



Check against delivery

Summit of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Astana, 1 – 2 December 2010

Speech by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus
His Excellency Mr. Markos Kyprianou

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Before I proceed with my remarks I would like to express my gratitude to the Kazakh Chairmanship-in-Office for its warm welcome and hospitality.

Eleven years after our last Summit and 20 years after the adoption of the Charter of Paris the OSCE is more than ever in need of consolidating its role and relevance in the post cold war environment. It needs to adapt to the changing security environment while remaining true to its principles and its roots.

The historical rationale behind the creation of the CSCE/OSCE to bring into a single, broad security space all those actors who determine or impact European security remains pertinent and vital. We have come a long way in perceiving one another not as a potential military threat but as partners who co-operate to ensure our collective security.

We must appreciate the contribution of the OSCE to our security by considering what level of security and co-operation we would now enjoy, had the organization not been established. We believe that the organisation has displayed an ability to deter new threats and contain existing ones despite the persistence of conflicts in our area.

Despite its important achievements, the OSCE has yet to accomplish its mission or fulfill its potential. Thirty-five years after Helsinki we are still confronted by a deficit in trust and confidence and the need to fully respect our organisation's norms and principles and fully implement its commitments. To this end, we welcome the contribution of the Corfu Process in revitalizing our efforts to meet these goals.

Madam Chair,

I take this opportunity to add some comments on the idea for a European Security Treaty, a draft text of which was proposed exactly a year ago by the Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. We have embraced the value of studying this proposal, and in this respect have often advocated the need to engage in a constructive dialogue that addresses the

concerns of all parties, and seeks out solutions to the outstanding problems in the field of security.

The next logical step in the evolution of the OSCE is the creation of a security community whose aim should be to achieve peace and security throughout our collective space and enable us to shift our attention to countering threats originating outside it.

I should stress at this point that we must not fail to pay due attention to the regions adjacent to the OSCE area, as developments therein are intimately linked to our security. In this respect, I want to single out the importance of maintaining security and stability in the Mediterranean in recognition of the direct impact on European security of threats deriving from this region.

Much of the added value of the OSCE derives from its comprehensive approach to security which has a much broader scope than that of security alliances and endows the organisation with preventive and early warning capacities. We must make sure that our security approach encompasses non-traditional challenges: possible conflicts as a result of the increasing scarcity of resources, environmental degradation, inter-ethnic strife and transnational threats. We are cognizant that cyber-attacks could paralyze States in this digital age but have few tools to counter this effectively.

The unique composition of the OSCE, its authoritative expertise in certain fields, its contribution to conflict resolution through agreed negotiation mechanisms in conformity with OSCE principles, and its contribution to democratic standards and the respect for human rights are proof of its lasting relevance.

Madam Chair,

In closing, I want to emphasise the importance attached by my country to the preservation of the norms, principles and commitments we have developed over the years in the face of an ever changing world and as the challenges that it imposes evolve. As a country that continues to suffer from the effects of the use of force against it, Cyprus is well aware that creating security and confidence is a painful, costly, time-consuming and difficult process.

I thank you.