

Statement
by the Delegation of Armenia
at the OSCE Workshop on Post-Conflict Rehabilitation: Stabilization, Reconstruction and
Peacebuilding

ENGLISH only

Session 2 “Strengthening Local Ownership of Non-Military Confidence Building Measures”
3 May 2011

Mr. Moderator,

Let us start with appreciating the title of current session which explicitly refers to the local ownership of the confidence building measures. The international community can contribute to the peace building by proposing and designing tools and mechanisms facilitate their introduction. All those are necessary and welcomed efforts, indeed often imperative to assist the stakeholders to implement the CBMs especially where required trust and confidence lacks. However, at the end of the day it is the people directly engaged who should take the ownership and necessary political will to implement them.

The OSCE has been one of the leading Organizations in developing such tools, and we are glad it continues the efforts including through this meeting in the framework of the initiative of Lithuanian Chairmanship on V to V dialogue. As the President of the OSCE PA Petros Efthymiou put recently “the OSCE has been ‘in storage’ – we like to have it available, but have not fully made use of it”.

As I have touched upon the Parliamentary dimension, let me underscore the important role of the directly elected representatives in the efforts of bridging the gaps and easing tensions between the parties concerned.

In this regard it is important to note the role of public statements from all levels of political establishment in shaping the public opinion with regard to reconciliatory measures allaying the fears and mistrust. The indication of the desire to enter into the genuine dialogue, refraining from bellicose rhetoric and actions, would stand as clear illustration of the peaceful intentions thus contributing to building trust and confidence. The OSCE has in its ‘storage’ the commitment to refrain from the hate speech. The observance of that obligation and follow up efforts to ensure it can add to the OSCE contribution to confidence building measures.

Another danger to CBMs is their possible misuse to gain additional political dividends by playing on nationalist feelings. This may hamper their full implementation and jeopardize the introduction of others. In this regard one of the challenges remains in finding genuine interlocutors ready for result oriented dialogue.

Head of the OSCE Mission in Moldova, Ambassador Remler, during his key-note speech earlier today drew our attention to the application of CBMs in the framework of Transnistrian conflict resolution. With different levels of success and a lot of impediments but still number of them has been implemented. Perhaps the current state of affairs around the said conflict, indicated by many observers as the less explosive one on the post-Soviet area, is partly due to the role the CBMs has played. Of course their contribution should not be overestimated and they may be and are manipulated, but look at other conflicts, where the CBMs are almost absent. The situation there is much more complicated.

Mr. Moderator,

We are convinced that CBMs, even if modest and incremental, can play a decisive role in narrowing the gaps and building understanding between the parties to protracted conflicts. It is exactly during the period of “no war no peace” when the implementation of the CBMs is required, including for creating a better atmosphere for the peace negotiations. One doesn’t need a confidence building measure where the possibilities and resolve to talk are in place. We do not share the view that the CBMs should come after the comprehensive agreement on conflict resolution is reached. The peace itself can endorse and expand all kind of conciliatory and trust building measures.

It is impossible to foster the local ownership of CBMs without full engagement in their elaboration of all parties concerned, first and foremost those who are living in the areas torn by conflicts and who would be the main beneficiaries of the CBMs. Perhaps more effective ways should be explored to ensure some kind of a dialogue, a status neutral one, if required, between the parties concerned, including those who are not currently residing around this table, but who certainly have the right to express themselves and participate in the discussions on their own future.

Finally, here we have to mention again the importance of concerted and synchronized approaches and actions of international community within the framework of agreed formats of conflict resolutions. The famous call of Hippocrates “First do no harm” should always be adhered.

Thank you, Mr. Moderator.