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United States Mission to the OSCE

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**Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's  
Address at the OSCE Anti-  
Semitism Conference in Vienna**

June 19, 2003

I congratulate the OSCE on having this conference and having this conference at this time; it is very timely. I thank President Bush and Secretary Powell for asking me to head the delegation, and it's a very distinguished delegation, including Congressman Alcee Hastings of Florida, Congressman Chris Smith of New Jersey, and many other Americans who are deeply concerned about this issue.

It is strange to be standing here discussing anti-Semitism a few hundred yards from where Hitler announced his annexation of Austria. It's hard to believe that we're discussing this topic so many years later and after so many lessons of history have not been learned; and I am very hopeful that rather than just discussing anti-Semitism, we are actually going to do something about it, and take action. If action had been taken in the 1930s, then millions and millions of people would have lived. Words didn't suffice to save their lives, and words aren't going to suffice to turn the tide of anti-Semitism, which is once again growing in Europe and in other parts of the world.

So I'm hopeful, as are the President and the State Department, that what will emerge from this conference is action, things that we're going to follow up on. America certainly has had its experiences with anti-Semitism, and we continue not to be immune from anti-Semitism. We've also had in our history our own very regrettable experiences with prejudice. To me it seems that the burden that we carry in America is the burden of racism, which we've come a long way in overcoming, but have not overcome completely. But the burden that is suffered in Europe is the burden of anti-Semitism, the oldest, most pernicious prejudice that we have. It goes back at least two thousand years, and it has shown its ugly head in almost every single generation. And if we can reverse anti-Semitism, then we are going to be able to deal with so many of the other forms of bigotry and prejudice which also affect us.

America, as I said, hasn't had a perfect history. But because we are such a diverse country, and because we all have to live together, maybe we've had some experience at least in being able to deal with this.

I was privileged to be the Mayor of New York City for eight years. It's the most diverse city in the world. It is impossible to spend more than a day in New York City and not meet people, talk to people, see people who look different from you, talk different from you, act differently, and its diversity is really its strength. I was also the Mayor of New York City on the worst day in its history. We saw the worst excesses of hatred manifest themselves on the attack on the World Trade Center, often seen

as an attack on New York City, or an attack on America. But it was actually an attack on all of your countries.

The citizens of over eighty-three different countries died at the World Trade Center, in one of our worst experiences of hatred, and it should unite us rather than divide us. It should teach us that if we don't deal with hatred at an early stage, we're all vulnerable.

I thought the best contribution that I could make is to suggest eight concrete things that we can do, that we can follow up on, so that we don't just talk about this, but that we actually do something about it.

First: What I would recommend is that each one of your countries keep hate crime statistics, in great detail. Even before you pass a law -- which in some cases you already have -- and in many cases you do not have, which would be my second recommendation: You should keep accurate - or as accurate as you can - statistics of the number of incidents of anti-Semitism, the number of incidents of anti-ethnic attacks, racism, other forms of hate crimes, bias acts, and so on. It is enormously important that you keep those statistics, because it is the only way in which you're going to be able to figure out where you have to combat prejudice, where you have to combat crime, and where ultimately the educational efforts are necessary to turn this around. We began doing this in New York City twelve years ago, and several years ago Congress passed a law that requires that it be done throughout the United States.

I've brought with me an example of how it's done, and I'm more than willing to share it with you. Many times as Mayor of New York City, these statistics were enormously helpful to me, but I'll tell you one time that was perhaps the most dramatic.

On September 11, when we were attacked in a horrific and terrible way, after we re-established New York City government and were able to organize the recovery effort, my thoughts immediately turned to the possibility that there would be a significant reaction on the part of New Yorkers against people who are Arab, or appeared Arab. That would be just a terrible example for us to set, having just been victimized. What I did was, I was able to turn to these statistics, and I was able to talk to the people of New York City, tell them that this was a reaction that we did not want, and a reaction that would just be participating in the very same kind of group blame that led to the attack on us. Rather than just talking to them, I was then able to monitor, over a three or four-week period, the number of acts that actually were occurring - of attacks, both physical and verbal, against people in the Arab community, as well as anti-Semitic acts that might be a response to that; and I was able to see where our exhortations were working, where our enforcement was working, and where they weren't. I believe that that contributed to some extent in not having any kind of incident in the City of New York that would have really in many ways been just the worst possible thing that could have occurred, in that we would have acted in a similar way to the people that attacked us.

So the keeping of hate crime statistics is enormously important, as well as passing legislation that allows you to deal with and to penalize hate crimes. It also is important so that you don't hide your head in the sand, because there is a real tendency to do that. There have been recent incidents of anti-Semitic acts in different parts of Europe, in which the response has been - by the head of state in one case -

that anti-Semitism doesn't exist. The reality is: Anti-Semitism does exist, and to hide your head in the sand and to make believe that it doesn't is just going to mean that Anti-Semitism is going to be much more difficult to deal with, and so are all of those other forms of prejudice, and hatred, and racism, that you have to deal with. Ultimately, if Europe cannot reverse anti-Semitism, then it is going to be very hard for Europe to achieve its dream of being a modern country, a modern player in the world scene.

This is a burden that has held Europe back for two millennia, and it's a burden that can be overcome, if it is faced with laws, education, and the keeping of statistics. Furthermore, you should commit yourselves to reviewing those statistics on a regular basis. It's not just a matter of keeping them and putting them in a drawer somewhere, but to have regular meetings in which the performance of each of our countries is reviewed. We see how we're doing, and we can focus then on remedies that are necessary to reverse this. Keeping it behind closed doors will mean that it will just get worse. Putting it out in the open and examining it, on an annual basis and then on a regular basis, through this organization, would be a tremendous contribution to reversing it in a very practical and important way.

\*\* (Mayor Giuliani was able to complete his eight-point suggestions during his intervention in a later session):

1. Compile Hate Crime statistics in a uniform fashion
2. Encourage all participating states to pass Hate Crime legislation
3. Establish regular meetings to analyze the data and annual meeting to examine the overall performance
4. Set up educational programs in the all the participating states about Anti-Semitism
5. Discipline political debate so that disagreements over Israel and Palestine don't slip over into a demonizing attack on the Jewish people
6. Refute hate-filled lies in an early stage
7. Remember the Holocaust accurately; resist any revisionist attempt to downplay its significance
8. Set up groups to respond to Anti-Semitic acts, that include members of Islamic communities and other communities