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Conference Services

Please find attached the contribution “Charter of Values of Citizenship and Integration” by the OSCE Delegation of *Italy* with regard to the opening plenary session (*Combating discrimination and promoting mutual respect and understanding*) of the OSCE Conference on Combating Discrimination and Promoting Mutual Respect and Understanding - Follow-up to the Cordoba Conference on Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Intolerance, Romania, Bucharest, 7 - 8 June 2007.



**CHARTER OF VALUES
OF CITIZENSHIP
AND INTEGRATION**

NON – OFFICIAL TRANSLATION

ITALY AS A COMMUNITY OF PERSONS AND VALUES

Italy is one of the most ancient Countries in Europe, deeply rooted in the classical culture of Greece and Rome. Italy has developed in the perspective of Christianity that has permeated its history and, together with Judaism, has paved the way to modernity and to the acquiring of the principles of freedom and justice.

The values on which the Italian society is based are the result of the commitment of generations of men and women with different secular and religious orientations. These values are enshrined in the Italian democratic Constitution of 1947, which is the watershed after the totalitarian regimes and anti-Semitism that poisoned Europe in the Twentieth Century and persecuted the Jews and their culture.

The Italian Constitution is based upon the respect of human dignity and inspired to the principles of freedom and equality for anyone living in the Italian territory. Starting from its Constitution, Italy contributed to create a united Europe and the European institutions. The European Treaties and Conventions are contributing to the realisation of an international order based on the respect of human rights, equality and solidarity among peoples.

The geographic position of Italy, its Jewish-Christian tradition, and its free and democratic government institutions are the foundation of its receptive attitude toward foreign peoples. Located in the midst of the Mediterranean Sea, Italy has always been the crossroads of different peoples and cultures and the Italian population still bears the signs of this diversity.

All that makes up the Italian heritage, its artistic and natural beauties, together with its economic and cultural resources and its democratic institutions, are there for men and women, young people and future generations to enjoy. Our Constitutional charter protects and promotes inalienable human rights in order to support the weak, guarantee everyone's capacity building and develop work skills and moral and spiritual aptitudes.

HUMAN DIGNITY, RIGHTS AND DUTIES

1. Italy is committed to ensure that every person, since his/her arrival in Italy, is guaranteed the respect of his/her fundamental rights, regardless of his/her gender, ethnicity, religion and social condition. At the same time, though, anyone living in Italy must respect the values on which the Italian society is based, the rights of the others, and the duties of solidarity envisaged by the law. Italy grants asylum and protection to those who are persecuted or not allowed to exercise their fundamental freedoms in their countries within the limits provided for by the Italian law.
2. While envisaging rights and duties for everyone, the law provides support to those who are discriminated against and needy, especially women and minors, thus removing all obstacles hindering the full development of the person.
3. Freedom rights and social rights that the Italian legal system has developed over time must be extended to all immigrants. The right to live is guaranteed from the beginning to natural death. The right to free medical assistance is also guaranteed, when necessary. A special protection is ensured for mothers and children. The right to receive an education is guaranteed as an indispensable instrument for personal growth and social integration.
4. Men and women have equal dignity and enjoy the same rights inside and outside their own family. Italy offers to every female, male and young immigrant the possibility to integrate

while respecting one's own identity. This path can lead those who decide to settle in our Country to participate actively in the social life.

5. Immigrants may acquire Italian citizenship on the condition provided for by the relevant law. If a foreigner wants to acquire the Italian citizenship, after a period of regular residence stated by law, it is important that he/she shows a good command of the Italian language, knows the essential elements of Italian history and culture and shares the principles regulating the Italian society. Living in the same territory means to be full-fledged citizens of that land and acquire, with loyalty and coherence, common values and share responsibilities.

SOCIAL RIGHTS – WORK AND HEALTH

6. Italy protects and promotes work in all its expressions, and condemns and combats every kind of human exploitation, especially that of women and children. Work favours the development of the person and the realisation of his/her aptitudes and natural capacities.
7. Immigrants, as every Italian citizen, have the right to an adequate remuneration for their work, health and insurance benefits, sick leave and retirement according to the provisions of the law. Every job must be performed in safety conditions for the worker's health and integrity.
8. Anyone who is being harassed, discriminated against or exploited at his/her workplace may refer to the public authorities, trade unions, social assistance organisations in order to receive protection and continue performing his/her job being respected in his/her human dignity.
9. Citizens and immigrants have the right to receive treatment in public health centres. Health treatments will be provided in full respect of the person's will, dignity and taking account of his/her sensitivity. It is strictly forbidden for anyone to mutilate parts of the body, unless for medical needs.
10. Italy is committed to making sure that everyone can find a dwelling adequate to his/her needs and those of his/her family at a reasonable rent fee. Those in need or burdened by the excessive cost of their house may refer to public authorities or trade unions to be assisted and to obtain the respect of their own rights.

SOCIAL RIGHTS – SCHOOLING, EDUCATION, INFORMATION

11. Children and adolescents have the right and the duty to attend compulsory school in order to integrate in the Italian society on equal footing and become active members of it. It is the duty of all parents, either Italian or foreigner, to support their children's education, first of all by enrolling them in the compulsory school, which starts with the primary school and ends at the age of 16.
12. Teaching is aimed at building personality and promoting awareness of fundamental rights and education to the respect of the law, friendly relations with the others, the respect and benevolence for every kind of living thing. In order to favour the sharing of common values as well, the school provides teaching programmes of history, culture and the principles of the Italian and European traditions. In order to educate to social pluralism, it is also necessary to promote the knowledge of the culture and religion of the students and of their families in an inter-cultural perspective.
13. School promotes knowledge and integration of all students, the overcoming of prejudices and a common growth of the youth, thus avoiding divisions and discriminations. Teaching shall respect religious opinions and ideals of the students and their families. Religion courses may be organised on certain conditions, and students - or the students' families on their behalf - may choose to attend them.

14. On the basis of the same values, mass media shall promote the knowledge of immigration, of its cultural and religious elements, thus combating prejudice and all forms of xenophobia. The role of mass media is essential for spreading a type of cultural pluralism that respects traditions and fundamental values of the Italian society.
15. Organisations and private citizens may set up schools or organise school courses as long as they do not discriminate against students because of their ethnicity or religion and ensure that their teachings respect the general principles of education and human rights. Any type of teaching, whether it be public or private, must respect everyone's convictions and tend to unite people instead of dividing them.

FAMILY – THE NEW GENERATIONS

16. Italy recognises the rights of the family as a natural society based on marriage and considers family education as a necessary instrument for the growth of the new generations.
17. Marriage is based on equal rights and responsibilities of husband and wife and it is, therefore, monogamic. Monogamy unites the lives of two persons thus making them both responsible for what they realize together, starting from the bringing up of their children. Italy forbids polygamy, being it adverse to women's rights. This is also in line with the principles affirmed by European institutions.
18. The Italian legal system forbids all types of coercion and violence inside and outside the family and protects women's dignity in all its aspects and in every situation of social life. The basis of marriage is the freedom to choose whom to marry, that belongs to the youth; and entails the prohibition of coercion and forced marriages, or child marriages.
19. Italy protects the freedom of minors in developing their own personality, which is also made possible by meeting other young people and participating in social activities. The principle of equality cannot agree with the requests of separating men and women, boys and girls, in public services and in the workplace because of their religious beliefs.

SECULARISM AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

20. Italy is a secular Country based on complete religious freedom, both individual and collective. Every person, citizen and foreigner, and religious community is entitled to religious freedom. Religion and convictions cannot be a reason for discrimination in social life.
21. All religions are equally free before the law. The Italian secular State recognises the positive contribution of the different religions to the collectivity and has the intention to enhance the moral and spiritual legacy of each one of them. Italy promotes inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue in order to increase the respect for human dignity and contribute to overcoming prejudices and intolerance. The Italian Constitution envisages agreements between the State and the different religions to regulate their specific legal conditions.
22. The principles of freedom and the rights of the person cannot be violated in the name of whatever religion. Every type of violence, incitement to violence motivated by whatever religious reason is forbidden. Civil and penal law is the same for everyone, no matter what is the religion of the person involved, and there is only one court jurisdiction for those who are in the Italian territory.
23. Religious freedom and liberty of conscience entail the right to have or not to have a religious faith, to practice it or not, to change religion, to spread it by convincing others, to create religious associations. Worshipping is fully guaranteed and anyone can practice his/her religion as far as it does not infringe the penal code and the rights of the others.

24. The Italian legal system protects the freedom of research, criticism and debate, even in religious matters, and forbids offences to any faith or religious sentiment. According to the Italian law, different religious beliefs and convictions do not hinder marriage celebration.
25. On the basis of its religious and cultural tradition, Italy respects the symbols and the signs of all religions. No one can say to be offended by the signs and symbols of a religion different from his/her own. As established by international Charters, it is convenient to educate the youth to respect the other's religious beliefs, without finding in them elements of division.
26. In Italy there are no restrictions on people's attire, as long as it is chosen freely and it is not detrimental to his/her dignity. It is not accepted to cover the face because this impedes the person's recognition and hinders establishing relations with the others.

ITALY'S INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENT

27. In line with the afore-said principles, Italy's policy is in favour of peace and respect of all peoples in order to promote coexistence of nations, defeat war and terrorism. At the international level, Italy is committed to protect all forms of life and environmental resources of the planet.
28. Italy rejects war as an instrument to solve international controversies, weapons of mass destruction, and any form of torture or inhumane and degrading punishment. Italy condemns anti-Semitism, which has led to the genocide of the Jews, and any racist tendency aiming at dividing men and humiliating the weak. Italy rejects every expression of xenophobia, which can be expressed in turn as Islamophobia or prejudices towards populations coming from other parts of the World.
29. Together with the other European Countries, Italy abolished death penalty and works in the international fora to promote the abolition of capital punishment in the countries that still have it. The abolition of death penalty is an objective of civilisation, which makes the respect for life win over the spirit of revenge.
30. Italy is committed to solving peacefully the main international crises, especially the long-standing Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Italy's commitment has always been in favour of a solution for the coexistence of different peoples in the region, first of all Israelis and Palestinians in the context of two States and two democracies.
31. Together with the other European Countries, at the international level Italy promotes the respect of dignity and human rights everywhere, and favours the achievement of political democracy as a form of government that allows the participation of citizens in the common good and the growing respect of the person's rights.

Rome, 23rd April 2007.