

PC.DEL/1520/15
6 November 2015

ENGLISH
Original: FRENCH

Delegation of France

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDRE VULIC,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FRANCE TO THE
OSCE, AT THE 1075th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

5 November 2015

**In response to the Personal Representatives of the OSCE
Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination**

Mr. Chairperson,

France associates itself with the statement by the European Union and the words of welcome to the Personal Representatives of the Chairperson-in-Office. As France was mentioned – in a basically sympathetic and fair manner – I should like to add the following comments on behalf of my country.

After the terrorist attacks in Paris on 7 and 8 January 2015, the French Government, along with immediate security measures to protect religious sites and schools, adopted a transdisciplinary approach to prevent and suppress racist acts.

The President of the Republic has made combating racism and anti-Semitism into a major national issue, and a new interministerial plan on it was adopted on 17 April 2015. This plan to combat racism and anti-Semitism involves all ministries, regional bodies and civil society. It is based on four main pillars: punishment, education, communication of the values of the Republic and combating hate speech, particularly on the Internet.

To improve the suppression activities, France has refined its statistical tools to measure the effectiveness of criminal policies. In accordance with the recommendations of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Ministry of the Interior and judiciary institutions have a statistical breakdown of motivations for racist acts, which are published annually. As part of the new interministerial plan, a summary of prosecutions for these acts will also be published. The French methodology for collecting data was presented at the OSCE Human Dimension Committee meeting on 27 January 2015.

Finally, to bring the response as far as possible into line with the needs of civil society, the Government has strengthened its consultation mechanisms with bodies representing Muslims and Jews in France.

In combating intolerance, the Government makes no difference between the reasons for discrimination. Be they anti-Semitic, anti-Islamic, anti-Christian, anti-Roma or homophobic, all acts of intolerance and discrimination are vigorously condemned by the public authorities and prosecuted as necessary by law.

Mr. Chairperson,

France is a country of great cultural and geographic diversity. In view of our history, which includes slavery but also the Second World War, we know only too well the negative effects of a system that categorizes citizens according to their ethnic or religious affiliation.

As the President of the Republic stated at the Camp des Milles memorial on 10 October 2015: “No culture, no country, no society, no era is safe from succumbing. But we have all the means for resisting and vanquishing this scourge. France has a resource that allows us to have this confidence. It is called the republic. The republic makes no distinction on account of race, skin colour or community. It recognizes only free citizens with equal rights.”

Thank you for your attention.