



United States Mission to the OSCE

Implementing ODIHR's and Participating States' Tolerance Taskings after Maastricht and Berlin

As delivered by Ambassador Stephan M. Minikes
OSCE Conference on Tolerance and the Fight Against Racism, Xenophobia
and Discrimination, Brussels
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Thank you for the floor, Mr. Moderator.

On behalf of the United States, I would like to thank you and our distinguished introducers, Dr. Beate Winkler of the EUMC and Mr. Michael Head of the European Commission on Racism and Intolerance, for your remarks and for the important work all three of you do to promote tolerance.

Having the heads of ODIHR, EUMC, and ECRI moderate and introduce this workshop is exactly the sort of close coordination needed to maximize the impact of each organization's programs.

The United States fully supports ODIHR's efforts to build a tolerance program relevant to all 55 participating States. We were proud to promote the expansion of ODIHR's tolerance mandate through the July 29 PC Decision on Tolerance and the Fight against Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination.

As one of the participating States that has been very active in ODIHR's taskings in the area of tolerance, you will be happy to hear, Ambassador Strohal, that we will do our best to ensure that the Office receives the human and financial resources it requires.

I am pleased to share with Conference participants that in late August the United States made extra-budgetary contributions of 203,000 Euros and 63,500 Euros to support ODIHR's tolerance and non-discrimination program outline and freedom of religion activities.

We are impressed with ODIHR's plans to build its tolerance program and pleased to note that it is visibly moving ahead and hiring people.

We are also impressed with ODIHR's plans to establish "Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Information line," a searchable Internet database of statistics and information related to tolerance, including data on hate crimes and recommendations of best practices for promoting tolerance.

To be truly effective, however, ODIHR needs the support of all participating States not only in terms of personnel and funding, but also in terms of active dialogue and the provision of

information and statistics—and this area has been seriously lagging and needs to be addressed, now!

Participating States have freely committed to forward to ODIHR data on racism, xenophobia, discrimination and anti-Semitism and efforts to combat these scourges.

Too many, way too many, have so far failed to do so and we urge them to respond as soon as possible.

In line with our view that promoting tolerance is not only a critical human rights issue, but also is central to political stability in our increasingly diverse societies, the United States makes the following recommendations:

- First, that ODIHR tolerance activities, which are mandated by multiple Ministerial and Permanent Council Decisions, should be generally funded from the core budget and performed by personnel on the permanent staff table;
- Second, participating States should make extra-budgetary contributions as needed to support ODIHR's tolerance program;
- Third, participating States should embrace ODIHR as a resource for information on best practices and advice on combating intolerance—they have and will have excellent people ready and willing to help;
- Fourth, we urge ODIHR to be proactive in reminding the participating States of their tolerance-related commitments when it reports to the PC and HDIM on intolerance-related developments in the OSCE region;
- Fifth, ODIHR, as it is already doing and as was mandated in the July 29 PC Decision on Tolerance, should proactively build ties to NGOs working in the field of intolerance because they are key sources of information and best practices on various forms of intolerance.

Thank you, Mr. Moderator.