

OSCE Human Dimension Meeting 2017

Thursday 14th September 2017

Working Session 7

Statement by the Community Security Trust

My organisation has been closely involved in helping to prepare and deliver 'Words into Action', the new OSCE programme designed to combat antisemitism by promoting education, interfaith work and advice on security.

OSCE Participating States will be only too aware that the Jewish communities in France, Belgium and Denmark have suffered lethal terrorist attacks in recent years. Moreover other life-threatening attacks have been foiled, in the UK and France.

Despite a small reduction last year, the number of non-fatal incidents in which individual Jews or Jewish institutions are targeted, continues to rise.

Now the OSCE has developed a well-researched programme, based on best practice and compiled by educationalists and law enforcement agencies, and using the knowledge and experience of Jewish community security groups.

OSCE Participating States have indicated that they understand that antisemitism and terrorism threatens Jews, and continued Jewish life in Europe. But also, that terrorist attacks undermines a state's cohesion and democratic way of life. In that way, attacking Jewish citizens must also be seen as an attack on the state and its foundations.

If a state cannot protect all its citizens, whatever their religious background, then it has failed in its primary purpose.

So far, only a handful of OSCE Participating States have agreed to engage in the Words into Action programme.

Many others should now do so.