

Opening remarks of Head of Centre Andrew Tesoriere

At the workshop on the role of community policing in countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism, organized by the OSCE Secretariat and the OSCE Centre in Bishkek, and the Ministry of Interior

Bishkek, 4 October 2011

“Distinguished Minister, guests, participants, I am grateful for this opportunity to make a few brief remarks at the opening of this international workshop on combating radicalisation and extremism. It gives me particular pleasure to see here today regional organisations such as SCO and CSTO as well as international bodies such as the UN and EU.

This workshop will focus on the particular role of **community policing** in thwarting extreme attitudes in sections of society taking hold and translating into violent action.

The practice of Community Policing is firmly taking root in Kyrgyzstan. Among other actors, the OSCE has for some years supported the development of Community Policing within the Ministry of Interior. Its purpose is clear. To support a cooperative alliance between Police and the Public and build a relationship of mutual trust, which is better positioned to prevent crime, unlawful activity and circumstances that can lead to violence.

The quality of this relationship between Police and local communities can not only help increase a sense of public security and reduce crime but also act as a substantial deterrent against situations that lead to terrorism.

It must be emphasised that to earn such public trust, **Police conduct must be impeccable**. The Police must be viewed as “our” police; a police that serves all sections of society and is not sectarian or partisan. Conversely, if any segment of the population or local community feel marginalised or intimidated by the Police, that grievance can transmute into a violent mindset – and one that is vulnerable to extremist action, be that committed in the name of an extremist group or committed as an individual act of terror.

This workshop, I hope, will drill down into the rich seams of international expertise on how community policing techniques that fully respect citizen rights can help thwart extremist mindsets and activities take hold.

In going about its discussions, this workshop recognises that the nature, causes and solutions to terrorism are complex. There is no silver bullet. Addressing the issues requires a holistic approach. And that is precisely why the OSCE looks conceptually at security in a multi-dimensional way. Politics, economics and human rights and responsibilities are all part of the mix. In this vein, Kyrgyzstan was the first Central Asian country to host an OSCE-supported regional conference in 2008 on developing so-called “public-private partnerships” in combating terrorism. These partnerships have indeed developed in Kyrgyzstan but it may be fair to say have not yet coalesced into a coherent national policy. Community policing is a key ingredient in such a policy. This conference will have fulfilled its purpose if it more clearly spells out HOW in practical ways community policing can prevent radicalisation.

In closing, I would repeat a blunt message that I have delivered before at such conferences.

Good governance and respect for human rights substantially lessen the threats from terrorism by reducing potential grievances on which terrorism can prey. Public feelings of social and

economic marginalization, disenfranchisement or abuse by Authority play into the hands of terrorist recruiters.

Protecting human rights must be an integral part of any State anti-terrorism framework. As the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated in March 2003 at a special meeting of the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee with International, Regional, and Sub-Regional Organisations : "Our responses to terrorism, as well as our efforts to thwart it and prevent it, should uphold the human rights that terrorists aim to destroy. Respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law are essential tools in the effort to combat terrorism – not privileges to be sacrificed at a time of tension."

I thank you for your attention and wish you fruitful work. The OSCE Secretary-General who arrives in Bishkek tomorrow looks forward to joining you and making an address at the close of this Conference."