



10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OSCE'S BERLIN CONFERENCE ON ANTI-SEMITISM

HIGH-LEVEL COMMEMORATIVE EVENT AND CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM

**12-13 November 2014
Weltsaal, Federal Foreign Office, Berlin**

ANNOTATED AGENDA

Background

In 2004, high-level representatives of OSCE participating States gathered in Berlin to explore challenges related to manifestations of anti-Semitism in the OSCE region at a conference hosted by the German Government. With the ensuing Berlin Declaration, OSCE participating States acknowledged that anti-Semitism has assumed new forms and poses a threat to security and stability in the OSCE region. At the time, and at subsequent Ministerial Council Meetings, OSCE participating States assumed responsibility for addressing this challenge (MC Decisions No. 12/2004, No. 10/2005, No. 13/2006, No. 10/2007, No. 9/2009, No. 3/2013). In particular, they pledged to enact a comprehensive set of measures to respond to violent manifestations of anti-Semitism, whilst also committing themselves to implement educational activities to raise awareness about anti-Semitism and promote remembrance of the Holocaust. Ever since, the commitment to address and respond to anti-Semitism and other biases has been part of the OSCE's work in the human dimension of security.

Ten years after the Berlin Declaration, it is time to take stock of how these commitments have been implemented and to review them in light of new challenges. To this end, a high-level commemorative event will be convened which, in addition to assessing what has been achieved, will also provide OSCE participating States with an opportunity to commit themselves to addressing today's challenges related to anti-Semitism in line with human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The event will gather high-level government representatives and political leaders for facilitated conversations about challenges and good practices in countering anti-Semitism. It will also provide civil society organizations and representatives of the younger generation with an opportunity to develop and present recommendations to OSCE participating States.

12 NOVEMBER 2014 – CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM ON ANTI-SEMITISM

The Civil Society Forum is designed to discuss the implementation of OSCE commitments on anti-Semitism, with a view to producing a comprehensive list of recommendations to be presented to participating States. In light of the Swiss Chairmanship's efforts to "strengthen the voice of young people" and to "enhance their involvement within OSCE structures", the civil society forum will also include representatives of youth organizations.

The purpose of the civil society preparatory meeting is to:

- Review the implementation of OSCE commitments related to anti-Semitism and identify implementation gaps;
- Survey new challenges related to manifestations of anti-Semitism in the OSCE region;
- Provide civil society, including youth organizations, with an opportunity to prepare recommendations to be presented during the high-level commemorative event;
- Share good practices and experiences that illustrate what can be done to effectively and sustainably prevent and address anti-Semitism;
- Provide a forum to discuss civil society's engagement with the OSCE and with ODIHR;
- Facilitate and enhance coalition-building, exchange and co-operation among civil society organizations throughout the OSCE region.

Framed by an opening and a closing plenary session, the participants will break into eight different thematic working groups to discuss challenges and elaborate on the recommendations that will be presented during the high-level commemorative event.

09:00-09:30 OPENING SESSION

Welcome Remarks

09:30-11:00 PLENARY SESSION

In the first Plenary Session, participants will present civil society initiatives and best practices that have evolved over the years to fight anti-Semitism, discussing ways to broaden the application of model initiatives. They will also voice expectations with regard to ways to maximize the impact of civil society groups on the high-level commemorative event on anti-Semitism, touching on broader topics to be explored within working groups, including ways to increase usage of existing tools that can help understand and raise awareness about anti-Semitism.

11:00-11:30 **Coffee Break**

11:30-13:00 WORKING GROUPS
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Working Group I: Strengthening Political Leadership in the Fight against Anti-Semitism

While good practices of high-level political reaction to incidents of anti-Semitism have been reported, manifestations of anti-Semitism continue to be a cause of concern, including instances where charges of anti-Semitism are used by politicians as a political instrument. In addition, the growth of populist movements and far right-wing parties is bringing anti-Semitism into parliamentary debate. This working session will survey new challenges that

governments need to address in the fight against anti-Semitism, including issues of victim competition and conflicting memories regarding national narratives resulting from debates about historical events. The session will explore what can be done to raise awareness among officials to ensure that governments enact the necessary measures to respond to anti-Semitism. The working group will explore ways to increase the commitment and accountability of governments in dealing with the fight against anti-Semitism and translating the commitment into concrete political action.

Working Group II: Challenges to the Security of Jews and Jewish Communities

The working group will explore security challenges arising from deadly attacks on Jews and Jewish institutions, as well as the impact of recent spikes in anti-Semitic violence on Jewish communities in Europe. Particular attention will be paid to the role of governments and civil society in addressing the security needs of Jewish communities, including the role of monitoring and identification of anti-Semitic hate crimes, focusing on good practices of collecting data on anti-Semitic attacks. This session will be an opportunity to review the extent to which OSCE participating States have implemented their commitments in the area of combating hate crime.

Working Group III: Countering Anti-Semitism on the Internet

Since 2003, the OSCE has acknowledged that hate crimes can be fuelled by racist, xenophobic, anti-Semitic and other hateful content on the Internet. Through the Internet, anti-Semitic propaganda, stereotypes and conspiracy theories are circulated throughout and beyond the OSCE region. The problem has in recent years been broadened through the widespread use of social fora to spread harmful expressions of anti-Semitism. This working group will explore what can be done to address web-based anti-Semitism while respecting the OSCE's commitment to the promotion and protection of freedom of expression. The working group will also discuss civil society actions to highlight the problem. Close attention will be paid to the opportunities offered by the Internet as a tool to prevent and address anti-Semitism.

Working Group IV: The Relationship between Nationalism and Anti-Semitism

Nationalist and populist political parties in Europe have been part of the political landscape for some time, employing at various times anti-Semitism as part of their ideology. However, concerns revolve around the recent electoral success in some countries of extreme right-wing parties that openly use anti-Semitism as part of their party platform. There have also been troubling incidents of individual politicians from more mainstream parties making unabashed use of anti-Semitic stereotypes. Furthermore, challenges emerge from charges of anti-Semitism brandished openly in the political arena. This working group will discuss ways to counter manifestations of anti-Semitism in the political arena.

13:00-14:00 Lunch Break

14:00-15:30 WORKING GROUPS

Working Group V: Responding to Holocaust Denial and Distortion

Manifestations of Holocaust denial and distortion have been observed in various sectors of society and politics, while challenges also revolve around debates about historical memory. A number of populist political parties seek to rewrite historical narratives related to the Second World War and the Holocaust. At the same time, Holocaust denial in the media and in the public arena, compounded by expressions of anti-Semitism, pose a challenge to Holocaust education and remembrance. This working group will discuss what governments and civil

society can and should do to effectively and sustainably address these questions, reviewing as well the responsiveness of governments on the implementation of their OSCE commitment to promote Holocaust education and remembrance.

Working Group VI: Addressing Anti-Semitism against the Background of the Conflict in the Middle East

At the 2004 Berlin conference, OSCE participating States emphasized that international developments, including those in the Middle East, never justify anti-Semitism. A lack of differentiation between the actions of the state of Israel and Jewish communities in OSCE participating States can lead to direct threats as well as to attacks on Jews and Jewish institutions. This working group will address ways for governments and civil society to identify effective approaches to countering anti-Semitic discourse in connection with conflicts in the Middle East. This will include a discussion about relevant educational tools.

Working Group VII: The Impact of Recent Challenges to Religious Ritual Practices

The commitment to protect and promote freedom of religion or belief features prominently in OSCE commitments. In recent years, however, concerns have revolved around attempts to ban and regulate traditional Jewish and Muslim religious practices such as circumcision and ritual slaughter. Overly restrictive measures, if implemented, would pose a serious challenge to Jewish life in Europe, and, on a larger scale, to European identities. Recent discussions about circumcision and ritual slaughter prompted considerable anti-Semitic reactions in the media and in the public arena. This working group will discuss what steps governments can take to ensure that the rights of Jewish and Muslim individuals to practice their religion is respected and promoted throughout the OSCE region, as well as addressing civil society measures, such as joint Muslim-Jewish initiatives, to counter attacks on Jewish and Muslim ritual practices.

Working Group VIII: Fostering Civil Society Networks to Combat Anti-Semitism

Civil society initiatives are a critically important tool in combating anti-Semitism. Civil society groups working together can greatly strengthen the impact of the work being done by individual groups. In this regard, there is path-breaking work being done by some civil society actors diversifying the work against anti-Semitism. This working group will discuss the importance of diversifying the response to anti-Semitism through inclusion and representation of various groups in society. Civil society organizations will present examples of their practice as a basis for the discussion.

15:30-16:00 Coffee Break

16:00-18:00 PLENARY SESSION

In the plenary session, the rapporteurs will present recommendations from each working session with an opportunity for plenary discussion. The concluding recommendations will be presented at the high-level commemorative event the following day.

**18:45 Bus transfer to the Embassy of Switzerland
Otto-von-Bismarck-Allee 4a, Berlin**

19:30-21:30 Reception hosted by the Embassy of Switzerland and the Federal Foreign Office of Germany

13 NOVEMBER 2014 – HIGH-LEVEL COMMEMORATIVE EVENT

10:30-11:00 OPENING REMARKS

11:00-12:00 HIGH-LEVEL PANEL I: From 2004 to 2014: Reflecting on Efforts Across the OSCE Region since the Berlin Declaration
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The speakers of this high-level panel will be asked to look back at ten years of addressing anti-Semitism in the OSCE region. This will include a joint reflection on the significance of the 2004 Berlin Declaration on Anti-Semitism and progress made in solving challenges in the area of anti-Semitism. In addition to commemorating this seminal event, the panel will explore to what extent anti-Semitism continues to pose a challenge to security and stability in the OSCE region. In this regard, the speakers will share their assessment of recent manifestations of anti-Semitism in the OSCE region and discuss current challenges against the background of the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security and its commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Particular attention will be paid to the role of political leaders in spearheading the fight against anti-Semitism at both the national and international levels.

Discussion questions:

- What was the significance of the OSCE's 2004 Berlin Declaration? To what extent does it remain relevant today?
- Have OSCE participating States made progress in addressing anti-Semitism in the past ten years? Have OSCE participating States successfully addressed anti-Semitism as a threat to stability and security?
- What are current challenges related to anti-Semitism? What impact do recent events of geo-political importance, such as the conflict in the Middle East, have on Jewish individuals and communities in the OSCE region?
- How can the OSCE effectively build on the achievements of the Berlin Declaration and deepen its multilateral co-operation and dialogue on anti-Semitism, including co-operation with civil society?
- What is the role of political leaders in spearheading the fight against anti-Semitism at both the national and the international level?

12:00-12:45 **Interventions from the Floor**

12:45-14:00 **Lunch Break**

14:00-15:00 HIGH-LEVEL PANEL II: From Words to Action: Countering Contemporary Anti-Semitism
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The focus of the second high-level panel will be on analyzing what can be and what has been done by governments and political leaders to address anti-Semitism. This conversation will revolve around the policies and mechanisms that need to be put in place to ensure that anti-Semitic hate crimes and other security threats are responded to and that anti-Semitic discourse is countered, online and offline. The speakers will be asked to share their respective experiences with relevant initiatives and showcase educational approaches that have proven to be effective in preventing and addressing anti-Semitism. A key discussion topic will be to explore what is needed for governmental officials – criminal justice officials, civil servants,

educators, etc. – to play their respective roles in countering anti-Semitism. This includes ensuring that Jewish individuals and communities are safe, and that anti-Semitism does not affect the right of Jewish individuals to freely practice their religion.

Discussion questions:

- Have OSCE participating States developed effective approaches to addressing anti-Semitism in the past ten years? What are the main obstacles to the implementation of OSCE commitments in this area?
- Have OSCE participating States developed a comprehensive response to anti-Semitic hate crime? Are governments addressing the security needs of Jewish communities? What can be done to protect Jewish communities and institutions from all forms of violence, including terrorist attacks?
- What is the significance of extremist parties' recent electoral successes? And what challenges emerge from the fact that anti-Semitic stereotypes and conspiracy theories are being voiced in mainstream fora, such as, on the Internet, in football stadiums as well as in parts of the media? What should be the criteria for drawing the line between criticism of Israel/Israeli politics and anti-Semitism? How can all these challenges be addressed in light of the need to protect the fundamental right to freedom of expression?
- Is there an effective and sustainable educational approach to anti-Semitism? Are OSCE participating States taking account of manifestations of anti-Semitism that challenge Holocaust education and remembrance? What kinds of educational strategies need to be developed to effectively prevent manifestations of anti-Semitism that use the conflict in the Middle East as a justification for anti-Semitism?
- What are the implications for Jewish life in Europe of recent initiatives to question and regulate Jewish religious practices related to circumcision and ritual slaughter? To what extent have related debates brought to the fore age-old anti-Semitic stereotypes? How is Jewish religious life affected by security concerns?

15:00-15:30 Interventions from the Floor

15:30-16:00 Coffee Break

16:00-17:00 CIVIL SOCIETY PANEL: Mobilizing the Base: Recommendations from Civil Society

The third panel will gather civil society representatives to present the concerns voiced and the recommendations made during the civil society forum. The speakers will explore the impact of anti-Semitism on Jewish individuals, communities and societies at large and engage with the question of how governments and civil society can work together in addressing anti-Semitism. The speakers will present the views of civil society on the status of the implementation of OSCE commitments on anti-Semitism, showcase good practices and identify implementation gaps. By presenting a comprehensive set of forward-looking recommendations, the civil society representatives will identify key issues of concern in relation to anti-Semitism and propose relevant interventions. Special attention will be given to the younger generation and its perspective on what needs to happen to sustainably and effectively prevent and respond to anti-Semitism in the OSCE region.

Discussion questions:

- What role do governments play in addressing anti-Semitism?
- How have OSCE participating States implemented their commitment to address anti-Semitism in the past ten years? What are the most significant implementation gaps?
- What are the most pressing challenges related to anti-Semitism in the OSCE region? What impact do different manifestations of anti-Semitism have on Jewish communities and society in general? What are the concerns of the younger generation in the area of anti-Semitism?
- What mechanisms can governments put in place to consult civil society and Jewish communities on governmental policies pertinent to the struggle against anti-Semitism and how can they co-operate with, learn from and support the work undertaken by non-governmental organizations in this area?
- What political initiatives are necessary to ensure that OSCE participating States can effectively make a difference in the fight against anti-Semitism? What should OSCE participating States focus on with regard to addressing anti-Semitism in the coming decade?

17:00-17:30 Interventions from the Floor

17:30-18:00 CONCLUDING REMARKS
