



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Secretary General Lamberto Zannier

Opening Remarks

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Check against delivery

Excellencies,
Ambassadors,
Distinguished Participants,

Also for my part I would like to welcome all participants, especially those who travelled from capitals to join us for this event, and I congratulate the Ukrainian Chairmanship for the successful organization of this important Conference. I am particularly grateful to the other keynote speakers for their thought-provoking opening remarks.

The overall theme of this year's ASRC – *'Towards Helsinki+40, Finding Common Responses to Security Threats and Challenges'* – is particularly timely. Last December's Ministerial Council Decision requires us to step up our common engagement on a broad range of security issues – those where there are common views but also those with divergence. This is happening.

During my remarks, I would like to expose two strands - the Security Day events and the executive structures' implementation work relevant to the Conference's agenda. Both strands significantly contribute to advancing work in implementing the Astana Summit vision of an OSCE security community, including in the context of finding common responses to security threats and challenges.

Security Days:

The Security Days initiative, launched last year, is progressing well. As an informal platform through which we can engage with the civil society and academic institutions, it is providing worthwhile contributions to the wider debate on the role and agenda of the OSCE as a security organization. This year there have been three Security Day events. In March, one was held on arms control and another on engagement with Afghanistan.

The third event was held just prior to the ASRC, focussing on '*OSCE in the 21st Century*'; included 7 sessions and over 35 eminent panellists. There was active participation of about 400 people, with an interesting mix of representatives from OSCE delegations, media, academia, think tanks, students and other elements of the civil society. The event was web-streamed live and there was interaction via social media, such as Twitter.

The agenda reflected many issues that we will discuss in the coming days and I will present some relevant ideas under the relevant sections of my presentation. Among more general points that are especially relevant for this Conference, I would like to highlight the following: Threats and challenges to security are increasingly inter-linked, often touching upon multiple areas of concern. They affect relations between governments and global actors, affect people in different ways, creating a need for new approaches, a mix of hard and soft security, and involve more directly the role of societies and actions by the people.

The OSCE is not a niche organization, it does not operate in a narrow, specialized field. Rather its strength, and hence its place in a security system, lies in bringing together all actors in a broad framework, such as this Conference, and in having an inclusive dialogue and a comprehensive approach to security.

Some of the most serious threats stem from outside the OSCE area but have an impact within our Organization. This presents challenges on how to address the issues affecting our neighborhood and also raises the issue of how exportable is the OSCE approach and model. Finally, and linking back to the Conference's theme, the identification of threats, threat perceptions and solutions plays a key role in reaching a common understanding, co-operation and a shared vision. Indeed, the mere identification process is in itself a confidence-building measure.

TNT:

Five important decisions have been adopted last year in the field of TNTs: on confidence-building measures related to the use of information and communication technologies, on combating illicit drugs, on police-related activities, on the fight against terrorism, and on broader OSCE efforts to address TNTs. Progress has been made to implement these PC decisions and efforts in this regard should continue.

In anti-terrorism, for example, the Secretariat has provided regular updates on the ‘Status in the OSCE Area of the Universal Anti-Terrorism Conventions and Protocols’, has held roundtables in Pristina and Bishkek on the ‘Terrorist Bombing Convention’, has produced an online publication ‘Women and Terrorist Radicalization’ and is finalizing a handbook on critical energy infrastructure protection.

In the police-related area, we have held regional trainings for South Eastern Europe and Central Asia on precursor determination, finalized the ‘Guidebook on Police Reform within the Framework of Criminal Justice System Reform’, and are preparing the OSCE-wide Conference on countering the threat of illicit drugs (to be held 25-26 July) and the Annual Police Experts Meeting to be held this fall in Bucharest.

In the cyber/ICT security area, the Secretariat continues to support the Informal Working Group in the development of the first set of confidence- building measures related to the use of information and communication technologies.

In the field of border security and management, we have assessed the implementation of the 2005 Border Security and Management Concept. In addition to the Annual meeting of the Borders National Focal Point Network we have developed a joint anti-corruption training curriculum for border and customs agencies of Moldova and Ukraine and are working on a self-assessment tool for nations to increase their preparedness for cross-border implications of natural and man-made disasters and crises. And of course constant attention is devoted to supporting the activities of our Staff College in Dushanbe.

Let me conclude this chapter with a few considerations from the security days discussion on TNT:

TNTs, once on the margins, are now among the key security challenges faced by the OSCE and its participating States. It is, however, difficult to assess their individual impact, also from a national, sub-regional and OSCE-wide perspective, and to prioritize objectives and develop policies addressing their sources, often outside the OSCE area. This is due to a regional fragmentation of TNTs, with different countries facing different sets of TNTs, and with differing perceptions on the threats posed and the right solutions. This is also because different countries are differently affected by them.

For this reason, it is hard to say whether TNTs are having a unifying effect on the OSCE agenda. On the other hand, all States face them and all want to combat them. No State or international/regional organization can do this alone, the OSCE included. This presents an opportunity to really work together, and to do so both at the political and the technical level.

Conflict Cycle:

Implementation of MC Decision No. 3/11 on ‘Elements of the Conflict Cycle’ has continued to be a particular focus, with substantial progress made in priority areas explicitly mentioned in the decision. This has been covered in my report to the Permanent Council last July, extensively discussed at the meetings of the informal ‘Open-ended Working Group on the Conflict Cycle’, and captured in a table on the status of implementation, recently distributed to participating States.

In early warning, the Conflict Prevention Centre has assumed the role and functions as the OSCE-wide early warning focal point, a network of early warning focal points has been established in OSCE executive structures, and workshops have been held to share information and strengthen capacities. This has streamlined and systematized better what we were already doing.

In early action, the focus has been on setting up the operational tools to strengthen the OSCE’s preparedness to translate decisions quickly into actions on the ground. We are finalizing procedures to enable the swift, temporary deployment of experienced OSCE staff as first responders. Also, a modest virtual pool of equipment has been established. Meanwhile discussions continue on ensuring quick, flexible access to contingency funding.

In dialogue facilitation, mediation and mediation support, an internal framework on further strengthening mediation support has been distributed by the CPC as the focal point, and coaching has been provided for high-level OSCE mediators and field operation staff.

On other aspects, various initiatives have been undertaken to implement UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and a protection checklist on forced displacement, developed with UNHCR, has been finalized. Also, last December a Security Day event was held on *Reconciliation in the OSCE Area*. It revealed some controversies, but also exposed that mutual misperceptions, divisive memories and the inability to overcome historical legacies feed into the spiral of distrust. Reconciliation is a way to break the cycle of enmity by creating, or re-creating, constructive political and societal relationships, thus making it possible to move forward. We should redouble our efforts to encourage reconciliation through many of our activities. The current OSCE '*Security Community*' magazine, available outside, has some good articles on the topic.

Finally, during the Security Days, it was pointed out that the OSCE, in addressing conflicts, can only do as much as participating states allow it to do and equip it to do – as is the case also with other international actors – and progress becomes increasingly difficult when the parties to the conflict do not show readiness to make the necessary, often very difficult, decisions. This unwillingness to try is in turn often compounded by institutionalised inflexibility.

Some argued that, while the OSCE has limited resources at its disposal, it has a unique comprehensive approach and a strong ability to mobilize and bring together different sets of actors - governments, parliaments, representatives from the civil society, religious and community leaders, academia – to address issues that the political level alone struggles to deal with. Others added that the OSCE has had and continues to have more successes than failures. Such successes were founded on strong political leadership by the Chairmanship supported by the SG, operational preparedness, mobilization of all its resources, and creative solutions. The difficulty has been, however, to quantify the successes and better engage the political level to garner stronger political and financial support.

Arms Control & CSBMs:

On Arms Control, an OSCE Security Day event on was held in early March, bringing together more than 200 participants from OSCE countries and research institutes to discuss the challenges as well as future prospects for conventional arms control in Europe. Many interesting points were raised; I would encourage you to read the report. To pick out just a few salient points:

There was common concern about the state of affairs in conventional arms control in Europe, and agreement by many that the current challenges to arms control have led to an erosion of trust and confidence in the military field across the OSCE.

Stability should be pursued maintaining real transparency and verification and by restricting military capabilities according to the principle of reasonable sufficiency and strategic restraint. At the same time arms control cannot provide for political solutions to territorial disputes. Therefore, linkages to regional conflicts and situations should be avoided. Regional stability would also depend on how local arms races are prevented and on whether external actors exercise restraint.

A parallel approach in updating/negotiating the conventional arms control agreement and the Vienna Document could be envisaged by some in order to use the inherent flexibility between and among them in order to accommodate new items.

On the one hand, creating a completely new regime was seen by most as impractical. On the other, some considered that future conventional arms control could envision a framework agreement containing major objectives, parameters and principles of conventional arms control complemented by a system of regional/sub-regional agreements outlining limitations, verification information exchanges.

The Secretariat continued to facilitate the implementation of other FSC-related commitments. For example, the OSCE supported the implementation and outreach of the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security through the organization of specific seminars not only in South East Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, but also in the Mediterranean and North African regions.

The Conflict Prevention Centre, together with the UNSCR 1540 Committee Experts and UNODA, assisted a dozen countries in the drafting National Implementation Action Plans on UNSCR 1540, which resulted in three adopted national action plans, namely in Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Serbia.

A number of OSCE-wide and regional events were organized to build national capacity on export and brokering controls on military and dual-use goods, to enhance information sharing between licensing authorities and customs agencies, raise-awareness of UNSCR 1540, and enhance the effectiveness of tracing illicit SALW. The Conflict Prevention Centre also continued the implementation of projects on SALW and conventional ammunition stockpile management, security, and destruction in over 10 OSCE pS, including the largest OSCE ExB project on melange elimination in Ukraine.

Afghanistan:

An OSCE Security Day event on '*International Community Engagement with Afghanistan and Central Asian States – Challenges, Synergies, Possible Responses and the OSCE Role*' was held on 12th March, bringing together nearly 300 participants who, along with over 20 eminent panellists, discussed the current trends and challenges facing the OSCE participating States in Central Asia and Afghanistan, particularly in light of the ongoing Afghan security transition and the 2014 political transition.

Many interesting points were raised. Let me mention a few.

Regional leadership and co-operation during and after the transition period needs to be at the core of the efforts of the international community. There are obligations from the international community to continue to support the region, but the countries of the region must also show that they are taking the necessary steps to ensure that the progress that has been made in the past decade is not reversed. This also includes addressing existing challenges, including those related to energy, territorial and border disputes, interethnic relations and water management, all of which present challenges to regional co-operation and undermines the trust among key actors.

The security situation in Afghanistan is directly linked to security across the region. Support for the Afghan Security Forces, and in particular for police, border guards, counter-narcotics officers and counter-terrorism experts, must be continued and efforts in this area should be

coordinated among all international actors. Duplication of efforts is not always a negative factor since the need for capacity building is so great and there is room for multiple actors in the same area, as long as the efforts are closely coordinated with the leading organizations in the field.

Given the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security and its unique position as a platform for dialogue among all concerned stakeholders, the Organization should continue to explore opportunities for co-operation among all relevant actors, including in the fields of electoral support, economic development, training of law enforcement and in good governance.

Meanwhile, OSCE assistance to Afghanistan has been demonstrated in concrete, pragmatic OSCE projects fully supported by the Afghan authorities, including some on Patrol Programming and Leadership, BMSC, Promoting bilateral and regional co-operation on border security and management, and one has been completed (Development of women entrepreneurship through SME and small handicraft business support). In parallel, experts from the Afghan government and civil society are familiarising themselves with OSCE norms, values and commitments and are able to contribute their expertise to our events.

Mr Chairman,

Time precludes me giving a more detailed overview of the Security Day events and the OSCE executive structures' implementation work relevant to this Conference. In fact, much related work is being -and continues to be- conducted by OSCE institutions, field operations and units within the Secretariat. More detailed information is regularly provided to all relevant committees.

I look forward to fruitful discussions, in this room or in the margins of the conference over the next two days.