



all different, all equal :
from principle to practice

European contribution to the world conference against
RACISM, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, XENOPHOBIA
and **RELATED INTOLERANCE**

Strasbourg, 11 - 13 October 2000

EUROCONF
(2000) 1 final

**Political Declaration adopted by
Ministers of Council of Europe member States
on Friday 13 October 2000
at the concluding session
of the European Conference against Racism**

13 October 2000

Political Declaration

**WE, THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE EUROPEAN CONFERENCE
“ALL DIFFERENT ALL EQUAL: FROM PRINCIPLE TO PRACTICE”,
EUROPEAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM,
RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, XENOPHOBIA AND RELATED INTOLERANCE,**

STRASBOURG, 11 – 13 OCTOBER 2000

Reaffirm that:

Europe is a community of shared values, multicultural in its past, present and future; tolerance guarantees Europe's pluralist and open society, in which cultural diversity is promoted;

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and with a potential to contribute constructively to the development and well-being of our societies;

All persons are equal before the law and are entitled to the equal protection of the law;

Full and effective implementation of all human rights without any discrimination or distinction, as enshrined in European and other international human rights instruments, must be secured;

Racism and racial discrimination are serious violations of human rights in the contemporary world and must be combated by all lawful means;

Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance threaten democratic societies and their fundamental values;

Stability and peace in Europe and throughout the world can only be built on tolerance and respect for diversity;

Equal dignity of all human beings and the rule of law must be respected and equality of opportunity promoted;

The fight against marginalisation and social exclusion must be continued;

All initiatives aiming at greater political, social and cultural participation, especially of persons belonging to vulnerable groups, should be encouraged;

All States must draw lessons from manifestations of racism in Europe and in other regions of the world;

Suffering caused by slavery or which arose from colonialism must be remembered;

All States must reject ethnic and religious cleansing and genocide, in Europe and in other regions of the world, and work together to prevent their recurrence;

The Holocaust must never be forgotten.

We are conscious of and alarmed at:

The continued and violent occurrence of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, antisemitism and related intolerance, including contemporary forms of slavery, in Europe and in other regions of the world, despite efforts undertaken by the international community and national governments ;

The fact that such occurrences target, notably on grounds related to language, religion or national or ethnic origin, persons such as migrants, asylum-seekers, refugees, displaced persons, non-nationals, indigenous peoples; or, on grounds related to belonging to minorities, persons such as Roma/Gypsies and Travellers;

The related degrading treatment and discriminatory practices;

The existence of multiple discrimination;

The persistence and development of aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism which can lead to serious and large-scale violations of human rights;

The recent examples of ethnic and religious cleansing in Europe and in other regions of the world;

The continued occurrence, in many forms, of intolerance on grounds of religion and belief;

The dangers of indifference to manifestations of racism;

The hostility expressed by certain media and politicians towards vulnerable groups;

The support for political parties and organisations disseminating xenophobic ideology in Europe and in other regions of the world;

The use of new technologies of mass communication for the dissemination of racist messages.

We note with satisfaction:

The contribution of the United Nations, in particular through the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the action of its High Commissioner for Human Rights in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;

The key role of the Council of Europe in combating racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance as affirmed at the highest political level and demonstrated by:

- the European Convention on Human Rights and its additional Protocols, as well as the European Court of Human Rights and its case law;
- the adoption by the Committee of Ministers of Protocol No. 12 to the Convention, which introduces a general prohibition of discrimination;
- the Organisation's other human rights and legal instruments providing for equality and non-discrimination, including the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities;
- the action of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI);
- the contribution of the Commissioner for Human Rights;

The European Union's commitment to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance across the range of its policies, notably through the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, the anti-discrimination regulations in the Treaty establishing the European Community and other relevant EC legislation, in particular Council Directive 2000/43 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, as well as global activities in this regard;

The results of the "All different all equal" European Youth Campaign against Racism and of the European Year against Racism;

The contribution of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), including the activities of its High Commissioner on National Minorities, its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and its Representative on Freedom of the Media;

The contribution of non-governmental organisations and other actors of civil society to combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance throughout Europe;

The efforts made at national and local levels to take preventive action to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, especially in promoting human rights education, including intercultural education.

We therefore commit ourselves:

To take further steps, having in mind in particular the General Conclusions of the European Conference, to prevent and eliminate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, antisemitism and related intolerance, and to monitor and evaluate such action on a regular basis. These shall include:

legal measures

- to implement fully and effectively at national level the relevant universal and European human rights instruments and to consider signing and ratifying , as soon as, and wherever, possible without reservations, those instruments for which such action has not yet been taken;
- to adopt and implement, wherever necessary, national legislation and administrative measures that expressly and specifically counter racism and prohibit racial discrimination in all spheres of public life;
- to guarantee equality to all without discrimination as to origin, by ensuring equality of opportunity;
- to assure to all victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance adequate information, support and national legal, administrative and judicial remedies;
- to bring to justice those responsible for racist acts and the violence to which they give rise, ensuring the prohibition of racial discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to freedom of expression;
- to combat all forms of expression which incite racial hatred as well as to take action against the dissemination of such material in the media in general and on the internet in particular;

policy measures

- to establish national policies and action plans to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, antisemitism and related intolerance, including through the creation of independent specialised national institutions with competence in this field, or reinforcing such existing institutions;
- to pay specific attention to the treatment of persons belonging to vulnerable groups and to persons who suffer discrimination on multiple grounds;
- to integrate a gender perspective in policies and action to combat racism with a view to empowering women belonging to vulnerable groups to claim respect for their rights in all spheres of public and private life;
- to create conditions for the promotion and protection of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of persons belonging to national minorities where such minorities exist;
- to counter social exclusion and marginalisation, in particular by providing equal access to education, employment and housing;

- to ensure the development of specific measures, which actively involve the host society and encourage respect for cultural diversity, to promote fair treatment for non-nationals and to facilitate their integration into social, cultural, political and economic life;
- to pay increased attention to the non-discriminatory treatment of non-nationals detained by public authorities;
- to reflect on the effective access of all members of the community, including members of vulnerable groups, to the decision-making processes in society, in particular at local level;
- to develop effective policies and implementation mechanisms and exchange good practices for the full achievement of equality for Roma/Gypsies and Travellers;

educational and training measures:

- to give particular attention to education and awareness-raising in all sectors of society to promote a climate of tolerance, respect for human rights and cultural diversity, including introducing and strengthening such measures among young people;
- to ensure that adequate training and awareness-raising programmes are implemented for public officials such as the police and other law enforcement officers, judges, prosecutors, personnel of the prison system and of the armed forces, customs and immigration officers as well as teachers and health and social welfare services personnel;

To combat ethnic and religious cleansing in Europe and in other regions of the world;

To support non-governmental organisations, strengthening the dialogue with them, with the social partners and other actors in civil society and to involve them more closely in elaborating and implementing policies and programmes designed to combat racism and xenophobia;

To consider how best to reinforce European bodies active in combating racism, discrimination and related intolerance, in particular the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance;

To enhance co-operation between relevant European and international institutions so as mutually to reinforce their respective action to combat racism.