

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION AT THE OSCE HIGH-LEVEL
CONFERENCE ON TOLERANCE AND NON-DISCRIMINATION
(INCLUDING HUMAN RIGHTS YOUTH EDUCATION ON
TOLERANCE AND NON-DISCRIMINATION)**

Tirana, 21 and 22 May 2013

Plenary session 3: Combating anti-Semitism

Mr. Chairperson,
Colleagues,

We are convinced that combating various forms of intolerance must remain among the OSCE's main priorities. There is no doubt of the need to develop long-term strategies for our Organization in the fight against racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance. The relevant OSCE instruments also require improvements.

The situation in this area remains a cause of serious concern. In particular, we note the flare-up of anti-Semitism in countries to the west of Vienna.

The Russian Federation, unlike most European countries, has been able to tackle this problem, as was noted by the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Rabbi Andrew Baker, during his visit to our country. We have gained experience of effectively combating anti-Semitism. In this context, we should like to note three important points: the work of law enforcement agencies, raising awareness about the Holocaust, and increasing the tolerance of the media.

Regarding improvements to the activities of law enforcement agencies, we observe that the Russian Federation has built up experience of successfully detecting and investigating hate crimes. We have a system for recording, compiling and analysing information about such crimes. The Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation oversees the application of legislation in this area.

Another important element of efforts to counter anti-Semitism and anti-Jewish sentiment is educating the public about the Holocaust. The topic of the Holocaust is included in curricula and in State educational standards. This topic is also part of initial training programmes and continuing professional development courses for educators. Particular importance is attached to prevention and to work with young people, first and foremost in secondary schools.

A third area is the development of a social climate that does not accept anti-Semitic attitudes and that is tolerant towards people of different ethnic groups and religions. In this regard, the media play a special role. In order to encourage print and electronic media to take an interest in fostering public tolerance and preventing racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and aggressive nationalism, the Federal Agency for Press and Mass Communications, *Rospechat*, provides assistance to media projects aimed at preserving the cultural identities of the peoples of the Russian Federation, overcoming xenophobia and hostility towards migrants, as well as campaigning against terrorism, extremism, nationalism, and racial and religious intolerance. Specifically, in 2012, State assistance amounting to more than 61 million roubles (2 million United States dollars) was provided to media projects of this type.

Rospechat also ran a nationwide competition, *Yedinenie* (Unity), for television films and programmes. More than 200 works from 30 Russian regions were submitted, of which 11 were awarded prizes and awards. With the support of the Ministry of Regional Development of the Russian Federation, a nationwide media competition for the best examples of reporting on topics of interaction between ethnic groups, *Smirotvorets* (Media Peacekeeper), has been held annually since 2008.

We should also like to draw particular attention to the need to counter the dissemination of racist and xenophobic materials in the media and online. In the Russian Federation, Internet resources are monitored on an ongoing basis. A list of materials classified as extremist by the courts is permanently available on the website of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation.

We believe that monitoring, as well as combating hate rhetoric in the media and the use of the media and the Internet for the dissemination of radical ideologies and views, including racism, anti-Semitism, aggressive nationalism and neo-Nazism, should, in accordance with OSCE commitments, be a subject of close attention both for participating States and for OSCE institutions.

We attach particular importance to establishing co-operative ties between the authorities, religious organizations and civil society representatives. The Russian Federation has a series of mechanisms in place which make it possible to exploit the experience and potential of religious associations and non-governmental organizations and to discuss current issues concerned with maintaining tolerance and developing interfaith dialogue. Among these are the Presidential Council for Co-operation with Religious Organizations and the Governmental Commission for the Affairs of Religious Associations. The Inter-Religious Council of Russia, made up of the heads of the country's main religions, was also set up at the initiative of religious leaders.

A total of 276 Jewish organizations are registered in Russia, most of which are concentrated around three major associations: the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia, the Congress of Jewish Religious Communities and Organizations in Russia, and the Russian Jewish Congress. All of these bodies actively co-operate with staff from federal and regional executive agencies and participate in the work of the relevant commissions and councils.

The Russian Federation will continue in future to use all mechanisms, including international ones, to counter anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance. Russia was one of the co-sponsors of a United Nations General Assembly resolution to establish International Holocaust Remembrance Day, which was first marked on 27 January 2006. At a General Assembly session in January 2007, Russia co-sponsored a resolution expressing determination not to allow Holocaust denial.

It is our view that active dialogue on this issue at various international forums, including the OSCE, and sharing positive experiences of problem solving will make it possible to counter growing religious and ethnic intolerance.

Thank you for your attention.