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**Address by Mr. Paul Goldenberg
Programme Manager, OSCE/ODIHR Law Enforcement
Officer Training Programme for Combating Hate Crimes**

**OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human
Rights (ODIHR)**

**OSCE High Level Conference on Combating
Discrimination and Promoting Mutual Respect
and Understanding,
Session 4**

Bucharest, 08 June 2007



Excellencies, Distinguished Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am privileged to lead an international group of law enforcement executives, who are personally committed to both the concept and the practice of ensuring an effective police response to hate crimes as a region phenomenon and as a threat to security and stability. This group of police officers has been on the ground providing training and support to policing agencies in a number of countries across the OSCE region. Importantly however, our work has extended beyond just working with governments, but to the working with the NGO's that are at the heart of the OSCE as well as the critical component in any community when the police are seeking to engage the community.

The ODIHR Law Enforcement Officer Programme for Combating Hate Crime in the OSCE Region, or LEOP for short, is uniquely a police-to-police programme, focused on expert level engagement and policing organization capacity building, drawing upon an expanding international team of expertise, provides a tangible, measurable and highly visible outcome to the OSCE's ministerial commitments.

These have included, the working definition of a hate crime that we now all reference, which was the work of our team, along with the hate crime data collection template, the comprehensive methodologies for the response to hate crimes, the management of hate crime victims and witnesses, a guide for NGO engagement with the police, a National Implementation Template to help participating states with broad programmes designed to combat hate crimes, and importantly the engagement of NGO's with the police in both dialogue and police training. In order to ensure that the Programme is not a one-off training initiative, each State who implements the Programme signs a memorandum of agreement with the ODIHR, which commits it to institutionalize hate crime training within the existing national police training curriculum, as the Croatian delegation has referenced in their presentation. Next week we will travel to Zagreb to hold a follow-up meeting with the original stakeholders involved in the implementation of the programme to discuss the initial impact of the programme. The programme has been running with great success since its inception in 2004, and to date we have successfully engaged more than two dozen countries in either programme implementation or training delivery. I would like to thank the governments of Canada, Croatia, Hungary, France, Spain and the United Kingdom for committing their law enforcement officers to participate as members of the LEOP international implementation team. We would also like to thank those OSCE members that have committed funds to the promotion and advancement of this programme. I would also like to thank the American Jewish Committee for their unwavering support of this programme in both concept and practice.

Most importantly, I and all the members of the team would like to thank the OSCE and the ODIHR for their support and commitment, for when many members of society had seen the police as the problem, the ODIHR saw police as part of the solution.

I, and the LEOP International implementation team look forward to your continued support of all our efforts in these areas, and we hope to expand the number of participating states who are actively engaged in this programme.

I would like to close with my thanks to James Brown from Canada and Tim Parson from the United Kingdom, who are with me here today and have served as my co- developers and managers of the program.

Thank you.