EMISCO Statement

Warsaw Human Dimension Conference 2026
Contribution to Plenary Session 4: Tolerance and Non-Discrimination I
Thursday, 8 October 2026 | 10:30-13:00

Mr. Moderator,

For more than two decades, we have built standards around equality, human dignity and fundamental rights. Yet racist, antisemitic and Islamophobic narratives are becoming increasingly organised and normalised.

Our concern is the growing gap between commitment and consequence.

Governments and political majorities may change. Our commitment to human rights must not.

Too often, in the West of Vienna, Islam, Muslims and immigration are blamed for complex social and economic problems. Through repetition and insinuation, prejudice becomes normalised.

Words have consequences. Hate speech can make discrimination acceptable, fuel hostility and contribute to hate crimes and violence.

Women and children often bear a heavy burden. Muslim women whose faith is visible face barriers to education, employment and public life. Fear, trauma and exclusion can affect families across generations.

Prevention must begin before hatred becomes violence.

EMISCO calls for concrete action.

Participating States must effectively investigate anti-Muslim hate crimes, provide remedies for discrimination and ensure that women are never forced to choose between their faith and their ambitions.

Police, prosecutors and judges need training on anti-Muslim bias and victims' needs.

We encourage ODIHR to strengthen systematic country-by-country monitoring of anti-Muslim hatred, discrimination and restrictions on freedom of religion or belief.

Regular, transparent assessments would identify regression, measure progress and help protect fundamental rights from changing political priorities.

Finally, Muslim civil society - particularly women and young people - must be treated not merely as victims, but as active partners in preventing discrimination, hatred and hate crimes.

This must be achieved through genuine, independent civil society engagement, not through the creation of government-organized NGOs (GONGOs) designed to conceal the realities on the ground, distort the voices of victims, and present a misleading picture of the human rights situation.

Our message is simple:

Governments change.
Political debates change.
Human dignity must not.

Do not let hatred become normal.
Do not wait until words become violence.