

**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

Closing plenary session

Mr. Chairperson,
Colleagues,

The discussion over the past two days on a wide range of issues concerned with countering religious and ethnic intolerance, xenophobia, racism, anti-Semitism, aggressive nationalism and neo-Nazism has shown both the need for such dialogue and the different approaches that remain to solving the aforementioned problems.

We note that the situation in this sphere poses a serious challenge to stability and security in the OSCE area. It requires a pooling of our efforts and the use of best practices. Precautionary measures and preventative action should be a priority here.

We need to fully understand the processes taking place and analyse the reasons for and possible consequences of the dissemination of radical ideologies and sentiments if we are to achieve positive results. We take the position that there are no guarantees against repeating the tragedies of the twentieth century. As the world and the information space become more globalized, one cannot rely solely on the self-awareness of society and its immunity to these phenomena. We are convinced of the need to step up the relevant work with the public, media and civil society institutions. National legislation and law enforcement practice require further improvement. OSCE participating States must strictly observe their international commitments in this area.

The shaping of public opinion, preventative measures and the education of young people, first and foremost in educational institutions, all deserve particular attention. In this connection, it is important to take into account the traditional cultural and moral values that prevail in society, the protection of public morality and the inadmissibility of discrimination through the promotion of the rights and interests of a single social group without due consideration being given to the rights and interests of others. It is essential to protect children and young people from harmful content on the Internet. We believe that it is necessary to continue to develop dialogue within the OSCE on traditional religious, moral and cultural values.

Work to preserve the historical truth about the Holocaust is revered. It is carried out in Russia and in many other OSCE participating States. Those who fought on the side of the anti-Hitler coalition, as well as the Soviet soldiers who lost their lives liberating Europe from fascism and saved not only Europeans but also many other peoples from total destruction, deserve the same treatment and support. It is of the utmost importance to remember the lessons of the Second World War and not to permit a shift in our moral compass or attempts to whitewash Nazism and once again raise the banners of a theory of racial hatred and supremacy.

There is also still much to be done to protect national minorities and ethnic groups from discrimination. Elevating to State policy the idea that within a country one nation is superior to another, or artificially dividing society into first and second class citizens, is inadmissible.

The media play no small role in countering intolerance and teaching respect for religious, ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity. Fighting against hate speech in the media is one of the OSCE's priority tasks.

We call on the OSCE participating States to withdraw their reservations to Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and to ensure that their national legislation takes its provisions into account. Criminal law should include provisions under which motives or purposes connected with racism or xenophobia constitute aggravating circumstances when a crime is committed, and all measures should be taken to conduct an effective investigation and bring to justice those persons accused of hate crimes.

We believe it essential that:

- The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights step up its work to monitor manifestations of racism and aggressive nationalism and, in particular, organize an annual expert seminar to share experience in fighting racism, aggressive nationalism and neo-Nazism;
- The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media pay particular attention to preventing the use of media outlets and the Internet to promote racism, religious hatred, xenophobia and aggressive nationalism;
- The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities pay particular attention to the inadmissibility of discrimination against national and linguistic minorities and the persistence of mass statelessness.

Thank you for your attention.