

## **Conclusions of the NGO Preparatory Meeting for the Second OSCE Tolerance Implementation Meeting on Education to promote mutual respect and understanding and to teach about the holocaust**

Dubrovnik, October 22, 2006

The purpose of the NGO preparatory meeting was to give NGO's the opportunity to exchange information, share best practices and formulate recommendations so that they can be presented at the Second OSCE Tolerance Implementation Meeting entitled „Education to Promote Mutual Respect and Understanding and to Teach about the Holocaust“ held in Dubrovnik on October 23-24, 2006. More than twenty representatives of non-governmental organizations working on education issues, the rights of minorities as well as human rights in general discussed numerous topics related to the above mentioned theme in four sessions yesterday. Keeping in mind that civil society organizations play a key role in complementing and supplementing official activities in this field, while maintaining their role as informed critics of states and state institutions, the NGO preparatory have come to the following conclusions:

- States ought to recognize the importance of education in general and realize that support of sound activities in the educational field has remarkable long-term positive effects for society as a whole
- States ought to recognize that non-governmental organizations can contribute significantly to the educational process, while principals, teachers as well as educational authorities ought to foster co-operation with NGO's that specialize in diversity education and related areas
- States ought to focus their support for diversity education to those activities - both formal and informal – that are based on individual stories and direct contact with „the other“
- States ought to support educational activities about tolerance and mutual respect that start at an early age for children and include innovative methods such as peer education and training-of-trainers
- States ought to be aware of violence among children and support those activities by schools as well as NGO's that aim at eliminating violence among children while fostering co-operation among teachers, parents, social workers and other actors, specially the media
- States ought to set-up independent commission, with expert and NGO participation, that would identify and seek the removal of any statements in textbooks and other teaching materials that would be based on intolerance or prejudice of any form

- States ought to initiate and support activities that record the Holocaust, other genocides and crimes against humanity, thus contributing to important efforts to deal with our own past – documentary films, books, commemoration sites and recording oral history
- States ought to set the conditions for constructive co-operation with the Jewish community, while supporting educational activities about the Holocaust conducted by the Jewish community, human rights organizations, research centers and other groups
- States ought to support educational activities about the Holocaust as well as other crimes based on intolerance of different forms, specially against Roma and other vulnerable groups, in a manner that recognizes and condemns those ideologies of the contemporary period which could in the end have similar objectives
- States ought to condemn and investigate in a timely manner all individual cases of hate-crime and hate speech based on racial and national intolerance, xenophobia, anti-semitism, anti-muslim behaviour and all other forms of intolerance based on any persons belonging or beliefs, including the rights of non-believers
- Public authorities, international organizations and foundations are encouraged to continue their funding of NGO activities in general, while supporting co-operation between the public school system and non-governmental actors in diversity education

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