

**ECRI's Round Table in Oslo, Norway
Organised in Co-operation with the
Norwegian Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud (LDO)**

Concluding remarks

**presented by Aslak Syse
member of ECRI**

The main aim of this round table - to bring all the stakeholders together to hold a genuine exchange of views - has been achieved; it has also been very interesting because our discussions have been frank and instructive. I would like to thank all the participants and organisers for today's lively, open and very constructive discussions.

We have used ECRI's last report on Norway as a starting point for this round table. We are very happy to hear that some of the recommendations ECRI made in this report have already been fully implemented. Let me just mention the Government's new LGBT action plan and the Act on changing legal gender. In addition, the new public procurement procedure gives room to strengthen equality and non-discrimination. The Government's strategy against hate speech is almost finished. Statistics on hate crime will be improved.

I am sure that the discussions throughout the day have helped and will continue to help to fine-tune some of these ongoing initiatives.

In session II we discussed key proposals for strengthening the Equality Ombud and the Equality Tribunal even further. For ECRI, this reorganisation of powers between the Equality Ombudsman (LDO) and the Equality Tribunal (LDN) is crucial and I strongly suggest reading through ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 2 and No_7 and the need to provide efficient legal assistance to victims including representation before the courts and the possibility to finance strategic litigation.

In session III we received important input for improving the fight against hate crime in Norway and I am pleased that the police plan to spread good practices.

In session IV we saw that hate speech must be countered on various levels including the political level. Prevention and self-regulation are as important as the application of civil and criminal law.

I hope that we will carefully use this important input for improving our action towards equal rights and equality in Norway.

None of us were born with knowledge about equality and the unacceptability of racism, hate crime, hate speech and discrimination. Therefore, we need to continue improving, on the one hand, human rights education, and, on the other hand, the tools to use when human rights, and in particular the right to equality, are violated.

I hope that everyone in this room will contribute to this task.