

Invitation to the participants of the  
**OSCE - Mediterranean Partner Countries' Civil Society Conference**

Breakfast Discussion on  
Tolerance and Non-Discrimination in Democratic Transitions

Monday, 5 December 2011, 09:00-10:30

Times of transition constitute important challenges for societies. When societies are undergoing significant political, social, and economic transformations, there are risks that existing inter-religious, inter-ethnic or inter-cultural animosities evolve into patterns of discrimination and of violence. Minorities are particularly at risk: they may be the targets of bias-motivated acts of violence. Authorities have to respond quickly and in a robust manner if they want to prevent further escalation.

Since the revolutions in the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation took place, there have been instances of intolerance based on bias, some leading to a considerable number of deaths. A large number of societies in the OSCE region faced or are still facing similar challenges and have engaged in processes aimed at building societies underpinned by the principle of equality, and the values of mutual respect and understanding.

The side event will give participants the opportunity to exchange information and share their experiences with a view to identifying good practices in preventing and responding to acts of bias-motivated violence, and promoting mutual respect and understanding. Particular attention will be given to dialogue and educational initiatives, as well as the development of the media.