



## **Coalition Europe Recommendations for the Civil Society Preparatory Meeting for the OSCE High Level Conference on Combating Discrimination and Promoting Mutual Respect and Understanding**

We express thanks to the Chairmanship and the ODIHR for initiating this Civil Society Preparatory Meeting to prepare recommendations for the OSCE High Level Conference on Combating Discrimination and Promoting Mutual Respect and Understanding.

As a pan-European coalition of Human Rights NGOs, we have launched a campaign to combat hate crimes in the OSCE region and find several areas to be of particular concern in the fight to combat hate crimes in the OSCE Region. Please find below our areas of concern and our recommendations.

### **AREAS OF CONCERN**

#### Existence of Hate Crime

- The continuing existence of hate crimes in all OSCE participating states
- The alarming rise of hate-motivated violence in certain parts of the OSCE region

#### Actions of Governmental Agents

- The continuing collusion and complicity of government agents in the perpetration of hate crimes
- The lack of proper training for criminal justice professionals who deal with hate victims
- The pervasive institutional prejudices that obstruct the recording, investigation and prosecution of hate crimes

#### State Failure

- The failure of participating States to recognize all forms of hate crime
- The failure of participating States to fulfill the commitments they have made to combat hate-motivated violence

#### Stakeholder Support

- The lack of support services and self-help initiatives for victims of hate crimes
- The lack of training, resources and funding for community organizations and leaders
- The lack of acknowledgement of the role of NGOs in combating hate crimes
- The lack of financial support, dialogue and cooperation of governments with NGOs
- The lack of involvement of stakeholders at all levels of hate crime prevention

### **RECOMMENDATIONS TO PARTICIPATING STATES**

- We remind participating States of their obligation to comply with international standards relevant to discrimination and hate-motivated violence.
- We urge participating states to review and amend where necessary, national legislation in order to identify and fill gaps in the protection of victims of hate crimes.
- We urge participating states to publicly acknowledge the gravity of hate crimes and to condemn their perpetration.
- We recommend that participating States raise awareness of hate crimes among the public with all available means, in particular through the media and through the funding and creation of educational programs.
- We recommend that participating States establish mandatory official data collection mechanisms at the European, national and local level that will assess the scope, nature and location of hate crimes and hate-related problems and that will allow for more accurate official responses.
- We stress that data on hate crimes be comprehensive and include of all victims of hate-motivated violence.

- We recommend that participating states should use the ODIHR working definition to develop a minimum standard for hate crimes monitoring.
- We remind participating states of their commitment to provide hate crimes statistics on a regular basis and to respond to violent manifestations of intolerance.
- We recommend that participating States put in place measures to increase the rate of reporting, prosecution and sanctions against perpetrators of hate crimes.
- We recommend that participating States sensitize and train professionals who deal with victims of hate crimes, including law enforcement officials, prosecutors and judges, so that they can adequately recognize hate-motivated elements of criminal acts to accurately record complaints.
- We urge law enforcement agencies and specialized bodies to publicize records on hate crimes and to provide NGOs with comprehensive and timely information on hate crimes.
- We recommend that participating states support the development of self-help initiatives for victims of hate crimes that are easily accessible on a local level.
- We recommend that participating States provide training and resources and funding for local community organizations and community leaders to enable them to address the problem directly.
- We urge participating States to provide victims and their communities with adequate support and services including provision of information and advice, legal aid, psycho-social support and ensure that such services are accessible and funded.
- We recommend that participating States acknowledge the role of NGOs involved in combating hate crimes and establish active dialogue and cooperation with these NGOs, including financial support.
- We encourage participating States to establish coordinated programs for preventing hate crimes at local, national and European level.
- We urge participating States to actively include relevant stakeholders, including civil society actors and hate crimes victims in all International, National, regional and local actions to combat hate crimes.
- We urge participating States to further strengthen the development of coalitions and networks in combating all forms of hate crimes.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS TO CIVIL SOCIETY**

- We stress the importance of Civil Society to collect comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data.
- We urge Civil Society to encourage national and community leaders and opinion makers to publicly acknowledge the gravity of hate crimes and to condemn their perpetration.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE OSCE**

- We urge the OSCE to continue to call upon States to implement the commitments they have made to monitor and combat hate crimes.
- We recommend that the OSCE Personal Representatives on Discrimination and Xenophobia, Anti-semitism and Discrimination against Muslims play an active role in raising awareness of the existence, monitoring and reporting of hate-motivated violence in the OSCE region.
- We urge the OSCE to support civil society initiatives and projects addressing hate crimes, in particular when providing data collection, reporting and information and assistance to victims.
- We urge the OSCE to recognize the role of coalitions and networks in combating all forms of hate and recommend that the OSCE further strengthen the development of NGO coalitions and networks.