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**Address by Dr. Solomon Passy,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria,  
Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE,  
to the Security Council  
(United Nations, New York, 7 May 2004)**

**Mr. President,  
Secretary General,  
Distinguished Members of the Security Council,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a pleasure to be back in the Security Council. As you will recall, Bulgaria was a non-permanent member in 2002 and 2003. That was a busy time for my country. But there has been no pause since then as at the time when we rotated out of the Security Council we had already assumed the Chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

I congratulate Pakistan on its assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council and commend the successful leadership of the German Presidency in April.

In my remarks today I will focus on the role of the OSCE and what the Chairmanship of the OSCE is engaged in nowadays. The low key, soft security nature of OSCE work rarely gains public attention, but that does not diminish its importance. The presence of the Chairman-in-Office in the Security Council is yet another proof to that.

As you know, since 1992 the OSCE, at the time - Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe is a **regional arrangement** in the sense of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. Close and expanding cooperation with UN, EU, NATO and other regional organizations is a priority for the Bulgarian Chairmanship. With its specific expertise and unique activities that we implement from Vancouver to Vladivostok OSCE is a special partner of the UN.

The roots of our Organization go back more than thirty years to the CSCE and the Helsinki process, which meant so much to me and my generation as we struggled to win basic human rights in what were then communist countries. I believe that the OSCE has much to be proud of in its relatively short history. The CSCE was a catalyst for ending the Cold War by keeping the focus on human rights, encouraging greater openness and transparency, stressing arms control and uniting Europe.

The OSCE as the largest security organization in Europe helped to end civil war in Tajikistan, constrained conflict in the Republic of Macedonia, Moldova and Georgia, and defused inter-ethnic conflict in a number of States. With the UN, the OSCE continues to play a major role in building civil society in post-conflict Bosnia and Kosovo.

With its unique comprehensive approach to security – stressing human rights and economic development as well as political-military issues – the OSCE remains the primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation in its region.

Our 18 OSCE field missions, especially in countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia, represent an invaluable on-the-ground presence which can help us deal more effectively with new threats to security.

Building on the efforts of its predecessors, addressing and preventing the most salient threats to security is high priority for the Bulgarian OSCE Chairmanship.

Take for example **counter-terrorism**. The OSCE is looking at practical issues like travel document security, the threat of man-portable shoulder-fired missiles to civilian aviation, and improving ways of stopping the financing of terrorism. Work is being done to destroy ammunition stockpiles to eliminate the possibility of these landing up in the wrong hands. The OSCE works closely with the UN Counter Terrorism Committee. Indeed, in March the OSCE hosted, in cooperation with the UN Office for Drugs and Crime, the 3<sup>rd</sup> special meeting of the UNCTC with international, regional and sub-regional organizations.

We do not limit ourselves to worthy statements of intent. We bring together the practitioners – experts in airport security, for example, or people who design and produce passports – to enable them to share experiences and best practices.

This is practical work which should make it harder for terrorists to threaten civilian aircraft with portable missiles or to cross international frontiers using forged passports and ID cards.

Furthermore, the OSCE is co-ordinating assistance on the ratification and implementation of twelve UN conventions and protocols on anti-terrorism. We are also trying to ensure that anti-terrorism legislation does not compromise human rights and are therefore working with the UNODC to assist OSCE States when drafting national anti-terrorism legislation. This is in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1373.

The OSCE is working to control the spread of **small arms and light weapons**.

We were proud to present the OSCE's *Handbook of best Practices on Small Arms and Light Weapons* to Ambassador Kuniko Inoguchi of Japan, representing the UN, last December. Today, many more people are at risk from illegally-held small arms and light weapons than from weapons of mass destruction. These weapons are easily concealed, portable and have often been diverted from legal possession through illegal channels. In the wrong hands, they can be used by terrorists, criminal groups, and sometimes with terrifying effect by children caught up as irregular forces in civil conflict. Too often, such small weapons can turn disagreements into violent conflicts with devastating consequences. The OSCE's regional work provides substantial input to the UN Program of Action.

Given the ever present threat from crime, **policing** is high on our agenda. The OSCE has quickly and effectively built up expertise in community policing, particularly in multi-ethnic societies. We have trained police in the Republic of Macedonia and in Kosovo, where recruits join the UN-led Kosovo Police Service. The OSCE is also implementing a police assistance programme in Kyrgyzstan and is formulating programmes to assist Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in reforming police culture and operational effectiveness. In the future, more attention will also be paid to crime intelligence. We need to do more to break the link between crime and conflict.

Policing is a perfect OSCE issue; bringing together security and human rights and we can play a lead role. The rule of law needs to be enforced in a way that is proportionate, professional and has the respect of the community.

When handled badly, policing can be part of the problem. When there is effective, democratically controlled policing, societies will be more stable and more integrated. We should not wait until crises deteriorate to the point where peace-keeping is required. We should do more to strengthen policing within States, where necessary, with the support of the international community.

**Border management and security** is another area to which the OSCE is paying greater attention. As Europe transforms, borders are becoming more open. At the same time, this openness is being exploited by traffickers of drugs, people and weapons. There are also issues – like pollution, development and water management – that defy borders and therefore require regional co-operation.

The challenge is to facilitate legitimate cross-border travel and commerce, protecting human rights and promoting human contacts while ensuring a level of security that is commensurate with the threats of illegal cross-border activities. These factors are being considered in the elaboration of an OSCE border management and security strategy. These issues will also be the topic of a conference on borders to be held with the UN in Vienna in September.

The OSCE is paying increasing attention to fighting trafficking, particularly trafficking in human beings. I will shortly be appointing the first Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings to increase the OSCE's capacities in this important work.

The Maastricht Ministerial Council last December adopted a new OSCE Strategy Document which provides recommendations and commitments for addressing **economic and environmental threats to security and stability** in the OSCE region.

To implement the strategy we are working closely with the UNECE, particularly when it comes to reviewing the implementation of commitments, and the development of early warning mechanisms and indicators. In fact an inter-Secretarial task force has been created to this effect. We also work closely with UNEP and UNDP on our common Environmental and Security Initiative, which is designed to assess key environmental issues relevant for security in South-Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus.

The **human dimension** remains at the heart of the OSCE's activities. Recent OSCE election monitoring operations, in Georgia and the Republic of Macedonia, for example, once again demonstrate the importance of expert, objective international observers. Election monitoring and assisting OSCE States with democratization are core activities of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. The OSCE's Representative on Freedom of the Media is a unique watchdog who monitors media freedom in the OSCE area. A free media is vital in open societies. With freedom comes responsibility, for example in relation to hate speech on the Internet. These are the types of contemporary issues that the OSCE is addressing.

Tolerance, non-discrimination and integration remain key themes for the OSCE. We have recently had a high-profile conference on anti-Semitism in Berlin that provided a valuable opportunity to see what concrete steps can be taken to better address this scourge in the OSCE area. Our participating States agreed to compile, share and make public reliable statistics on incidents of anti-Semitism and other hate crimes, to review their legislation and to pay more attention to education on tolerance. We are working with, among others, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

We are also implementing an Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti in the OSCE Area. Furthermore, we intend to evaluate what more can be done to combat violent manifestations of racism, xenophobia and discrimination.

These forces are still evident across the OSCE region and need to be contained. So too is the threat of extreme nationalism and inter-ethnic conflict. Here the High Commissioner on National Minorities continues to play a discreet and valuable role. Increasingly his work involves projects, including in co-operation with UN agencies.

In co-operation with UNESCO, among others, we are paying attention to **education** and its important role in building tolerance and inter-cultural understanding.

The OSCE and UN work well together in the field. In **Kosovo**, the OSCE is an integral part of the UNMIK structure.

Immediately after the recent flare-up of violence on 22 March together with NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer I visited Pristina, thus demonstrating the determination to take most effective measures in restoring the order and normal life in the province. We expressed our full support for UNMIK and KFOR.

The Bulgarian Chairmanship has no doubts and made it clear to the parties that the implementation of the Standards before Status policy of the international community in regard to Kosovo should be strictly followed. This policy was re-confirmed during the open meeting of the UN Security Council held on 13 April and the Statement of the President of the Security Council on Kosovo, issued on the 30 of April 2004. The Provisional Institutions of Self- Government (PISG) should stand-up to their commitments and “ensure that acts of violence and threats are not repeated”.

Multi-ethnicity and reconciliation throughout Kosovo should be re-built in an urgent manner.

On 23 March in Belgrade I discussed with government representatives the events in Kosovo and the situation in Serbia and Montenegro. In my meetings I stated that the international community highly appreciated the wise approach of the Government to the developments in Kosovo and its prompt reaction to the unrests in Belgrade, Niš and other places.

The recent violence in Kosovo has once again shown that the international community – most notably the UN, NATO, EU and OSCE – must act in concert for the progress there to be maintained and become truly sustainable.

On 13-14 April 2004 a regular regional meeting of the Heads of OSCE missions in the countries of the Western Balkans was held in Sofia, Bulgaria. The meeting was devoted to how to better streamline the functioning of the OSCE field presences in the countries of the Western Balkans in 2004. The situation in Kosovo, the fight against terrorism and illegal trafficking, strengthening of border control, refugee returns, education and training of young people were high on the agenda of the meeting. Particular attention was dedicated to the problems of education and the media.

Developments in **Georgia** have brought into sharper focus UN-OSCE relations there. The OSCE supports UNOMIG’s efforts to bring about a comprehensive political settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia. The OSCE stands ready to help with opening of the Ghali branch of the UN Human Rights Office in Sukhumi.

In South Ossetia, the OSCE works closely with UNDP and the UNHCR in the implementation of rehabilitation and repatriation projects within the framework of an EU grant to the OSCE.

Given the latest developments in Ajara, I congratulated President Saakashvili, the people of Georgia and the government on achieving a peaceful settlement of the situation in Ajara. The Bulgarian Chairmanship would continue to assist vigorously in strengthening democratic institutions in Georgia for the benefit of all citizens. I am pleased to note the constructive role played by the Russian Federation, particularly by Mr. Igor Ivanov, in settling the crisis situation. We stress the importance of the restoration by peaceful means the territorial integrity of Georgia as a crucial prerequisite for the country’s democratisation and prosperity as well as for the stability of the southern Caucasus. We hope that the peaceful resolution of the crisis in Ajara would stimulate fresh efforts to resolve conflicts in South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Following up on its support for democratic elections, the OSCE is committed to working with the Georgian Government to continue the process of democratic reform and maintain the territorial integrity of the country by peaceful means.

After my visit to Georgia, I also visited Armenia and Azerbaijan where, as you know, the OSCE has been working with the parties to seek resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. As I said at the time, the OSCE can not perform miracles. It is up to the parties themselves to find the courage and realize that they share an interest in long-term peace and stability. However, the OSCE is committed to further provide suggestions and to facilitate a substantial dialogue aimed at bringing mutually beneficial results. The longer the conflict persists the more complex it becomes.

As Western and Central Europe have demonstrated – most recently by EU enlargement - regional co-operation can be a catalyst for confidence-building, good neighbourly relations, and prosperity. That is a message that I spread to my colleagues in South Eastern Europe, and it is a point that I have raised in visits to the Caucasus and Central Asia.

In that respect, I believe that Central Asia’s security and **Afghanistan**’s future are closely inter-linked. In April, after visiting all five Central Asian republics I flew to Kabul for meetings with President Karzai and Foreign Minister Abdullah. The OSCE has plenty of experience to share on issues relevant to the future of a stable Afghanistan. I believe that the OSCE and the UN can work more closely with States in the region to promote regional security, stability and co-operation.

The OSCE is active in a wide range of areas and we have good working relations with the UN. I believe that we can do even more. The OSCE will continue to co-operate with major international players: the EU, NATO, UN with the aim of improving their ability to respond quickly and effectively in addressing major contemporary challenges.

There is more room for sharing the OSCE experience with other parts of the world, particularly in areas adjacent to our region. OSCE institutions and commitments may be inspirational to others who, like us, are searching for ways to prevent conflict, improve bilateral and regional relations, and live in secure, pluralistic and lawful societies. This has been the OSCE’s aim for the past thirty years.

And while the world has changed since the Cold War and the Helsinki Final Act, we still face threats and challenges to security between and within States. That is why the OSCE continues to adapt and work to build security through co-operation.

Thank you.