

171ST INTERNATIONAL SENIOR SEMINAR
VISITING EXPERTS' PAPERS

Group 3

**BEST PRACTICES FOR SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF CRIME MOTIVATED BY
INTOLERANCE AND DISCRIMINATION**

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Report Summary

Group 3 reviewed the current situation of intolerance crime in the participating countries and identified best practices to support victims. Intolerance crimes target persons and groups based on ethnicity, race, disability, religious beliefs, etc. and include gender-based violence. To counter these crimes, the group stressed the need to protect victims and witnesses throughout all stages of the criminal justice process.

In response to intolerance crimes, a number of approaches used in various jurisdictions were reported: legislative measures to protect victims and witnesses, special laws for gender-based violence, the creation of special victim and witness protection agencies and specific police units for gender-based violence, and measures to protect victims and witness throughout the judicial process, including when giving testimony. While victim and witness protection measures do encourage cooperation with law enforcement authorities, the group found that cooperation can be limited due to lack of confidence in the criminal justice system, fear of revictimization, the attitude of the victims (including economic dependency, community norms, etc.), and insufficient levels of victim support.

To ensure sufficient support for victims and witnesses, their unique needs during the pre-trial, trial and post-trial stages must be addressed. Throughout all stages, the confidentiality of victims' identities should be maintained in order to prevent revictimization. During the pre-trial stage, measures to facilitate reporting of crime include providing interpreters, psychological and legal support, providing hotlines for reporting crimes and utilization of specialized units for handling intolerance crimes. To facilitate police investigations, the group recommended establishing safehouses and interview rooms suitable to victims, judicial and police protection, and the provision of financial support to victims. During the trial stage, the group recommended a number of measures including the use of video-link and witness screening equipment, providing personal and legal support, etc. During the post-trial stage, the group stressed the importance of ensuring adequate victim compensation. Further, the group recommended providing psychological support, safehouses, and keeping the victim appropriately informed of the status of the offender's conviction and sentence.