

OSCE High Level Conference on Tolerance and non-Discrimination
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Session 2

Intervention by the World Jewish Congress- World Jewish Diplomatic Corps

Mr. Moderator.

We have heard from Rabbi Baker, the personal representative of the OSCE Chairman in office, of the worsening situation with regards to Antisemitism in the OSCE region.

We have heard how increasingly tension in the Middle East leads to attacks on Jews around the world.

The Jews are held hostage to the relations of Israel and its neighbors, and many people use this complex situation as an excuse to criticize Israel as well as the Jews, in a way that is illegitimate, inciting and Antisemitic.

Six years ago, in April 2004, the OSCE committed to systematically collecting best practices to prevent or respond to anti-Semitism and disseminate the information throughout the OSCE area.

The 2004 Berlin Declaration contains other concrete measures such as reviewing legal systems to ensure they foster a safe environment free of anti-Semitic harassment, violence or discrimination and calls for educational programmers to combat anti-Semitism and promote remembrance of the Holocaust.

However, today, over 6 years later, the situation is not as the one envisioned in 2004, and this issue needs to be addressed.

Many OSCE countries lack sufficient documentation and mechanisms of reporting of Antisemitic incidents.

Without clear understanding of the current situation in each and every OSCE country, we will not be able to develop and implement efficient practices for combating and preventing Anti-Semitic attacks as well as vicious propaganda, which has grown dramatically in many OSCE countries in the past year.

Violent attacks against Jews worldwide more than doubled last year (2009).

According to the Roth institute at the Tel Aviv University 1,129 anti-Semitic incidents last year, ranging from vandalism and arson against Jewish targets to beatings of Jews. The figure, up from 559 incidents the previous year, was the highest since the survey began more than 20 years ago.

We are not mentioning this to discuss methods to deal with the rise of anti-Semitic sentiment in Western Europe, the reasons for it or who is to be blamed for it.

We are suggesting that dealing with the phenomenon of racist acts and Antisemitism, should begin with the proper official recording and monitoring of these acts of violence in an authentic and effective manner.

We encourage the OSCE to pressure its constituent countries to fulfill its obligation to monitor, prevent and act against any possible Anti-Semitic propaganda or actions happening in their respective countries, as well as share their practices throughout the OSCE region.

Also, sharing best practices on preventing and combating xenophobia in all respective countries and training police officers and prosecutors would be helpful to all of us in working together to produce better solutions to battle this evil phenomenon.