



## United States Mission to the OSCE

### **Plenary Session 3: Combating Anti-Semitism**

As prepared for delivery by the United States Delegation  
to the OSCE Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Conference,  
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The persistence of anti-Semitism is one of the world's most pervasive ills. More than six decades after the world recoiled at the horrors of the Holocaust, we continue to see the rise of xenophobic and anti-Semitic parties, anti-Semitic statements from political leaders, and violence against Jewish people around the world, especially when there are hostilities in the Middle East.

Hatred toward Jews often goes hand-in-hand with intolerance and discrimination against other minority groups. During a recent trip to Europe, our new Secretary of State, John Kerry, spoke of the "urgent need to promote a spirit of tolerance." We must redouble our efforts, individually and collectively, to combat anti-Semitism in all of its ugly forms. I am pleased to announce that Secretary of State Kerry has just named Ira Forman, a champion of fair treatment for all, to the position of U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism. Our new Special Envoy very much looks forward to participating in and supporting the OSCE's tolerance and non-discrimination efforts.

The OSCE must continue to shine a light on all intolerance and discrimination in the region. Anti-Semitism remains a significant problem in many OSCE countries. Overtly anti-Semitic and xenophobic political parties gained or maintained seats in parliament in Greece and Hungary. Representatives of such parties made anti-Semitic remarks in public discourse, including a call on the floor of the Hungarian Parliament for the creation of a list of Jewish government officials, a reading from the Tsarist forgery "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" in a session of the Greek Parliament, and anti-Semitic and extremist remarks by political parties leading up to the October 2012 elections in Ukraine. Many of these same political parties made conspicuous political attacks on Roma communities and immigrants, especially those from majority-Muslim countries. France's Jewish community recorded a 58 percent increase in the number of anti-Semitic attacks in 2012.

In the United Kingdom, the Community Security Trust reported 2012 to be "the third worst year on record" since it began tracking these figures in 1984. An NGO in Austria said that twice as many incidents were reported to them in 2012 compared to 2011.

In our own country, almost two-thirds of hate crimes committed each year on the basis of religion or belief are committed against Jews. Civil society groups, including Jewish organizations, are key partners in our efforts to combat discrimination and hate crimes. Just last month (April 2013), our attorney general thanked one such group for its assistance in

designing and conducting innovative training programs for law enforcement at the National Holocaust Museum, and in developing the recently published FBI Hate Crimes Guideline and Training Manual. We have brought cases seeking to protect the right of Orthodox and Hasidic Jewish communities to locate their synagogues and religious training schools in communities on the same basis and under the same conditions as other similar facilities.

Anti-Semitic acts, such as desecration of Jewish cemeteries and synagogues, defacement of Holocaust memorials, and attacks on rabbis and Jewish community members, have been reported in Germany, Hungary, Russia, and Ukraine, among other OSCE countries. Leaders of many of those countries strongly condemned those acts of anti-Semitism and took decisive measures to find and bring to justice the perpetrators of anti-Jewish criminal acts. We commend their resolve and call on everyone to follow their example.

In Sweden, anti-Semitic statements and incidents in Malmo met with vocal public rejection. In Hungary, Prime Minister Orban declared “zero tolerance” for anti-Semitism during the World Jewish Congress in Budapest. We commend the governments of Norway and Belgium, whose leaders publicly apologized for the role of their authorities in deporting Jews during World War II while under Nazi occupation. In March, Prime Minister of Greece Antonis Samaras became the first Greek PM in more than a century to visit a synagogue, where he paid his respects on the anniversary of Jewish deportation to Nazi concentration camps. His example should be adopted in all OSCE member states: governments must send a very powerful message to the younger generation, underscoring the importance of the message of "Never Again," as neo-Nazi sentiment grows across the continent.

We also applaud when civil society comes together to combat anti-Semitism. We were pleased to hear reports that Hungary’s annual March of the Living, in April, received a record turnout, with marchers facing down a group of provocateurs attempting to disrupt the march.

Unfortunately, anti-Semitic incidents during sporting events continue. Despite a recent Swedish-led centennial commemoration of Raoul Wallenberg, who saved thousands of Hungarian Jews from Hitler’s ovens, the head of the Raoul Wallenberg Foundation Ferenc Orosz was assaulted at a soccer game in Hungary. Extremist fans chanting Nazi slogans attacked him after he argued with them to stop their anti-Semitic shouts. We welcome Hungarian Foreign Minister Martonyi’s strong condemnation of the attack. In Greece, a 20-year-old soccer player for a top Athens club celebrated a game-winning goal in March by giving a Nazi salute to fans in Athens. We welcome the broad criticism of this act. The player later apologized, but he was banned for life from representing his country in all international tournaments. We must continue to stand resolute against anti-Semitism and intolerance in sports.

When Greece's Golden Dawn political party uses the Nazi salute at rallies, it is easy to see why youth could think something so reprehensible would be acceptable. We must remain committed to teaching about the dangers of intolerance and discrimination and the menace of anti-Semitic and other hatreds.

It is vital that we teach our youth about the dangers of anti-Semitism and other forms of hate. We commend the Belgian Senate for passing a resolution in January recognizing the role of

Belgian authorities during World War II in the Holocaust and indicating a desire to include Holocaust education in Belgium's curricula. Last October, Ukraine celebrated the opening of the Menorah Jewish Community Center and Holocaust Museum. In the United States, the Department of State has hosted multiple events to commemorate the Holocaust.

We strongly support the work of the OSCE and ODIHR for its efforts to address anti-Semitism, including holding a Workshop for Civil Society on Anti-Semitic Hate Crimes in the OSCE Region. Next year will mark the tenth anniversary of the seminal OSCE conference on anti-Semitism in Berlin, and we must all take action to ensure that the anniversary records concrete progress. We also commend the tireless work of Rabbi Andrew Baker, the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for Combating Anti-Semitism, and we are looking forward to the conference on the security of Jewish communities, to be held June 13 in Berlin.

Throughout the OSCE region, not excluding our own country, nationalistic movements target immigrants, as well as religious and ethnic minorities. We encourage the Chairman-in-Office to continue to focus on countering anti-Semitism, discrimination, and intolerance. As Secretary Kerry has noted, "I've never met a child...who hates anybody. Hate is taught...Anti-Semitism remains a dangerous menace. We need to continue to tell the world this is simply unacceptable. At the beginning of the 21st century, we need to come together to condemn anti-Semitism in every form."