



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe**

**Secretary General Lamberto Zannier**

**Concluding Remarks**

**Security Days 2013: “OSCE in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”**

**Hofburg, Vienna**

18 June 2013

Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished Participants,  
Dear Colleagues,

Two busy and inspiring “Security Days” are coming to an end!

I have particularly appreciated listening to your innovative ideas and suggestions. In fact, I believe that **careful listening** is the key to developing constructive dialogue. And **constructive dialogue** – including with civil society – is pivotal to advancing the OSCE’s ambitious agenda.

Moreover, I am convinced that the issues touched upon during these days are not only of interest to the OSCE family, but also to the **wider international community**. As such, our debates about a co-operative approach to security, current and future security threats, security developments in our neighbourhood, social media, as well as more specific deliberations on conflict prevention, transnational threats and future perspectives of a security organization like the OSCE, could not have been timelier. These are the issues **shaping regional**

**security agendas**, which are in turn fuelling the **international security dynamics** of our time.

This year's conference has spurred creative thinking and novel ideas about the security challenges we face. Just to mention a few:

- The debate highlighted that, in the existing multipolar context, threats and challenges to security are increasingly interconnected, often touching upon multiple areas of concern. They affect relations between governments and global actors and impact people in different ways, creating a need for new approaches, usually comprising a mix of “hard” and “soft” security. Moreover, it was recognized that the process of identifying security threats itself plays a role in building confidence and increasing co-operation.
- Participants also concurred that transnational threats are among the key security challenges facing the OSCE and that no state or organization can deal with them alone. However, jointly assessing their individual impact at national, sub-regional and OSCE levels has proven difficult, as different states may face different sets of threats, or may be differently affected by them. Hence, threat perceptions often differ from state to state, making joint actions more difficult. Further, it was observed that some of the most serious threats stemming from outside the OSCE area also have security repercussions in the OSCE region. How to effectively deal with this type of threat remains a challenge for the OSCE.

I am also extremely pleased to see that the OSCE **Security Days are quickly emerging as a prime event** in the international landscape of security conferences. Over the past two days, more than 400 participants from over 60 countries in the OSCE region and beyond have had the opportunity to listen to a

truly impressive series of discussions. Thank you very much for this remarkable participation, both live and on-line!

I was also happy to witness a rich debate on the OSCE Security Days tweet wall! I am told that - in the last two days - we have reached a potential of 163,000 single people with our tweets. Personally, I believe that relying on new communication technologies will greatly contribute to make our future Security Days even more interactive, engaging and, if you will, real!

But the **Security Days are also becoming more “operational”** as we speak. In my view, this trend is confirmed by the development of the OSCE Network of Academic Institutions: a great initiative to foster innovative research in areas relevant to the OSCE, particularly with regard to the vision of realizing a Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian Security Community.

I personally see the **network as an open-ended, flexible and informal** interaction of relevant academic institutes and think tanks from across the OSCE region. Like the Security Days, this network will **bridge the two diplomacy tracks**. It will facilitate smoother interaction between Track I and II by enabling fresh (academic) contributions to be channelled into the world of traditional diplomacy.

In essence, the network will complement the work of our executive structures by providing the OSCE with **forward-looking and well-reasoned approaches** to better face the security challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

I am also pleased with the successful inauguration of our **Night Owl Session**, which focused on engaging the younger generations in the discussion of current security issues within the context of our ever modernizing environment. It is my

hope to follow it up with similar events targeted at stimulating debate among a young audience.

All in all, I am very proud of the **interactive, dynamic and engaging format** of the Security Days that has evolved within just one year of its launch!

Let me finish by thanking again all donors for their generous support, panellists and moderators for their expertise and, most importantly, all of you for such active participation. I am confident that in these two days we have all learnt a great deal.

Thank you, and see you next year!