



**Address by Mr. Eamon Gilmore T.D., Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE,
Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland to the
United Nations Security Council, Thursday 9 February 2012**

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure and an honour to speak before the UN Security Council in my capacity as Chairperson in Office of the OSCE. In my address today, I will outline the main priorities of Ireland's OSCE Chairmanship and I will also discuss a number of key issues which are common to both of our organisations.

With 56 participating states, covering a population of over one billion, the OSCE is the world's largest regional organisation under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. The United Nations and the OSCE are founded on core principles and common values. We share a common belief in a comprehensive approach to security, which addresses that challenge in all of its dimensions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In my address to the OSCE's Permanent Council in January, I underlined that Ireland would adopt a pragmatic, fair-minded approach to our Chairmanship responsibilities. I noted that our aim was to elaborate a set of priorities that will ensure a balanced and

coherent approach across all three dimensions – Politico-Military, Economic & Environmental and Human.

I can assure you today that we will take forward work in all areas in 2012. We will do everything in our power to achieve concrete results and deliver tangible benefits. I am firmly committed to the OSCE's concept of a common, comprehensive and indivisible security, based on a cross-dimensional set of agreed principles and commitments.

Ireland has always attached importance to the Human Dimension and we will have an ambitious agenda this year. The Irish Chairmanship will work closely with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media to address specific instances where OSCE commitments are not being met, and to take forward a number of key issues.

We intend to prioritise the issue of internet freedom. As in other parts of the world, the threat to freedom of expression online is ever-present in the OSCE region and appears to be growing. We will work to ensure that existing OSCE commitments in relation to freedom of expression and freedom of the media apply to all forms and means of their exercise. As part of these efforts, we intend to organise a conference in Dublin next June for OSCE participating states, at which we will aim to move towards a common understanding of the issues at stake.

Human Dimension events are also planned on a range of other topics. We intend to organise meetings focussed on freedom of association and assembly, freedom of religion and belief, trafficking in human beings and racism and intolerance in Sport.

Ireland also intends to maintain the highest standards for OSCE election observation activities. This year will see important elections throughout the OSCE region.

In the Politico-Military Dimension, we hope to see continued progress on the updating of confidence and security building measures and enhancement of the conflict prevention capacity of the OSCE. We will take forward work which will enable the OSCE to deepen its involvement in all phases of the conflict cycle and to strengthen its capacity to tackle conflict, from prevention to resolution. In this regard, we will work closely with OSCE Secretary General, Lamberto Zannier on implementation of the conflict cycle Decision which was agreed at the Vilnius Ministerial meeting.

We will examine the options available to us to achieve progress in the areas of arms control, conflict prevention and resolution and transnational threats, which pose challenges to all of our societies. In relation to the updating of the Vienna Document, we will work with the chairs of the Forum for Security Cooperation to build on the good results achieved last year. We will also encourage participating States - who are party to the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty - to strive to overcome the current impasse in this area.

A shared challenge for our two organisations is to ensure close and effective cooperation to tackle complex transnational threats. One key area of shared interest is counter-terrorism where the focus of the OSCE's activity is to support the implementation of UN anti-terrorism instruments. The OSCE also cooperates closely with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. During our Chairmanship, we will build on our joint efforts to tackle transnational threats such as organised crime, cyber threats including cyber crime, drugs, terrorism and trafficking.

Within the Economic & Environmental Dimension, the core theme of the Irish Chairmanship will be the promotion of security and stability through good governance. We firmly believe that weak governance undermines economic development and exposes states to greater security risks. Here too, we see great potential for building on the existing co-operation with the UN in this field.

Ireland's ratification last year of the UN Convention against Corruption signals our determination to further international cooperation in this area. This UN Convention is a comprehensive anti-corruption treaty which requires countries to implement legal and regulatory regimes both within the private and public sectors. The OSCE Ministerial Council Decision on Combating Corruption specifically highlights this Convention and encourages OSCE participating States to ratify it. During our Chairmanship, we will promote further dialogue within the OSCE on the role it can play to support and encourage implementation of this Convention.

During our Chairmanship, we will focus in particular on measures to counter corruption, money-laundering and terrorist financing. We will also consider the issue of confiscation of the proceeds of criminal activity. In this regard, we intend to highlight the work of Ireland's Criminal Assets Bureau as a model for other participating States to consider.

As Chairperson-in-Office, I will seek ways in which progress can be made towards lasting settlements of a number of conflicts which persist in the OSCE area. Among these are the conflicts in Moldova regarding the territory of Transdniestria; in Georgia regarding the territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia; and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. I have appointed two Special Representatives to assist me in addressing these complex conflicts.

As regards Moldova and Transdniestria, we stand ready to build on the momentum achieved by Lithuania with the successful resumption of official "5+2" talks. We look forward to hosting the first official talks under our Chairmanship in Dublin later this month.

The situation in Georgia, particularly the humanitarian situation, is a matter of utmost concern. Ireland strongly supports the Geneva Discussions in facilitating engagement and a way forward for all concerned. We very much welcome the rich cooperation with the UN in these discussions and would like to pay tribute to the work of UN

Representative for the Geneva International Discussions, Ambassador Antti Turunen, and his team.

We also commend the continuing efforts of the OSCE's Minsk Group in addressing the long-running Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and look forward to working closely with the Co-Chairs and other members of the Minsk Group during the year.

In supporting these efforts, we will draw from our own experience of conflict resolution. I will host a conference in Dublin on 27 April which will focus on Northern Ireland as a case study, aiming to explore a number of aspects which might be applicable to conflict situations in the OSCE area. I believe we can encourage those engaged in negotiations elsewhere to persevere in their efforts by showing that it has been possible to create and build peace in Northern Ireland and by explaining how this was achieved and how it is being sustained. I will also share some of Ireland's experience in this area through the UN Friends of Mediation group, of which Ireland is a member. Let me take this opportunity to welcome the vital enhancement in recent years of the UN's capacity in the area of mediation, which we have been pleased to be able to support on a national basis.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At a time of constrained resources and ever more complex transnational threats, a closer partnership between the OSCE and the UN is indispensable. Our cooperation has advanced not only in the development of common approaches to the challenges we face, but also at the field operational level. The OSCE mission in Kosovo is the first example of the Organisation becoming an integral part of an operation led by the United Nations. That mission has a specific tasking from UNSC Resolution 1244 to take the "*lead role in matters relating to institution and democracy building and human rights and the rule of law.*" Indeed, the former UN Special Representative for Kosovo and Head of UNMIK, Lamberto Zannier, is now serving as Secretary General of the OSCE: in the valuable contribution which he has made to each, he embodies the

ever closer relationship between the two organisations. Close and effective cooperation exists in many of the OSCE's 16 field missions with many of the UN agencies, notably with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

On Afghanistan, I recall that Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon specifically welcomed greater OSCE involvement when he addressed the OSCE Summit in Astana. I am pleased to confirm that we will promote implementation of the Decision agreed at the Vilnius Ministerial through concrete projects in Afghanistan, in close co-operation with the UN and other international actors in the region.

The UN has provided strong leadership on the issue of women, peace and security, reflected in UNSC Resolution 1325. Ireland's National Action Plan, launched last November, is a powerful statement of our commitment to the rights of women affected by conflict. Within the OSCE context, promotion of Resolution 1325 is carried out by the Forum for Security Cooperation (the FSC). In this regard, a dedicated military officer based at our Permanent Mission to the OSCE in Vienna has been tasked to examine ways that the FSC can support the implementation of this resolution and other resolutions related to gender and security.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A great many tasks lie before us as we direct the work of this organisation across a wide range of activities. It is a signal honour for Ireland to discharge this important multilateral responsibility in 2012.

As Chair of the OSCE - a key regional partner of the UN - I pledge my full support and partnership. I am confident our cooperation will be richly successful.

Thank you for your time.