversity and tolerance are explicitly addressed in educational curricula, the messages may be self-contradictory. It is as difficult as it is necessary to expose schoolchildren to abuses of power that have led to the development of human-rights protections. Individuals as well as countries tend to remember the pain they have suffered, not the pain they have inflicted on others. Victimhood is one-sided in history textbooks, epitomizing what David Tyack has called calls “the pedagogy of patriotism”.²⁵

²¹ Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities - Report on the prevention of discrimination (Prepared by the Secretary-General), U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/Sub.2/40 of 7 June 1949, paras. 17 (c) and 177.

²² Dagenais, R. and Mackay, C. - *Christians and the Holy Spirit. Pupil’s Book, Primary 7*, Uganda Joint Christian Council, Kampala, 1976, p. 32.

²³ Crawford, D.K. and Bodine, R.J. - Conflict resolution education: Preparing youth for the future, *Juvenile Justice*, vol. 8, No. 1, June 2001, p. 21.

²⁴ Bonnet, C. - *L’Enfant Cassé*, Albin Michel, Paris, 1999.

²⁵ Mondale, S. and Patton, S.B. (eds.) - *School: The Story of American Public Education*, Beacon

School textbooks rarely describe abuses committed by one's own government against populations of other countries or the people in one's own country, although history abounds with such examples.

In most countries, domestic law protects individuals against being publicly insulted but prohibitions of group defamation are rare. Maligning "foreigners" can be deemed an expression of patriotism and is often a vote-winner. This has often been emphasized by the ECRI (European Commission against Racism and Intolerance), which has, in the case of Denmark, pointed out that negative stereotypes and prejudices "are promoted by public opinion leaders, including political elites from across the political spectrum".²⁶ Their inevitable influence on children and young people undermines human rights messages in school-based education. In addition, David Coulby has pointed out that schools and universities "are being involved in the encouragement of xenophobia as a mode of state-building".²⁷ Eliminating obstacles to rights-based teaching and learning is therefore necessary, from the local to the global level, throughout the world.

- **Speech of Manfred Nowak, Professor, Director of the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights in Vienna:**

1. A human right to human-rights education

Fifty of the 55 OSCE participating States are parties to the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**, which guarantees in Article 13 the right of everyone to primary, secondary, higher, and fundamental education.²⁸ All States Parties agree that "education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms". Similarly, Article 29(1)(b) of the **Convention on the Rights of the Child**, which has been ratified by all states of the world with the exception of the United States and Somalia, reaffirms that education shall be directed to the "development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations". Only a policy that includes human-rights education (HRE) in the curricula of all levels of formal and non-formal education can ensure that education is in fact directed at the development and strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It follows from both provisions that the right to education implies the corresponding obligation of states to actively provide for HRE as a process of life-long learning. That HRE is itself a human right has also been explicitly recognized in various international forums and documents, including the World Plan of Action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy adopted by the International

Press, Boston, 2001, p. 5.

²⁶ European Commission against Racism and Intolerance - Second Report on Denmark adopted on 16 June 2000, Doc. CRI (2001) 4 of 3 April 2001, para. 28.

²⁷ Coulby, D. - Education in times of transition: Eastern Europe with particular reference to the Baltic states, in Coulby, D. et al. (eds.) - *Education in Times of Transition. World Yearbook of Education 2000*, Kogan Page, London, 2000, p. 17.

²⁸ Only Andorra, the Holy See, Kazakhstan, Moldova and the United States have not yet ratified the Covenant.

Congress on Education for Human Rights and Democracy held in Montreal in March 1993.²⁹

2. Human rights as a universally accepted system of values

Human rights is the only universally recognized system of values, which has gradually developed over centuries and, since the end of World War II, has been codified in a broad variety of binding and non-binding international and regional human-rights instruments. Human rights do not offer ready-made answers for any of life's countless questions but instead provide a loosely knit network of minimum standards and procedural rules for relations between governments and private individuals, as well as for human relations, business relations, and other interactions.³⁰ As a normative framework agreed upon by governments in the course of extended and careful drafting processes, human rights can also be considered as the moral and political basis of values underlying the present world order. In a time of growing challenges to this world order deriving, above all, from the process of globalization under the domination of neo-liberal market forces, universal human rights seem to be the only normative framework that establishes clear and justiciable rules for dealing, in a civilized manner, with these challenges, which include terrorism, armed conflicts, and the global power of transnational corporations. Again, life-long HRE is a precondition that human rights are in fact resorted to by the relevant governmental and non-governmental actors as a means of conflict resolution and as a convincing answer to such challenges.

3. Targets of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education

The ultimate goal of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education is the building of a universal culture of human rights through the imparting of knowledge and skills and the moulding of attitudes of human beings. In order to achieve this goal, governments were urged to formulate effective strategies for the furtherance of HRE at all school levels, in vocational training, and formal as well as non-formal learning. Since such lofty goals and objectives are difficult to monitor, the United Nations agreed on certain formal targets to be achieved by governments by the end of the Decade in 2005. When the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights in 1993 proposed the proclamation of such a Decade, it called on all states to include **human rights as a separate subject** in the curricula of all learning institutions in formal and non-formal settings.³¹ In officially proclaiming the Decade for Human Rights Education in December 1994, the General Assembly of the United Nations urged governments to prepare and implement **national plans for human rights education**.³² The Plan of Action for the

²⁹ For the text of this and other major documents on human rights education see the source book published by Werner Köhler, *Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy in the UNESCO context*, Stadtschlaining 1998.

³⁰ See, e.g., Manfred Nowak, *Introduction to the International Human Rights Regime*, Leiden/Boston 2003, 1 et seq.

³¹ Para. 79 of the Vienna Programme of Action. For the text see Manfred Nowak (ed.), *World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna 1994*, 168 at 187.

³² GA Res. 49/184 of 23 December 1994, op 6.

Decade³³ clearly spells out a structure for the co-ordination and implementation of human-rights education at the national level.

- **National focal points** for HRE should be designated in each state, such as national committees on HRE or focal points within existing national human-rights institutions;
- Each national focal point should be charged with developing a **national plan of action** for HRE;³⁴
- Each state shall establish a **national human-rights resource and training centre** capable of engaging in research, training of trainers, preparation, collection, translation, and dissemination of human-rights materials, etc.

4. Implementation of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education in the OSCE region

It is, of course, difficult to assess the extent to which the United Nations Decade for HRE has contributed to the gradual formation of a universal human-rights culture. There can be no doubt that the global awareness of human rights among the population at large is steadily growing and that the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, as well as various activities carried out in the process of implementing the United Nations Decade for HRE, have contributed to this awareness-raising. A more formal evaluation of progress made towards the achievement of the objectives of the Decade must, however, concentrate on the implementation of the formal targets to be achieved within the Decade. Of course, the establishment of a national focal point and the adoption of a national plan of action for HRE does not guarantee any success in terms of human-rights awareness-raising, but it can serve as a useful indicator for the commitment of governments towards achieving the goals and objectives of the Decade. Unfortunately, the Decade did not establish a formal reporting obligation and monitoring mechanism for assessing the compliance of states with their respective undertakings. The Plan of Action only provides for a mid-term evaluation by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights “in co-operation with all other principal actors in the Decade” and for the preparation of a final report by the High Commissioner after conclusion of the Decade in 2005.

The **mid-term evaluation** of September 2000 is based on information received by the High Commissioner from governments and other actors in response to two questionnaires. In her report, the then-High Commissioner, Mary Robinson, commented on the willingness of states to provide relevant information as follows: “Owing to the limited number of responses to the questionnaires and the difficulties involved in verifying the information received, and being aware of the resulting incompleteness of the picture of the efforts, achievements, and shortcomings in the various regions, the review does not name countries and national entities but focuses on a comparative and

³³ See Köhler, *supra* note 2, 116 at 120.

³⁴ See also the guidelines for national plans of action for HRE in UN Doc. A/52/469/Add. 1 and Corr.1, developed in 1997.

conceptual analysis of the information gathered”.³⁵ Although the High Commissioner noted that Europe was the region from which the most replies were received, she stressed that less than one-third of the governments that responded had national committees for HRE, that very few national plans of action for HRE already existed, that only few countries in the region had an encompassing legislative framework for HRE, and that only one government reported integrated HRE at all levels: pre-school, primary, and secondary.³⁶ In conclusion, she recalled that the Decade “remains the sole mechanism for global mobilization of strategies for human rights education; that potential must be more effectively utilized in the remaining years of the Decade, thus laying the foundations for sustainability beyond the Decade”.³⁷

I am afraid that, towards the end of the Decade, the situation has not improved significantly. The website of the High Commissioner for Human Rights contains a **Summary of national initiatives undertaken within the Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004)**, which is updated as of **October 2003**.³⁸ These national initiatives are presented by country, under five regions. Looking at the OSCE region of Europe and North America, I found information provided by 36 out of the 55 participating States. Of these, only eight states (Belarus, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Norway, Portugal, Romania, and Turkey) have established a **national committee** on HRE, and only six states (Belarus, Croatia, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, and Turkey) have adopted a **national plan of action** for HRE. The oldest national focal point was established already in 1980 in Norway as a Working Group on HRE within the Advisory Committee on Human Rights. The only country where human rights seem to have been integrated in the **curricula of all schools** at all levels is Sweden, where human rights also constitute a compulsory course at several universities. In addition to various master’s programmes on human rights, the University of Lund recently even started the first programme leading to a specialized bachelor of human rights. In the United Kingdom, HRE was recently introduced in the framework of citizenship education as a statutory national curriculum subject in primary and secondary schools. Other countries, such as Croatia, treat human rights as a cross-curricular education principle, integrating human rights and civic education topics in all suitable school subjects. From my own experience, having trained Austrian school teachers for more than 20 years in human rights education as one component of a cross-curricular civic education principle, I must, however, admit that a mere cross-curricular approach, which is based on the voluntary participation of interested teachers, has only a fairly limited effect on the human-rights awareness-raising process. A cross-curricular approach can never substitute, but only complement, the recommendation of the Vienna Programme of Action to include human rights as a special subject in the curricula of all learning institutions.

³⁵ Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the mid-term global evaluation of the progress made towards the achievement of the objectives of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004), submitted in accordance with Assembly resolution 54/161 of 17 December 1999, UN Doc. A/55/360 of 7 September 2000, para. 23.

³⁶ Ibid, paras. 81, 82, 86, 87 and 88.

³⁷ Ibid, para. 178.

³⁸ See www.unhchr.ch/html/menu6/1/initiatives.htm.

As I stressed before, in the absence of any formal reporting obligations by governments, the information received by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and made available on the website is, of course, far from complete. There might be other countries that have taken initiatives towards establishing a national committee on HRE; developing a national action plan; and introducing HRE as a special subject in the curricula of schools, adult education, and specialized training for target groups, such as the police, the military, judges, school teachers, and others. In many countries, teaching materials for HRE have been prepared and distributed to schools and other educational institutions. Most notably, the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, in her capacity as Chair of the Human Security Network, initiated the preparation of a manual on human-rights education, which was published by the European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Graz in 2003 and widely disseminated worldwide.³⁹

5. Conclusions and recommendations

On the basis of the information made available by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as incomplete as it may be, one can conclude that even in the OSCE region, **the targets of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education 1995-2004 are far from being achieved.** Notwithstanding a growing universal human-rights awareness, governments have not taken those recommendations seriously, which they had unanimously agreed upon in the Vienna Programme of Action and in the UN Plan of Action for the Decade for HRE. As a minimum, every government should have established a national committee on HRE (as an independent body or as a focal point within an existing national human-rights institution) and adopted a national plan of action for HRE in accordance with the relevant UN guidelines before the end of the Decade. Only a small minority of all OSCE participating States have so far complied with this minimum formal requirement, which is at the same time a precondition for a satisfactory communication, information, and reporting system towards the United Nations.

Second, every school-age child has the **human right to be provided with formal HRE at all levels of school education.** With very few exceptions, such as Sweden, no government seems to have complied with this obligation, which derives from binding international human-rights treaties and which was further elaborated in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action 1993. Rather than establishing HRE, which “should include peace, democracy, development and social justice”,⁴⁰ as a separate subject in the curricula of all learning institutions, most governments include human rights, if at all, as a non-compulsory part of civic education, which might be taught by interested teachers on a voluntary basis in the framework of a cross-curricula education principle. Since there is no domestic legal obligation to teach human rights in most countries, the training of teachers in HRE, if offered at all, is also based on voluntary participation. It cannot be excluded that such a soft approach might in the long term have

³⁹ Wolfgang Benedek and Minna Nikolova (eds.), *Understanding Human Rights – Manual on Human Rights Education*, Graz 2003.

⁴⁰ Para. 80 of the Vienna Programme of Action.

some impact on the human-rights awareness of pupils, but it certainly does not correspond to the legal obligation of states to ensure the human right to HRE.

This human right is not restricted to schoolchildren. Governments also have an obligation to include HRE in the curricula of university education, vocational training, adult education, and in service training of governmental officials and special target groups, such as law-enforcement officials. In order to achieve the ultimate goal of creating a universal human-rights culture as a precondition for mutual understanding, tolerance, peace, and justice, HRE should reach all sectors of society in a process of life-long learning.

Being aware that the United Nations Decade for HRE 1995-2004 has been far from successful, the idea has been advocated of extending the Decade for another 10 years. In my opinion, such a course of action does not seem to be very promising. Why should governments be more willing to honour their respective undertakings during a second Decade if they showed little commitment during the first one? I would rather support the idea of creating an **international convention on HRE**, which was recently launched at the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva by the acting High Commissioner for Human Rights, Bertie Ramcharan. After all, only international treaties create binding legal obligations, and the human right to HRE, although already existing under present international treaty law, obviously needs further elaboration in terms of detailed and comprehensive state obligations.

- **Speech of Ioanna Kucuradi, Professor, Director of the Centre for Research and Application of the Philosophy of Human Rights, Hacettepe University in Ankara:**

The ethical education of human rights:

During an interview on human rights in a television programme, the interviewer all of a sudden said that, as far as he could understand, I was establishing a connection between philosophy and torture and asked me what this connection was. I was shocked. In a couple of seconds, I tried to guess how he could have come to such a conclusion. My response was: there is no connection between philosophy and torture; still, when you look at the fact of torture with philosophical-ethical knowledge, you can realize that torture does not damage or “degrade” the human dignity of the victim of torture, as is usually accepted, e.g., in the formulation of the title of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. It causes damage to the human dignity of the person who tortures. We protect or damage human dignity, but our own human dignity, by what we do and not by what we suffer, since we are responsible for what we do and not for what others do to us. What we do, or refrain from doing, depends on each of us, i.e., acting in accordance with human dignity in our relations with other human beings is a problem in our ethical relations with ourselves, in spite of the fact that our actions are directed at somebody else.

This is an example of the ethical approach to human rights, which, I think, has to constitute the basis of all human-rights training given to various target groups, provided that we agree that the ultimate goal of human-rights education is to prevent active and passive violations of human rights and that its direct aim is to cultivate respect for human rights in the mind of the trainee, so that this respect can be subsequently reflected in his or her attitudes and behaviour.

In the meeting held last year in early September in this same room, I submitted for the consideration of the participants “The Ethical Education of Human Rights as a Way to Combat Racism and Other Intolerables”. Today, I shall say a few more words only on this education in connection with the issues of the first and second sessions of our agenda, because not only do I think, but my experience of the past few years has also proved, that human-rights education promising to lead to its aim has to be based and built on it.

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The concept underlying what I call “the ethical education of human rights” is that human rights: (a) in connection with the individual are ethical universal norms, i.e., they are demands for the treatment of all human beings, whatever their natural or contingent particularities might be, as well as norms expected to determine the actions of individuals in their relations with other individuals (“no one shall be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman treatment” implies that no one will torture or treat cruelly or inhumanly any one); and (b) in connection with the state, there are premises or universal norms for the deduction and implementation of law at all levels, i.e., they express the intention to introduce ethical concerns in positive law and the administration of public affairs.

Human-rights education and training in formal education, including that of public officials, is related to the first point and constitutes one main condition for the consistent realization of the second one.

The aim of this philosophical-ethical education of human rights is to awaken in the trainees the sincere will to protect human rights and to equip them with the necessary knowledge for this protection, so that they themselves do not violate human rights, or become the causes of violations, due to ignorance.

My experience, as someone who has been teaching human rights for many years, especially experience gained from teaching human rights to public officials in the past five years, has corroborated my acceptance that such a sincere will to protect human rights can be awakened in the trainees by helping them to become aware of their human identity, our only common identity. A crucial factor in achieving this – and in much less time than initially anticipated – is direct, face-to-face interaction between the trainee and the trainer, a trainer who looks at the trainees as human beings independently of all their other identities, including their professional identities, sometimes notorious in public opinion and in the beginning even in the eyes of their classmates. This is why human-

rights “educational programmes need to be sustained over a period of time, involve direct interaction between the trainer and the trainee and include practical learning”, as it is very sagaciously mentioned in our “annotated agenda”. This is something that often escapes the attention of those who apply human-rights education or “awareness” programmes on behalf of international organizations and attempt to “raise awareness” by organizing roundtables for a day and a half.

Another crucial point in teaching human rights, on which the awakening of the sincere will to protect them also depends, is to equip the trainee with the conceptual knowledge of human rights: the knowledge of what they are, i.e., of what they demand, because this knowledge makes obvious the reasons why they should be protected by everyone for everyone. Put very briefly, human rights are norms demanding a treatment of individuals – of all human beings – that do not hinder them from actualizing and developing their human potential; or, they are norms demanding the permanent creation of conditions deemed necessary for the actualization of human potential: the right to life, the right to food, the right to health, the right to education, the right to freedom of thought, of opinion, etc. demand the creation of such conditions.

Still, something more, and more general, in this training is indispensable for the protection of human rights in practice. And this is training in evaluation, so that the trainee can be able to properly evaluate the situations in which he/she has to act and find out what must be done in order to protect human rights, i.e., he/she has to be trained in selecting and putting in connection the appropriate norm with the existing situation. This also helps the trainee eliminate prejudices in his mind, a type of training by which “critical thinking and problem-solving skills” – to quote the annotated agenda of our meeting – can be developed, yet in a way that does not lose sight of the ethical and human-rights dimensions inherent in all human situations. And those who insist on further exercises in this respect, can acquire, one day, the virtue that Aristotle calls *phronesis* (prudence), a virtue especially important for decision makers and for the protection of human rights in public life.

From what I said, I hope it has become clear that the ethical education of human rights needs to be conducted as at least one separate basic course under the explicit heading Human Rights, though human-rights concepts and ethical concerns “should be an integral part of all teaching practices and courses”, which amounts to eliminating from all courses elements that are not in accordance with human rights and to promoting in the context of all special courses respect for the relevant rights. Without this basic ethical training in human rights, for example, “the study of collective violence and discrimination” taught in history courses could even awaken hate – racial or national hate – in some trainees.

Such a basic course constitutes an integral part of the training programmes conducted by the National Committee on the UN Decade for Human Rights Education of Turkey and also the core of the interdisciplinary M.A. programme in human rights conducted at Hacettepe University. The results of this programme could be better seen and evaluated by speaking directly with public officials who have followed this programme or by watching them while they carry out their jobs. Allow me here only to quote a sentence of

a senior security officer: “I was brought up in a family with a humanistic view, but when I saw how those young people who followed last year this programme have changed, I decided to participate also myself in it.”

And a last point: the key actor in the ethical education of human rights is the teacher or trainer. The successful implementation of this human-rights education depends on trainers who are themselves trained so that they themselves can do what they expect the trainees do: to protect in word and deed human dignity, being well aware of the truth that our dignity is protected by what we do.

This is why, in conclusion, I wish to recommend that:

- An interdisciplinary course – a pilot course – that has at its centre the ethical education of human rights be organized for a group of trainers of trainers in formal education, carefully selected from OSCE countries, and;
- A film series be prepared, under the auspices of the OSCE, consisting of a general introductory part and parts for special target groups, so that ideas are transformed to images that, if supported by appropriate comments, have a more direct impact on the minds than words and can reach larger numbers of people who have not undergone formal human-rights training.

4. Introductory speeches to Working Sessions:

Session 1: Formal Human Rights Education; Human Rights Education in School Curricula

- **Speech by Felisa Tibbitts, Executive Director, Human Rights Education Associates:**

Introduction

I want to begin by expressing my gratitude to the OSCE and the ODIHR offices for organizing this supplementary meeting on human-rights education. This gathering of governments, international governmental organizations, and NGOs to discuss best practices, with the intention of developing recommendations on HRE, is further evidence of the OSCE’s dedication to this issue and the broader recognition of the importance of education and training in the field of human rights. I commend you on these goals.

My name is Felisa Tibbitts, and I direct an international, non-governmental organization called Human Rights Education Associates, or HREA. Our name already tells you what our primary mission is: to support human-rights education. We do this through the training of activists and professionals, the development of educational programming and materials, and through community building using online technologies. Through our global HRE mailing list, we are able to reach a network of more than 3,200 individuals

and organizations interested or involved in HRE. This gives me some kind of idea of NGOs activities in HRE activities worldwide.

In my presentation, I will draw on my experience of 12 years in developing human-rights education programmes in the schooling sector. I cannot possibly share with you in 10 minutes all the things I have learned and observed over these years. As our conversations are supposed to lead to specific recommendations, I have framed my presentation around some key recommendations that I think are essential for HRE in the schooling sector.

Areas of Consensus

Before I move into my recommendations, allow me to acknowledge that we have really built some kind of consensus over recent years about key features of human-rights education.

- Education in and for HR belongs in the schooling sector;
- We are talking about the full range of human rights;
- It is the responsibility of governments to carry out HRE;
- Participatory methodologies should be used;
- Human-rights education involves thinking, feeling, and doing, that is, HRE should:
 - o Include knowledge about human rights;
 - o Foster personal attitudes of tolerance and respect; and
 - o Develop the individual's awareness of the ways by which human rights can be translated into social and political reality at both the national and international levels.

These HRE goals are quite broad and challenging. In the schooling sector, in practice, human-rights education is introduced to address a problem. This is often quite specific to current events in the country. HRE has been used to promote tolerance and conflict resolution, to address minority rights, to strengthen the rule of law, to help heal wounds following a situation of conflict, and to promote child-centred classrooms. We have to recognize that HRE fits into human-rights-related agendas that are specific to a national or community context.

Recommendation 1. Define clear learner goals.

Teachers respond to the language of learner outcomes and assessment.

Recommendation 1. Within a schooling system, define quite specifically what learner outcomes you have for the HRE programme and have accountability for these learner goals.

The accountability can be through including human rights in the re-education of teachers and also in the ways that students are assessed, both by their teachers and in the state system.

I notice that the programme talks about HRE and the promotion of tolerance. Bear in mind that different educational programmes can promote tolerance, and human rights education can promote goals other than tolerance. There is a great deal of variety out there, and we have to be specific and have accountability in order to enhance the possibility that an HRE programme will be understood and implemented.

Recommendation 2. Be creative in involving human rights in school curricula.

Those of us working to integrate human-rights education in schools know that this is most straightforward for subjects like citizenship education, history, or political science at the secondary-school level, although there are also many nice examples of children's-rights approaches at the primary-school level. In rare cases, human rights is a separate subject. We work hard to have curricular policies put in place, materials developed, and so on, and we struggle to find a few hours for educators to offer human-rights-related lessons. Frankly speaking, there is very little time in most national curricula, and it is left to the discretion of individual teachers how much they teach human rights. This calls into question the realism of achieving goals of affecting students in all three dimensions of thinking, feeling, and doing.

My second recommendation is to recognize that HRE has a place in non-traditional subjects, such as the sciences, technology, and especially the humanities. Some examples for the sciences include integrating the human-rights framework into discussions on contemporary issues, such as environmental degradation or exploring the link between health and the right to medical care, focusing in the situation of HIV/AIDS in Africa. In mathematics, you can examine how statistics are used to support certain human-rights-related work, such as refugee flows and the work of truth commissions. In economics, students can explore conditions leading to structural poverty and consider this in light of economic rights and the new movement for corporate social responsibility. Using the Internet and online newspaper and journal sources, students can explore media bias and the use of human-rights language in covering events.

Given how few hours are likely to be devoted to human-rights education in schools, it is exceedingly practical to think about involving a team of teachers in a given school to address human-rights-related issues in their own subject matter. A whole-school approach can be a viable way to promote human-rights culture and learning in the school environment. Remember also that HRE takes place in informal ways in the school setting. Special events and programmes can be organized on human-rights topics, and the culture and management of schools is an appropriate subject for human-rights inquiry. I will return to the latter topic towards the end of my presentation.

Recommendation 3. Involve parents and community members.

When we talk about HRE in schools, we are thinking primarily about teachers and youth. Each of these groups will require their own kind of human-rights education. However, we shouldn't think that HRE in the classroom stops there. **We are indirectly involving the**

families and communities that the educators and students are part of. Students are parts of families, and they will discuss at home what they are learning at school. Teachers and the school as a whole are embedded in a particular community. My recommendation is that we recognize this and embrace this. In fact, we might consider that an important goal of HRE in schools is to reach out to the community, to bring the community in (through resource speakers, for example), and to encourage students to analyse community needs through a human-rights lens, as well as participate in formulating solutions.

Recommendation 4. Prepare teachers adequately to teach human rights.

We must ensure that teachers are prepared to facilitate human-rights education. At the present moment, it is most likely that teachers will have the opportunity to participate in an in-service training – if they are fortunate. In the best of all worlds, teachers will learn the rationale, content, and methodology of HRE for their given system when they are in their pre-service training. At this time in a teacher’s career, this is when they are most open to new ideas and methods of teaching. To my mind, **a core recommendation is that teachers have access to pre-service and ongoing in-service training in HRE.** This cannot be overstated, and strategies will vary by country. This training will concern both the methodology of teaching human rights, as well as the content of educational programming.

Recommendation 5. Foster co-operation between the government and NGO sectors.

In most countries with HRE programming, it is the NGO sector or civil society that has been most active in carrying out such programming. This was one of the conclusions of the review of the Decade for HRE that was organized by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Therefore, although we want to use this forum to encourage governments to further their commitments to HRE, I believe that it is important that the **OSCE officially support government-civil society co-operation in this area.**

Recommendation 6. Promote the infusion of human rights throughout the educational system.

Let’s step back a bit from the classroom. **The human rights framework is one that should apply to all levels of the educational system,** and this is another recommendation that I hope we can make at the end of this conference. One level of work is curricular guidelines, subjects, materials, methodologies, training – what I have already been touching upon.

However, schools are institutions that should ideally operate on the basis of human-rights principles. Elements of school operation should be examined from a human-rights point of view, including the governance structure; relations among staff; between staff and students; and opportunities for students to influence school policies, bullying and

harassment policies, and discipline measures. The school should be a place that promotes and protects the human rights of staff as well as students.

A human-rights perspective should also be applied to the education system as a whole. Is there segregation? Are the participation and completion rates of girls, minorities, poorer children, or children coming from rural areas actively encouraged? Do students have an opportunity to study in their mother tongue? Are special-needs children mainstreamed? How different is the quality of schooling from school to school?

Finally, I thank the OSCE for the opportunity to present these ideas, and I **encourage you to help keep HRE on the public agenda**. The Decade for HRE is about to conclude, but very soon at the Commission meeting, a resolution will be proposed for a Second Decade, this time calling for the OHCHR to subsequently develop an international plan of action that will be formulated in realistic terms, with an indication of minimum activity for each country accompanied by indicators of success. We need this global framework for human-rights education, so that we can continue to develop national strategies that will bring us closer to the vision of more just and peaceful communities. The input of the ODIHR and the OSCE in developing such an international plan might help to strengthen the political resolve behind such an effort.

- **Speech by Olöf Olafsdottir, Head of the Department of School and Out-of-School Education; Directorate General of Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport, Council of Europe**

“Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights”

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I should like to thank the OSCE / ODIHR for having invited me to speak at this important meeting on the Council of Europe programmes concerning formal education.

These programmes have always been closely linked to the core mission of the Organisation, that is, the protection and promotion of pluralist democracy, the rule of law and human rights as defined in the European Convention on Human Rights, the European Social Charter and in other international treaties. Currently, activities promoting human rights education within formal education are taking place within the programme “Education for Democratic Culture”, which has four major aspects:

- development of policies and tools, including curriculum design, teacher training methods, quality assurance instruments to facilitate the promotion of education for democratic citizenship (EDC) and human rights (HRE) in member states. The European Year of Citizenship through Education, which will take place in 2005 is being prepared against this backdrop;
- strengthening the European dimension in history teaching, and its contribution to

- democratic culture, human rights and citizenship, through multiperspective and multicultural approaches in developing history curricula and textbooks;
- promoting intercultural understanding, mutual confidence and dialogue through education, with emphasis on issues such as education for the prevention of crimes against humanity, education to combat violence, education for Roma children and the development of Euro-Arab and Euro-Mediterranean dialogue;
 - promoting linguistic diversity as a component of successful interculturalism, particularly with regard to language education for minorities and migrants.

This means that human rights, as a basic set of values in a democratic political culture, are mainstreamed, they are for the CoE the pedagogical guideline in all its subjects and activities on formal education.

The EDC Project

Besides, Human Rights Education has been specifically developed within the project “Education for democratic citizenship and human rights”. This project was formally launched in 1997, at the 2nd Council of Europe Summit of Heads of State and Government. Through the EDC Project, the Council of Europe has defined concepts and definitions for EDC policies, developed strategies for their implementation as well as the skills, attitudes and values needed. On the basis of this work, the Committee of Ministers adopted in October 2002, *Recommendation (2002) 12 on Education for Democratic Citizenship* setting out educational objectives and contents of EDC.

What is EDC?

Education for democratic citizenship is an umbrella concept, of which human rights education is the key element (civic education, political education, values education, intercultural education including inter-religious education), peace education and global education can all be considered to fall under the umbrella of EDC). EDC is not only about teaching the content of the human rights instruments, but aims also at enabling citizens to live together, free and responsible, in the same social and civic space. EDC teaches solidarity, equality, openness to diversity, respect for the other, participation in social and political life, and is as such an instrument for social cohesion. It has been clear from the outset that EDC cannot be limited to formal curricula, but should be seen in a lifelong learning perspective and integrate both non-formal and informal education. A large number of reports and documents have been produced in the framework of the project. Most of these are available on the website of the EDC Division: <http://www.coe.int/edc>

Current activities within the EDC project:

Development of EDC policies, practical material and guidelines for integrating EDC into school curricula and teaching. Recently, an All-European study mapping out national policies on EDC across Europe and presenting examples of good practice has been

prepared. It sets out the main challenges in the years to come. EDC and HRE must be mainstreamed into all subjects even if they also constitute a subject in its own right.

Democratic governance of educational institutions. If we wish to ensure direct practice of human rights and participative democracy in schools, it is necessary to develop democratic organisational culture, involving pupils in decision-making and school management. A study on pupils/parents participation in school management throughout Europe has been prepared, and guidelines on school self-evaluation and self-improvement will be developed. The EDC recommendation favours the opening up of schools to the outside world, setting up partnerships between the school and the family, the community, the workplace and the media.

Teacher support and training. Many teachers are unprepared for teaching human rights and democratic citizenship issues, both as concerns content and pedagogy. The Council of Europe has run specific programmes on HRE teacher training in member states, especially the newer ones. This work is being extended.

The teaching methods, which define the relationship between teachers and pupils, and among pupils, are half the message. It is, for example, impossible to teach the subject freedom of expression as an academic subject alone, with the teacher lecturing to the class. The pupils must experience the active use of this freedom in school and in the classroom, learn how to argue in public and express their views in the face of opinions different than their own. It is, in a nutshell, necessary not only to teach on human rights but also in human rights. This is one of the ways in which the values of tolerance and mutual respect can be learned and integrated into one's own attitudes.

Networking. A network of EDC coordinators was set up in 2001. Its role is to liaise between the Council of Europe Secretariat and EDC actors in member states, and is a major step towards providing a more coherent and shared understanding of EDC. The members of the network collect information about EDC and HRE activities in their countries and spread knowledge about the activities organised by the Council of Europe. The network is of huge importance for our work, as it contributes to transferring the ownership of the project to the countries and favours exchange of good practice.

Future Challenges

The main challenges for EDC within and across the regions of Europe are of particular interest. The All-European Study on EDC reveals that, despite considerable regional differences in terms of context, culture and tradition, there are a number of common challenges for EDC and HRE policy development and practice in Europe. They include:

- Reducing the “compliance gap” between EDC and HRE policies and practices;
- Improving and extending the participation of students and community representatives in the education system, particularly in school management;
- Developing more effective and comprehensive teacher training, at both pre- and in-service levels;

- Introducing a culture of and suitable measures for monitoring, quality assurance and evaluation;
- Agreeing on and fighting for the place of EDC within competing educational reforms and priorities.

The European Year of Citizenship through Education (2005)

I should finally like to mention that in 2005, the Council of Europe will organise the *European Year of Citizenship through Education*. The Year is expected to increase awareness among policy makers and education professionals at different levels. It will be a good opportunity for sharing the wealth of knowledge built up during the project with those involved in EDC policies in member states, and, wherever the need appears, assisting decision-makers with reforms of legislation, and national curricula. OSCE / ODIHR will be invited to send a representative to the meetings of the organising committee of the Year. The first meeting is taking place on 27-28 April 2004 in Strasbourg. The Bulgarian authorities have been particularly supportive of the organisation of the “Year” and will be hosting its launching conference on 13-14 December 2004. In September, the Council of Europe will convoke a meeting of international organisations in Strasbourg in order to explore possibilities for co-operation during the Year. We should take advantage of this opportunity and join forces in order to promote Human Rights Education and Education for Democratic Citizenship. This is a question of better, more inclusive and more democratic societies, in short, of a better future for all of us.

Session 2: Human Rights Education and Training for Public Officials

- **Speech by Anna-Karin Lindblom, Head of Section, Ministry of Justice, Sweden**

Introduction

I would like to thank the Bulgarian Chairmanship for inviting us to discuss the very important subject of human rights education and training. The underlying, yet obvious, assumption of this meeting is that human rights education and training protects and promotes human rights. This is perhaps especially true of human rights education and training for public officials.

Knowledge and awareness of human rights means less risk of rules being breached in concrete situations where public officials come into contact with individuals. Knowledge and awareness of human rights can also provide guidance in situations where political decisions, and therefore priorities, have to be made so that – in the long perspective – more systemic problems can be avoided. Furthermore, human rights education entails reflection upon the human value and the fundamental importance of respecting each individual person. This is an important aspect when it comes to fighting discrimination, racism, xenophobia and intolerance. Finally, human rights education might lead to a better understanding of our increasingly multicultural societies. Since human rights law is a universal system of norms, it constitutes a set of common core values and rules that are

independent of geographic location, culture, religion or tradition and therefore form an important foundation for society, both nationally and internationally.

2. Human rights education and the Swedish Human Rights Action Plan

At the beginning of 2002, the Swedish Government presented the first Swedish National Human Rights Action Plan. This plan, which spans the period 2002–2004, focuses on certain areas of concern and priority, such as fighting discrimination, the rights of national minorities and the rights of the child. Furthermore, the action plan discusses the role and responsibility of different actors, including the government, public authorities and municipalities, both from a general human rights perspective, and more specifically, in relation to the areas of concern and priority. It also raises a number of methodological issues, such as coordination between different actors, human rights information and awareness, and human rights education. The latter is one of the most important components of the action plan.

According to the plan, different measures for promoting human rights education should be carried out in relation to public authorities, including the Government Offices, as well as municipalities and county councils. These educational measures should be seen as complementary to already existing human rights expertise and activities within public administration, such as the fields of responsibility of the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Discrimination Ombudsmen and the Children's Ombudsman. I would like to describe some of the human rights education activities carried out as a result of the human rights action plan.

3. Administrative authorities commissioned by the Government to provide human rights education within their organisations

In 2002, about 20 public authorities were commissioned to provide human rights education and training for their personnel. The list of authorities included the National Prison and Probation Administration, the Prosecutor-General, the National Police Board, the National Social Insurance Board and the Social Insurance Offices, the Swedish Migration Board, the Aliens Appeals Board, the National Courts Administration, the Board of Customs and the Swedish Armed Forces. These authorities were also asked to report back to the Government on the training activities that were carried out. I would like to describe two of these.

The Migration Board

The Migration Board has carried out an educational programme on issues related to torture. The programme was planned by a working group that identified problems and issues that arise when the Migration Board deals with applications from asylum-seekers who have been subjected to torture or other forms of inhuman or degrading treatment. The working group cooperated with the UNHCR, Amnesty International and the Swedish Red Cross. I mention this because, although the responsibility of educating public officials in human rights lies with the state, it is important that non-governmental (perhaps critical) voices are included in these educational programmes. This particular

programme was carried out in two stages: the first stage was of a more general nature and directed at different categories of employees, and the second stage went into more detailed analysis and information. The issues discussed included international and national law, information about the existence of torture in different parts of the world, the effects of torture on the victim and his or her relatives, and also the reactions of people who in their professional capacity come into contact with people who have been subjected to torture. Apart from this two-stage programme, guidelines for handling these cases were formulated and a network of resource persons was formed.

The National Police Board

The National Police Board set up a five-stage plan with the aim of training internal human rights instructors:

1. A two-day national conference was organised for senior officials and internal educators, representing both the national and regional level.
2. A two-day follow-up course was held in the different regions.
3. Instructors at the local level were trained and given the responsibility of conducting human rights courses for all personnel at their respective offices.
4. A one-day follow-up course for these local instructors was held.
5. The National Police Board plans to organise yearly human rights conferences for all local instructors. It will also see to it that the whole scheme when needed.

It should be mentioned that human rights education, focusing on international and regional human rights instruments, as well as Swedish constitutional human rights law, is included in the educational programme for basic police training at the National Police Academy.

Considerations for further development of human rights education for public authorities

Having described these different educational activities, we should also consider whether there were any problems carrying them out, and if so how they could be handled. Firstly, it should be admitted that not all public authorities had the same level of ambition. One issue – and a possible explanation – that was raised in our dialogue with the public authorities is that it is sometimes difficult to plan adequate educational programmes without active support from specialists. If these programmes are planned by people with little previous knowledge and experience of human rights, there is an obvious risk that the training will be too short and too general to be considered relevant for employees in their daily work. Ideally, each of these educational programmes should be specifically designed for the area of responsibility of the authority in question and include practical exercises based on the normal tasks of each employee.

Therefore, as a pilot project, the Government recently commissioned some of the county administrative boards to formulate human rights education action plans in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice. The idea is to provide more dialogue and assistance in the planning phase, so that each educational plan corresponds to the activities and needs of the authority in question. It is, however, too early to say how this method will function in practice, as we have only just initiated the dialogue with the county administrative

boards. It is clear that the method will demand more from us at the Ministry, at least during an initial phase. The consequence will be that fewer public authorities can be commissioned to provide human rights education. However, if the pilot project is successful, it might nevertheless be better to concentrate on fewer authorities at a time rather than giving assignments to many authorities with varying results.

Another important point is that we will need to follow the development over the next few years to see whether human rights training commissioned by and reported to the Government Offices is carried out as isolated cases, or if some of the authorities will integrate human rights programmes into their training as a more regular component.

Finally, we need to consider how different educational measures can be evaluated in terms of quality, not only quantity. I will come back to this issue later.

4. Human rights education for municipalities and county councils

In Sweden, some human rights – specifically in the economic, social and cultural areas – are implemented at the municipal level. This is the case with, for instance, the right to an adequate standard of living, several rights of the child including the right to education, some of the rights of people with disabilities and some of the rights of national minorities. In practice, however, there have sometimes been problems with the implementation of rights by municipalities and county councils. There are several possible explanations for this, such as lack of resources or inadequate prioritisation, unclear division of responsibilities, or lack of political will. National rights-oriented legislation is not always applauded by the partially independent municipalities.

Better knowledge of international human rights law could perhaps contribute to solving these problems in some cases. Within the political domain, the understanding and acceptance of national rights-oriented law could be enhanced if it was generally known that the rights guaranteed by the law correspond to international law, which is binding on the state. Better knowledge of human rights might also lead to the corresponding areas of municipal politics being given more priority by decision-makers. Further, some employees within the local administration that may be very well acquainted with domestic law in the area might not be as well informed about the fact that the limits for their “margin of appreciation” when making decisions in individual cases are also drawn from international human rights law. And, finally, better knowledge of certain central principles of international human rights law, such as the principle of non-discrimination and the universality of human rights, might lead to a better understanding of the importance of how each and every individual should be treated in their contact with officials at the municipal level.

The Swedish Ministry of Justice has attempted to increase the interest in, and knowledge and awareness of, the role of municipalities and county councils in the implementation of human rights by inviting all employees and politicians within these structures to regional conferences to meet and listen to human rights experts. The conferences have attracted quite a lot of interest from the municipalities and county councils, both from politicians

and employees. There seems to be a growing interest in human rights at this level, although it sometimes requires a fine balance to discuss concrete examples and problems of implementation of human rights without creating a reaction where the conference participants feel they need to defend themselves against criticism and lose their interest in the subject. However, by presenting concrete examples and projects where human rights issues have been highlighted within municipalities and county councils, a more constructive atmosphere can be created. That is why we have found it very important to invite representatives from this level of administration to play an active role in planning the conference programmes, and in the actual conferences by inviting them to be speakers, lead workshops etc. We also plan to organise one or more follow-up conferences specifically aimed at dealing with practical solutions and projects presented by representatives from municipalities and county councils.

5. Evaluation of human rights education and training

After having described the different educational activities carried as a result of the national human rights action plan, the question of effect arises. However, evaluation in this area is very difficult. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) has found that evaluation of human rights work in other countries can be summarised as follows: Individual projects can be evaluated, while it is practically impossible to evaluate the effects of these projects on the general human rights situation. I suspect that this is also true of human rights education and training, meaning that the programmes themselves can (and should) be evaluated, while their effect on the human rights situation cannot. For example, even if the number of complaints regarding a particular public authority can be counted, such an indicator cannot be isolated from a multitude of other factors that might have affected developments in society. On the other hand, the degree of human rights knowledge and awareness in the group of participants in an educational programme can be measured, or at least estimated. Perhaps an international evaluation tool could be developed to be used for different education programmes for public officials in different countries. This would help us to compare our activities to see which methods have been most successful so that we can give each other advice and sometimes borrow models from each other. I would be very interested in learning about your experiences of evaluation of human rights education, and of human rights education and training for public officials in general. Thank you.

- **Speech by Ronald Hooghiemstra, Chief of Capacity Building Section, Human Rights Division, OSCE Mission in Kosovo**

Introduction

In this presentation, I will be discussing the example of what has been developed in Kosovo for training of public officials in human rights. I will be concentrating on the training of general public officials in the executive power of government. This concerns the training of civil servants at both central level, in government Ministries, and at municipal level in municipalities and various governmental agencies. I will not be

discussing the training of police, because that is dealt with separately in Kosovo. However, I will also be referring to the training of judicial officials, due to some specific concerns in that regard.

The general approach we took in Kosovo was to look at the concept of “human rights” as a whole. In particular, we decided to examine the concept of “human” as an integral component of the overall concept of human rights. We considered that human rights are an integral part of each and every human being, and therefore, people have an implicit or intuitive understanding of human rights that training can help them to discover. In addition, we considered that human rights compliance cannot be imposed on public officials, but rather that people need to be encouraged to recognize by themselves the value of respecting human rights to their work and life.

In order to examine the human component of human rights, we studied a number of texts that describe human behaviour, motivations and rational strategies, and related this to the concept of human change, given that fundamentally we are interested in promoting changes in behaviour and attitudes. The sources of the texts we studied come from the disciplines of:

- International Law;
- International Case-law;
- Evolutionary Biology;
- Psychotherapy;
- Pedagogy;
- Neuro-science;
- Quantum Physics;
- Mathematics and Game Theory;
- Cognitive Psychology;
- Comparative Religion;
- Linguistics; and
- Philosophy.

The primary source among these texts proved to be recent developments in cognitive neuro-psychology. From the study of these texts, we developed a training concept founded on an understanding of human dignity and the full development of the human personality. The training concept includes a philosophy and a strategy, an assessment of the target audience and a methodology. I will discuss each of these four components in turn.

Training Philosophy

As our point of departure, we selected to define human rights as, “*Those things every human being needs in order to be able to survive in their environment.*” In this definition, environment is understood to mean the physical (geographical and meteorological), political, economic, social, cultural, philosophical and historical environment.

Training Strategy

The strategic approach was to look at the position of public officials within what we call a “Human Rights Compliant Society.” We defined this as:

A society where the knowledge, systems and structures are in place so that human rights standards are respected, and where effective procedures exist to ensure that human rights standards are maintained.

This definition leads to a framework where (1) public officials and politicians are responsible for the human rights compliance of legislation, public policies, and executive actions and decisions; (2) the judiciary, the legal profession and relevant administrative appeal bodies are responsible for the effectiveness of remedies for violations of human rights; and (3) the general population, civil society organizations and the media know how to claim rights, in order for the human rights compliance of political and executive action to be tested through the operation of effective remedies.

Training Assessment

Before designing the eventual contents of the training programme, we undertook an assessment of the intended target audience of public officials in the executive branch of government. We assessed two aspects of this audience, namely their prior level of understanding of human rights concepts and norms, and the environment in which they fulfill their duties as public officials. In looking at their environment, we concentrated our attention on the legislative, managerial and institutional environment.

Among public officials in the executive branch of government and government agencies in Kosovo we found that most people had a general, if superficial, understanding of human rights concepts and norms. In looking at their professional environment, we found that public servants in Kosovo function in a legislative, managerial and institutional state of semi-chaos.⁴¹ Given that environment, we considered that merely teaching public officials about international human rights documents and norms, and telling them they should follow these norms, would have little to no impact on the way public servants fulfill their public functions. The participants at such a training session would presumably merely comment, either openly or silently, “What does this have to do with me? Why should I care about human rights?” In addition, we found that public officials’ thinking was characterized by many received ideas that they may not individually agree with, but that they are not willing to question, for whatever reason.

Training Methodology

In order for the training programme to address both the level of knowledge aspect and the environmental aspect, we decided to include in the training programme two separate but inter-linked components.

First component

⁴¹ From my own experience in working on human rights in other post-conflict and transitional societies I have found that this assessment of a state of legislative, managerial and institutional semi-chaos in public institutions is not unique to Kosovo.

In support of the development of public officials' understanding and insight into human rights concepts and norms, we decided to provide them with a contextual framework for understanding why human rights exist and why they take the form that they have. This contextual framework involves a discussion of the following elements:

- Philosophical context;
- Historical context;
- Political context;
- Economic context;
- Social context
- Institutional context;
- International legal context; and
- Domestic legal context

As well as assisting participants to understand their own place within their contextual environment.

Second component

In order to support public officials' ability to survive effectively in their semi-chaotic environment, we decided to provide them with practical skills that would assist them in recognizing the practical value of human rights to their work. In addition, these skills would develop participants' understanding of the relationships between their functions and the broader context in which they operate and permit them to better defend their new-found insights with others in their working environment. These skills include:

- Analytical skills;
- Communication skills;
- Negotiation skills;
- Structuring thought and argument; and
- Evaluation and judgment skills

For public officials working in the judiciary, we also include practical skills to assist them in understanding the relationship between international human rights law and domestic law. On this point, our aim is to complement the training provided by our colleagues from the Council of Europe on European human rights law and procedures by clearly establishing how to apply this European law within domestic procedures and situations. In addition, training for the legal profession needs to look at the relevance of human rights law to administrative and civil law procedures as well as criminal procedures in order to ensure the effectiveness of remedies for human rights violations.

We establish the linkage between human rights and these practical skill sets by concentrating on the underlying principles of international human rights law and the practical application of these principles to factual reality. The underlying principles I am referring to include in particular:

- Fairness;
- Equity;
- Legality;

- Legitimacy;
- Reasonableness; and
- Proportionality.

Final Points

There are three final points I would like to make in connection with human rights training of public officials.

Point one - Time

Such a comprehensive training programme as outlined above takes time to implement for each and every target audience. In addition, in order to reach as many public officials as possible with such a training programme is a long-term project.

Point Two – Modeling behaviour

For the training programme to have the intended effect it is essential that the trainer or teacher is able to model, or illustrate, a human rights compliant approach to the audience. This implies demonstrating through the training style respect for the audience and their opinions, as well as building on what participants themselves bring into the training. The relationship between the trainer and the participants becomes a model of the preferred relationship between the public official and their interlocutors, whether this means with colleagues of the same institution, with public officials in other institutions or with the general public where relevant. To achieve this will require an inter-active teaching approach.

Point three – Management

Experience has demonstrated that, for any training to have an effective impact on professional behaviour and attitudes, the objectives and content of the training need to be supported by the management and supervision structures of the organization or institution where a person works. Many times, people may have received a wonderful training, and they may have fully understood and internalized the subject matter of the training, but they then find that they cannot apply these new insights in their work. This is because the institutional or organizational environment in which they operate has remained the same or cannot accept the change that the training implies. Without management support the objectives of the training programme cannot be realized, or perhaps only partially.

5. Opening and closing remarks of Ambassador Strohal, OSCE/ODIHR Director:

Opening remarks:

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Human rights education is about more than merely knowledge of a set of rules and principles. It is also about attitude and behaviour, and about change in attitude and

behaviour. That is why every target audience must not only be provided with more than a general understanding of what human rights is; everyone must also be shown how human rights are relevant to them and how they can apply human rights in their life and work.

The OSCE as a security organization approaches human rights education from a human security angle. Thus, human rights education can function as an important means to promote and strengthen human security. Human rights education and training enhances knowledge, clarifies values, promotes solidarity, changes attitudes and develops critical thinking and skills contributing to the respect for and enforcement of human rights. This leads to an active commitment and to the defence of such rights and to the building of a holistic, fully comprehensive culture of human rights.

Human rights education and training thereby constitutes a strong instrument for conflict prevention and the prevention of human rights violations. It is a key factor for achieving and securing human security. Human rights education can provide a valuable basis and common vision with regard to norms and standards for sustainable conflict resolution. Strategies of conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation should therefore be built integrally upon strategies of promoting and protecting human rights. Every woman, man, youth and child has the right to know, understand and demand their human rights. This is part of the human dignity of each individual which forms an important dimension of ensuring human security.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Most of the activities, programmes and projects of my Office are aimed at educating and training specific categories of people on human rights and democratic values or at transferring “know-how” and sharing experience and best practice, and would thus at least include elements of human rights education.

At the same time we are very much aware of the activities undertaken by other organizations in this field and that our efforts can only be seen as a small part of the overall global effort that is made to enhance the promotion and protection of human rights through education and training. One example is the activities of the United Nations, who have dedicated the last decade to human rights education, “aimed at the building of a universal culture of human rights”.

It is States, however, that have the main responsibility to ensure the promotion of human rights education within public institutions on all levels - executive, legislative and judiciary. It is therefore my hope that this meeting will not only focus on what is being done by international organizations, but just as much on the efforts undertaken by the States themselves and how the international community can support these efforts in a sustainable way.

In the agenda for this meeting we have decided to examine more closely human rights education and training targeting three groups of society: pupils and students; public officials and the general public. In this way we hope to provide a holistic approach to human rights education and training, as no training will be successful if it is not put into a wider context.

We will start by sharing experiences on how to include human rights education in school curricula from an early age. This is a vital step towards ensuring widespread knowledge and the emergence of a culture of human rights. Human rights education is ultimately about action for building human rights cultures in our own communities, leading in particular to tolerance and mutual respect.

Human rights education and training has to be integrated as a life long process of learning in formal education, included, in particular, in the curricula on history, political education and democratic citizenship, non-formal learning at the community level, and informal education for example through cultural means. It has to be culturally sensitive, practical and skills-oriented and adequately address the needs of learners across all sectors of society.

Integrating human rights education into the official education system also helps preventing a situation where human rights education remains subject to the good will of international organizations or local NGOs.

However, teaching human rights in schools cannot be done in a vacuum. If principles of democracy, human rights and tolerance are ill-defined and not understood in popular culture, it will be difficult or even impossible to have any major impact. This is of course particularly relevant when such values are just beginning to be evidenced in social and political practice.

Education and training on human rights for public officials working in the judiciary, law enforcement, prosecutors' offices and also those who are there to implement national laws on a daily basis are of paramount importance. A lot of effort has been invested into working with various representatives of State structures by the international community and civil society. However, the basic rule that should not be forgotten is that such education should be an integral part of their basic professional training. It is a primary responsibility of the OSCE participating States to provide conditions for adequate human rights education in this context. We hope that this meeting will allow us to discuss best practices in doing this and learn from experiences of each other.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Human rights education and training is a tool for peaceful societal transformation with a gender perspective and a framework for social development. It aims at the empowerment and the building of capabilities of women, men, youth and children through critical thinking, understanding, applying and claiming all human rights, including civil and political, economic, social and cultural rights, and the right to development.

Another aspect I hope we will be able to address in this meeting, is the quality of human rights education. It is imperative that human rights education and training be free of gender bias, racial and other stereotypes, be sensitive to particular needs and be based on the principles of non-discrimination and equality in the enjoyment of all human rights. We have made a conscious effort in preparation for this meeting to invite women NGOs who can share their experience on teaching women's rights so that this aspect can be included as an integral part of any human rights training planned in the future.

We have also invited NGOs working with minorities who can share their particular experiences and concerns. Non-governmental and community-based organizations play an important and creative role in the promotion and protection of human rights. As many have human rights education as part of their agenda, they disseminate information and engage in dialogue on human rights, especially at the grass-roots level and in remote and rural communities. I would therefore also like to take this opportunity to encourage participants from the civil society to take floor during this meeting and share your views and experiences with us.

Finally, human rights education and training should seek to enhance effective democratic participation in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres. It should be utilized as a means of promoting economic and social progress and people-centred sustainable development. It can thereby contribute to strengthening the rule of law and capacity building for democratic governance, recognized as an important strategy towards democratization, accountability and global governmental stability.

Closing remarks:

As this has been the first Supplementary Human Dimension to focus on Human Rights Education and Training, it has been a very interesting experience to learn about the wealth of activities and experiences made in the OSCE region. During this day and a half we have heard about human rights education and training from all different aspects. States, NGOs and international organizations have all contributed from their particular angles. We have heard about best practices and lessons learned, and also about obstacles against long-lasting and sustainable effects of human rights education.

This meeting has given my office, and I am sure many others among the participants, a wealth of concrete recommendations and ideas on where to take our work. It has been a very timely meeting for my own office, as we are currently in the process of consolidating and strengthening our program on human rights education and training. This meeting has provided us with a lot of food-for thought in this work.

The last day and half has also very well illustrated how the OSCE efforts is only one part of the global effort that is being made to enhance the promotion of human rights through education and training. It is important that we work together in these efforts and I therefore welcome the initiative of the CoE on the year of the citizenship through education in 2005. We will be very happy to take up their invitation to co-operate with them on this initiative.

The wide range discussions has also very well illustrated the holistic approach that has to be taken to human right education and training and which will also continue to be part of the ODIHR's approach to human rights education and training. Several recommendations touched on areas where the OSCE as an organization can have added value in this work and we will of course pay particular attention to these. The OSCE has for example a tradition of functioning as a bridge between governments and civil society and we will of course continue to play this role in the area of human rights education. We will also continue our efforts to ensure that human rights education also reached more vulnerable groups in the society such as the Roma and Sinti. We will also continue our efforts to include a gender perspective in every human rights education or training effort in order to make sure that there are no inherent biases that work counter-productive to the message that we are trying to get across.

Finally, I would like to thank all participants for their active input to this meeting and thereby contributing its usefulness for future work. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank the OSCE missions who have facilitated the participation of a number of NGOs and government officials.