

**Effective Education Policies for the Promotion of Human Rights, Democracy  
and the Rule of Law**

**24th Meeting of the Council of Europe Network of Co-ordinators for Education for Democratic  
Citizenship and Human Rights Education**

**(Strasbourg, 11-12 February 2016)**

**Speech by Mr Emil VALEV,  
Deputy Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the Council of Europe**

It is a great pleasure for me to address you this morning and extend a warm welcome to you to the Council of Europe.

I do so on behalf of Ambassador Todorova, the Bulgarian Permanent Representative and Chair of the Ministers' Deputies. She has asked me to convey her apologies for being unable to attend your meeting today. However, she will be present tomorrow and will participate in your work for the closing session.

For many years, the promotion of education has been a Council of Europe priority. It is one of the focal areas of activity for achieving the key objectives of our Organisation: respect for human rights, the rule of law and democracy.

The Bulgarian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers therefore attaches great importance to education and has included it amongst its priorities. In this way we hope to help ensure that the young generations, and more generally all learners, are made aware of and are trained in the values of the Council of Europe.

In view of the serious phenomena of extremism and radicalisation we are currently facing at world level, this objective is more vital than ever for our Organisation and for all member states.

At its ministerial session in May 2015, the Committee of Ministers adopted an Action Plan on the fight against violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism, which underlines the particular role of education in developing an understanding of "democratic culture" and consolidating the foundations of living together in our multicultural societies. The Bulgarian Chairmanship fully supports this Action Plan.

In this connection, the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education offers member states a key framework of reference. It sets out the main principles to be applied in laying the foundations of a cohesive democratic society which is respectful of human rights, equal opportunities and diversity.

In this context and as co-ordinators for education for democratic citizenship and human rights education, you play a key role as an interface between your respective national bodies and your international partners. You have the essential task of disseminating and promoting the work carried out by the Council of Europe. And it is you who in return inform our Organisation and your counterparts in Europe about developments in the field of education for democratic citizenship and human rights education in your own countries.

On behalf of the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers, I would like to thank you and assure you that we are highly appreciative of the work you do. I wish you a rewarding conference and some very fruitful discussions.

Thank you for your attention.