



**OSCE
HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON
TOLERANCE AND NON-DISCRIMINATION
Astana, 29-30 June 2010**

ENGLISH only

Part II. The way forward: Preventing and responding to intolerance, including hate crimes. Promoting mutual respect and understanding, including through gender perspective

Section V. The role of education to promote mutual understanding and respect for diversity according to the existing OSCE commitments

Thank you very much Mr. Moderator

My name is Pervin Hayrullah (Chairoula). I am representing Western Thrace Minority University Graduates Association.

Very briefly I would like to highlight the role of education to promote mutual understanding.

I would like to give an example from my country, Greece. In Greece a couple of years ago, the Minister of Education, Ms Giannakou attempted to change the contents of history books, but they still imply some prejudiced data against "Turks" and this causes a racist tendency among the majority people. The school children at a very young age are still taught that the eastern neighbour is an enemy.

Ladies and gentlemen, to prevent biased motivated crimes and to promote mutual understanding the biased items should be removed from the textbooks.

Mr. Moderator in this context we recommend that:

Governments should counter prejudices and misinterpretation in general society, and their efforts should in particular be targeted at the younger generation in order to build up their understanding of the need for tolerance and the importance of reconciliation and peaceful coexistence.

Governments should promote educational and awareness-raising programmes for combating intolerant discourse, and they should encourage the promotion of tolerance, dialogue, respect and mutual understanding through the text-books and media, including the internet.

Contact Person: Pervin Hayrullah (Chairoula)
Member of WTMUGA