

OSCE High-Level Conference on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination

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**Contribution by Mr. Szabolcs Takács, Deputy State Secretary for Global Affairs, MFA
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Mr Chairperson, Distinguished Guests,

We are extremely glad to see that Albania is hosting such an important event. Indeed, the fight against intolerance and discrimination is one of the most important tasks of the OSCE and its member states. We look at the initiative of Albania as the recognition of the importance of this task. Her contribution is to ensure that OSCE participating states work hand-in-hand in fighting against phenomena of discrimination, racism, xenophobia and aggressive nationalism.

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Hungary pays great attention to tackle intolerance. Here and now I would like to inform you on how we fight against hatred and intolerance against two particular groups of our society: the Jewish communities and the Roma. You will see that youth education and awareness-raising are central elements of our policy and action.

Hungary is the home of the largest Jewish community in Central Europe. Their flourishing culture has been an integral part of our history and has also been living its renaissance in the past couple of years. The Jewish Summer Festival, for example, has been organised every year since 1998, with growing numbers of participants that exceeded 120 thousand in 2010. Every year, more and more students arrive from Israel to Hungary for their university studies.

We find it very important and useful that we share with all of you the ways, means and the tools we use to fulfil the relevant OSCE commitments.

- a) The Hungarian Government feels that it is its moral and political obligation to consistently confront the dictatorships of the 20th century, every time pointing out the atrocities they committed. We have introduced a Holocaust Remembrance Day in every Hungarian school and have established the House of Terror Museum. Almost ten years have passed since the Holocaust Memorial Centre has begun operating in Budapest. 2014 is the 70th anniversary of the annihilation of the Hungarian Jews, in view of which the Hungarian Government has formed the Hungarian Holocaust 2014 Committee. Its

members include the President of the Federation of the Jewish Communities in Hungary, as well as the Ambassadors of the United States, Israel, Germany and Austria.

- b) We also work in cooperation with ODIHR (Organization of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights – Warsaw) whose professional experience and disponibility are very useful and adaptable for us. With the help of the ODIHR we received educational supplies (workbooks and digital materials) on the historical contribution of the Jewish community in Hungary and also on combating anti-Semitism. The materials were carefully studied by the Ministry of Human Resources and its relevant research institute. As a result of their findings, the use of the teaching materials has officially been recommended and they were sent to all schools and educational institutions. These will be used on memorial days, school ceremonies and in history classes.

Unfortunately, anti-Semitic incidents and crimes do happen also in Hungary – but the political leadership gives clear responses to them. As Rabbi Baker pointed out yesterday nationalistic parties pose security challenges to Jewish communities. The Hungarian Prime Minister shared this statement when he said in a recent interview given at the margin of the World Jewish Congress that party Jobbik represents a threat to democracy and to the peaceful coexistence. It is on the basis of this recognition that he declared *a policy of zero tolerance towards anti-Semitism*. Hungary condemns and rejects any form of hatred against the Hungarian Jewry, which has also been recognised by our international partners. We go beyond condemning such actions and firmly steps up against any form of crime, and takes a stand against the mass events of neo-fascist and paramilitary organisations, having the firm intention to sell them off.

- c) The recently adopted fourth amendment of our Fundamental Law is consolidating the legal basis of banning neo-fascist marches, paramilitary organisations or any phenomenon attempting to commit hate crimes. It claims that the exercise of one's right to free expression cannot be aimed at violating the dignity of any national, ethnic, racial or religious group.
- d) We have also launched a monitoring system to collect, store, and follow up on the governmental responses and judiciary consequences of all violent actions against persons and objects. The operation of this monitoring system is based on the one run by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. It also monitors the anti-Semitic remarks amongst public figures.

Mr Chairperson,

Whilst we fight against anti-Semitism, we are actively creating new initiatives. We do raise public awareness – especially the young generation’s – what happened to the Jewish community in different phases of history. Besides the already mentioned Holocaust Remembrance Day, the Holocaust Memorial Centre or the educational cooperation with ODIHR, it was the present government who declared 2012 as the *Raoul Wallenberg Year* that initiated numerous commemorative programmes in Hungary and, with the contribution of our embassies, in many countries abroad.

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Speaking about the situation of Roma communities it has been recognised that countries must combat the intolerance and discrimination against the Roma not only on the national level, but also via international cooperation. I would like to recall that it was Hungary who initiated the adoption of an *EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies* in April 2011 during her Presidency of the EU Council. In accordance with that, a *National Social Inclusion Strategy* was also adopted in Hungary, with the aspiration of tangibly improve the situation of Roma people by the end of the current decade. The implementation of the programmes contained in the Strategy has already been started.

- a) As a specificity of the Hungarian Strategy, a Framework Agreement between the Hungarian Government and the National Roma Self-Government has been concluded, with the double aim of improving the living conditions and facilitating the social inclusion of the Roma people. The following targets are to be realised by 2015:
 - The involvement of 100.000 unemployed Roma in the labour market;
 - The realisation of a comprehensive education reform which offers the possibility for 20.000 young Roma people to earn a marketable vocation in one of the 50 vocational schools that all take part in the inclusion programme;
 - The education support of 10.000 young Roma people enrolled in high schools;
 - Facilitating the preparation of 5000 talented Roma to take part in higher education;
 - A vocational training of 50.000 Roma adults for marketable vocations and the involvement of 80.000 additional Roma grown-ups who will take part in programmes improving such basic skills as writing, reading, calculation and informatics;
 - Participation of 150.000 Roma in preventive health screening.

- b) Recognising that Roma women are suffering from multiple disadvantages, the Hungarian Strategy pays special attention to the situation of this group. Therefore, the main priorities of the strategy in this field are promoting Roma women's inclusion in education awareness-raising and employment.
- c) In order to promote Roma inclusion, model programmes aimed at improving healthcare, housing and related community services have been introduced. In the upcoming years, several projects of the same kind will be implemented with the help of the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund. In February 2012, the Hungarian Government launched a comprehensive programme entitled "*Trust and Work*" to ameliorate the segregated Roma settlement structures. Those settlements that are inhabited by people living in segregated areas and in deep poverty may apply for EUR 15.7 Million (4.7 Billion HUF) from EU resources.
- d) In order to further contribute to the improvement of the situation of Roma communities in Hungary, the Government published tenders that exceeded the amount of EUR 33 Million (10 Billion HUF). This sum will be used for different aims like the creation of Roma internship and educational programmes, Roma professional collegiums, child welfare institutions, and for supporting students with disadvantages.
- e) Thanks to the good cooperation with ODIHR, the Hungarian Police hosted the Office's experts for training called TACHLE, which was aimed to train the officers to fight against hate crimes and to strengthen their preparedness. I cannot but underline the usefulness of this type of training in contributing to the implementation of OSCE commitments in this field.

Mr Chairperson,

We are glad to note that Senior Adviser on Roma and Sinti Mr Andrzej Mirga works intensively on the summary of the implementation of the *OSCE Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti*. We are confident that the conclusions he draws and the good practices he summarizes will lead us closer to the full implementation of OSCE commitments.

Thank you Mr Chairperson.