

International Conference



“Minority Protection at a Crossroads”

Venue: Alandica Conference Venue, Mariehamn, Åland Islands

Time and date: Tuesday 31 March 2015 at 9.00 – 16.00

Organizer: The Åland Islands Peace Institute, with support from the Council of Europe and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

Conference Programme

9.00 - 9.05 Opening of the conference and welcoming words by Ms. Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark, Director of the Åland Islands Peace Institute

9.05 – 9.10 Welcoming words by Ms. Marja Ruotanen, Director of Human Dignity and Equality, Council of Europe

9.10- 9.20 General introduction to the thematic of the conference by Ms. Maria Ochoa-Llido, Head of Anti-discrimination and Social Cohesion Department, Council of Europe

SESSION I

9.20 – 9.40 Conceptual keynote: The Framework Convention 20 years on: challenges in minority protection in an ever changing Europe

Mr. Francesco Palermo, President, Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

“The Framework Convention 20 years on: achievements, challenges and ways forward”

9.40 – 10.20 Panel discussion: Minority protection in Europe at a crossroads

Moderator: Mr. Gunnar Jansson, Member of the Åland Parliament

Ms. Petra Roter, University of Ljubljana, 1st Vice President Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities: Minority protection in the context of nationalism and Europeanisation

Ms. Nina Nordström, Director, Human Rights Policy Unit, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland: Challenges in promoting diversity and minority rights in Europe today

Mr. Johan Häggman, multilingualism expert: What the European Union can and should do for minority language

10.20 – 10.50 Discussion

10.50 – 11.20 Coffee

SESSION II

11.20 – 11.40 Conceptual keynote: Minority protection and conflict prevention

Ms. Astrid Thors, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities

“The High Commissioner on National Minorities approach to conflicts involving minorities”

11.40 - 12.25 Panel discussion: Minority protection in changing contexts

Moderator: Ms. Maria Ochoa-Llido, Head of Anti-discrimination and Social Cohesion Department, Council of Europe

Mr. Antti Korkeakivi, Chief, Indigenous Peoples and Minorities Section, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva: Advancing minority protection in Europe through creative use of human rights mechanisms in changing contexts

Mr. Benedikt Harzl, Dr. iur., University of Graz: Challenges of minority protection in Georgia

Ms. Natalia Mirimanova, Ph.D., adviser to international organizations in the domain of peacebuilding: Minority concerns in Crimea and Ukraine

Ms. Sirpa Rautio, Director, Finnish Human Rights Centre: Possibilities and challenges for national human rights institutions and international organisations

12.25 – 12.55 Discussion

13.00 -14.30 Lunch

Offered by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Ms. Astrid Thors

SESSION III

14.30 – 14.50 Conceptual keynote on the role of monitoring organs promoting minority protection in Europe

Mr. Stefan Oeter, Professor of International Law, University of Hamburg and former president of the Expert Committee of the Language Charter

14.50 – 15.35 Panel discussion: The independence of monitoring bodies at times of resistance to minority and human rights

Moderator: Ambassador Drahoslav Štefánek, Chair to the Rapporteur Group on Human Rights of the Committee of Ministers, Council of Europe

Mr. Alan Phillips, former President of the ACFC (2006 -10)

Ms. Vesna Crnić-Grotić, Chair, Committee of Experts for the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages

Ms. Päivi Kaukoranta, Director General for Legal Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

Ambassador Anders Rönquist, Director General for Legal Affairs, Swedish MFA: "The interplay between monitoring organs and policy-making at times of resistance to human rights and protection of minorities."

15.35 - 15.50 Concluding notes and final general discussion

Moderator: Ms. Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark

Mr. Rainer Hofmann, professor for international law, University of Frankfurt, former President of the ACFC (1998-2004 and 2010-2012)

15.50 – 16.00 Closing of the conference

Ms. Marja Ruotanen, Director of Human Dignity and Equality, Council of Europe and Ms. Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark, Director of the Åland Islands Peace Institute