



# HELSINKI COMMISSION BRIEFING

---

UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON  
SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

## Testimony :: Hon. Sam Brownback

[Print](#)

### Chairman - Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

Last summer a speech of mine was presented in Seville, Spain, at a preparatory NGO meeting for the OSCE Cordoba Conference on Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Intolerance. I was honored to be able to address that distinguished gathering of religious leaders and human rights advocates. As I noted in my taped address, Cordoba was an opportunity for governments to report on the specific measures they have undertaken to implement relevant OSCE commitments on combating anti-Semitism and other forms of racism. Regrettably, implementation was, and remains, uneven.

However, while government follow-through could be better, our Helsinki Commission briefing today will highlight how the OSCE Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights has continued to forge ahead.

One area is Holocaust education, which is a critical component in any campaign to fight anti-Semitism. By teaching the lessons of history properly, we honor the memory of those brave souls who were murdered by the Nazis and the lives of those who survived. I salute the hard work of Dr. Kathrin Meyer and her colleagues at ODIHR for developing guidelines for educators on commemoration for Holocaust Remembrance Days. I also look forward to the completion of ODIHR's teacher guidelines to combat anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance, which will be a natural companion to this first work. I am glad she will be presenting at our briefing today.

In addition, ODIHR has broken new ground in developing police training materials that help ensure law enforcement officials understand how to categorize crimes and the importance of working with affected communities to prevent further acts of violence. Paul Goldenberg and his team are to be commended for their hard work. If police are silent in the face of anti-Semitic violence, or equivocate when anti-Semitic incidents occur, it will only encourage the perpetrators of these vile deeds to strike again with greater viciousness. I am equally pleased that Paul will be speaking.

I commend ODIHR for its good work and encourage all participating States to utilize these resources. The upcoming tolerance meetings, the first in Almaty in June, will provide additional opportunities for participating States to demonstrate their commitment to these important issues.

As we are learning today in our struggle to defeat contemporary forms of genocide, such as in Darfur, the forces of evil are not easily defeated. However, as Chairman of the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, I will continue to raise the importance of vigilance when I meet other government leaders and parliamentarians. I believe elected leaders and government officials have a responsibility to speak out against acts of violence, ensuring that police vigorously combat these manifestations and that educators teach our children the lessons of the Holocaust.