

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION AT THE OSCE SUPPLEMENTARY HUMAN
DIMENSION MEETING ON FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF:
ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THE SPECIFIC CHALLENGES OF
COMBATING ANTI-SEMITISM AND INTOLERANCE AND
DISCRIMINATION AGAINST CHRISTIANS, MUSLIMS, AND
MEMBERS OF OTHER RELIGIONS**

Vienna, 22 and 23 June 2017

**Session III: Challenges of combating anti-Semitism and intolerance and
discrimination against Christians, Muslims and members of other religions**

Mr. Moderator,
Distinguished experts,

Combating racism, racial discrimination, anti-Semitism and xenophobia, and the related intolerance, is one of the most important areas of Russia's work in the various international human rights forums of the United Nations, the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

Every year, the Russian Federation submits for review to the United Nations General Assembly a draft resolution on combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. It was adopted most recently on 19 December 2016 at the plenary meeting of the 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly.

In that document, specifically, deep concern is expressed about the glorification of the Nazi movement and former members of the *Waffen SS* organization, the holding of related public demonstrations, and about the increased number of seats in parliaments occupied by representatives of extremist parties of a racist or xenophobic character. It is noted that in some countries persistent attempts are being made to elevate those who fought against the anti-Hitler coalition or collaborated with the Nazi movement to the rank of national heroes and participants in national liberation movements, which is blatantly offensive to those who liberated the world from the horrors of National Socialism. Any denial of or attempt to deny the Holocaust is particularly condemned.

It is also worth noting that in the frank and lively discussion at the first international conference on anti-Semitism – “Protecting the future” – held in Moscow in November last year, the participants observed the absence of any significant manifestations of anti-Semitism

in Russian society, unlike in Western countries, where a dangerous increase in anti-Semitism can be seen against a background of economic problems and migration flows.

In that connection, we should like to stress once again that we stand ready to work with the United Nations, other organizations, academic circles and non-governmental organizations on drawing up a “working definition” of anti-Semitism.

In view of the significant numbers of Christians, Muslims and Jews living in the Russian Federation, we consider that the international co-operation in all three areas on combating anti-Semitism, intolerance and discrimination towards Christians and Muslims should be implemented in a comprehensive and balanced way on the basis of the consensus principle.

In that connection, we believe that it would be useful to launch a discussion within the Organization, involving the OSCE participating States, executive structures, non-governmental organizations and academic circles on elaborating separate “working definitions” of intolerance and discrimination against Muslims and intolerance and discrimination against Christians.

Thank you for your attention.