



Prof. Gert Weisskirchen
Member of the German Parliament
Spokesman on Foreign Affairs of SPD-Group
Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office
of the OSCE on Combating Antisemitism

Berlin Office:
Platz der Republik · D-11011 Berlin
☎ +49 30 227-7 35 03
☎ +49 30 227-7 65 03
✉ gert.weisskirchen@bundestag.de

internet:
<http://www.gert-weisskirchen.de>

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Since 2005 I have been appointed by the respective Chairman-in-Office to the position of Personal Representative on Combating Anti-Semitism. Now, in my third year of this mandate, it is time to take stock of the current situation, point to successes and positive trends, make critical assessments, and then look ahead to the future.

OSCE conference in Bucharest

The mandates of the Personal Representatives of the Chairman-in-Office were created as a consequence of OSCE anti-Semitism conferences held in Vienna, Berlin, Paris, Brussels, and Cordoba. A further OSCE conference was held in Bucharest from 7 to 8 June 2007: the High-Level Conference on Combating Discrimination and Promoting Mutual Respect and Understanding. It was preceded by a NGO meeting.

The Bucharest Declaration contains the following passage:

"Recognizing its unique and historic character, [the participating States] condemn anti-Semitism without reservation, whether expressed in a traditional manner or through new forms and manifestations. [They] Reiterate previous OSCE declarations that international developments or political issues, including in Israel or anywhere else, can never justify anti-Semitism."

Prior to that the NGOs formulated nine recommendations and made reference in this context to the special role of education and parliaments. I strongly support all of these recommendations and in particular the appeal issued by the NGOs to take action against expressions of racial hatred and anti-Semitic discourse on the Internet. I have listed these recommendations for you at the end of this part.

As of June 2007 a total of 48 separate commitments had been made by OSCE participating States in reference to the fight against anti-Semitism. These commitments are necessary. There is a need now to strengthen the political will to implement these commitments in all OSCE countries. Many countries have been quite exemplary in this area. Unfortunately there are other countries whose efforts have not been sufficient.

Current state of affairs

Despite the considerable efforts that have been undertaken in many participating States and the numerous conferences that have been held, there have been recurrent manifestations of anti-Semitism in many countries of the OSCE region. This includes countries whose governments and public institutions have had an excellent record in the fight against anti-Semitism. In Germany, for instance, a rabbi from the Jewish congregation in Frankfurt was injured in a knife attack. In addition to egregious acts of violence like this one, there are often other, much more subtle forms of anti-Semitism that are a cause for concern. What is dangerous, for instance, are attempts to make anti-Semitic attitudes predominant in public discourse.

One of my objectives is to create an awareness of different forms of anti-Semitic discourse. I can give two examples of this from my work.

In May 2007 the British University and College Union (UCU) called for an anti-Israeli boycott. Other unions followed this example with similar actions. I issued a press release immediately condemning this call for a boycott. I travelled to London in July to talk with the unions in a further attempt to raise public awareness of this matter.

There was a disquieting development in Croatia. The popular singer Marko Perkovic, alias "Thompson", started showing various symbols from the Ustasha era at concerts. During a country visit to Croatia in 2007 I was able to talk to a number of government representatives as well as representatives of the Jewish communities. The objective here was to reach a consensus with my Croatian interlocutors that nationalistic tendencies of any kind need to be nipped in the bud.

I wrote a letter to all the heads of government of the OSCE participating States in which I proposed that an inquiry similar to the British All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry be carried out. This was also recommended by the NGOs in Bucharest. I enclosed the Magenta Foundation report on the 1st International Conference on Academic Anti-Semitism and the ODIHR-FRA Working Definition of Anti-Semitism. In the meantime I have received answers from some of the governments. Most of them use the working definition of anti-Semitism that was jointly formulated by ODIHR and the Fundamental Rights Agency. Unfortunately none of the reply letters has made any concrete statements to the effect that plans are being made to use an instrument similar to the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry.

CiO Personal Representative mandates

The role of CiO Personal Representatives encompasses three areas:

1. They implement the decisions taken by the participating states at OSCE Conferences.
2. They draw attention to both progress and setbacks in the implementation process.
3. They encourage efforts by civil society groups and promote national and transnational cooperation between social, parliamentary and governmental actors.

It will hardly be possible to carry out these tasks in a satisfactory manner with the current mandate structure. The Personal Representative mandates need to be equipped with further instruments if they are to be able to do justice to these functions. At the moment there is a considerable gap between what would actually be required and what exists in reality and this gap needs to be closed.

It would be nice if there were more support from the OSCE participating States. This year only one country visit has been agreed thus far, i.e. to Croatia. Unfortunately there have been no further invitations from other countries. Contacts and meetings with NGOs and representatives of the Jewish communities in the various countries is very important in terms of doing justice to the CiO Personal Representative mandates.

Prior to the appointment of the Personal Representatives the following six areas were declared to be in particular need of attention:

- 1) *Data collection*
- 2) *Legislation*
- 3) *Law enforcement*
- 4) *Education*
- 5) *Media*
- 6) *Parliaments*

Progress has been made over the past few years in most of these areas.

In November 2006 OSCE ODIHR held a Tolerance Implementation Meeting in Vienna on the subject of Data Collection. NGOs formulated various recommendations which I have listed in my written statement. I want to focus here on one of the most important recommendation the NGOs formulated:

We remind participating States of their commitment to provide hate crime statistics on a regular basis and to respond to violent manifestations of intolerance;

Various tools provided by OSCE ODIHR have proven to be very helpful. The OSCE ODIHR Law Enforcement Officer Programme has already been implemented in some countries and is in either the planning or preparatory stages in others. ODIHR is also working on a training programme for public prosecutors.

Teaching materials on the subject of anti-Semitism have been developed for a number of countries and are now in use there.

A code should be developed together with authors, journalists, and publicists that would constitute a voluntary moral and autonomous agreement to show tolerance and recognize the rights of minorities. A project of this kind has already been discussed with the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media.

The OSCE PA can be used as a laboratory for testing new legislative approaches. National parliaments should be encouraged to strengthen their ability to monitor the results of decisions in the OSCE. An instrument comparable to the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry could be employed in other countries as well. It would be a good thing if OSCE PA national delegations were to promote an initiative of this kind in their parliaments.

Outlook

Many parliaments have been exemplary in their efforts to fight anti-Semitism and recognize the scale of the problem. Nonetheless, there has been growing acceptance of anti-Semitic statements and stereotypes in some countries, as was observed in the autumn of 2006.

As such, it is of crucial importance that civil society be included in the fight against anti-Semitism. We cannot afford to lose those who are in the middle of the political spectrum. It must be guaranteed that social initiatives and projects will receive the support they need to be able to do their work successfully. It is a task for the national parliaments to see to it that there is sufficient funding for civil society projects of this kind.

We need to work towards an exchange of information on promising methods of fighting anti-Semitism. We are currently able to say that there are a number of particularly successful projects that could be implemented in other countries.

In Sweden, for instance, there is an exit programme for radical neo-Nazis. Over a period of many years case workers have succeeded in getting numerous individuals out of the right-wing extremist scene. No one is given up for lost.

In France official data on anti-Semitic violence and other manifestations of anti-Semitism is compared with data received from NGOs. Since NGOs do not use the same strict criteria for data collection, a more precise picture emerges as to the scale of anti-Semitic crimes.

The appointment of special envoys responsible for dealing with the subject of anti-Semitism and relations with Jewish communities results in the problem being seen more clearly on the part of executive government as well. There are special envoys of this kind in the United States, France, Poland, Spain, and Germany.

The following countries stand out for their efforts to fight anti-Semitism through education by taking part in the ODIHR Anne Frank House Project and developing relevant teaching materials: Germany, Croatia, Denmark, Spain, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, and Ukraine. I have actively supported this ODIHR programme from the outset and I am pleased by the success it has had in many countries.

As has already been mentioned, the CiO Personal Representative mandates need to be expanded so that they can be carried out in a satisfactory manner. The provision of physical and human resources would be helpful in making our work more effective.

I am certain that we will continue to have strong support for carrying on the fight against anti-Semitism.