



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

**Office of the Secretary General**  
*Section for External Co-operation*



2010 OSCE-Republic of Korea Conference on the OSCE  
and Asian Partners for Co-operation's Vision of a  
Comprehensive Approach to Security Issues  
**Seoul, 18 and 19 May 2010**



## **Consolidated Summary**

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## **1 General information**

### **1.1 Venue**

The Conference was held on 18 and 19 May 2010, at the **Yeong Bin Gwan, Hotel Shilla**, 202 jangchung-dong 2ga, jung-gu, Seoul 100-856, Korea.

### **1.2 Participation<sup>\*)</sup>**

- 1.2.1 Twenty-eight OSCE participating States, including Spain/EU, took part in the Conference.
- 1.2.2 All the Asian Partners for Co-operation (Afghanistan, Australia, Japan, Korea, Mongolia and Thailand) and three Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation (Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia) were represented.
- 1.2.3 The OSCE Secretariat, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, and the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media were represented. The Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Transport Issues, and the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for the Asian Partners for Co-operation also participated in the Conference.
- 1.2.4 The following international organizations were represented: the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the International Committee of the Red Cross.
- 1.2.5 At the invitation of the host country, Vietnam, holding the Chairmanship of the ASEAN Regional Forum, participated in the Conference.

### **1.3 Timetable and organizational modalities**

- 1.3.1 The Conference began at 9.15 a.m. (opening ceremony) on 18 May 2010 and ended at 1.30 p.m. on 19 June 2010.
- 1.3.2 The Conference was conducted in three sessions.
- 1.3.3 The opening session was co-chaired by Mr. Konstantin Zhigalov, Deputy Minister, Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, and Mr. Shim Yoon-joe, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the OSCE.
- 1.3.4 Each session had a moderator and a rapporteur.
- 1.3.5 The working language was English.
- 1.3.6 Arrangements were made for press coverage.
- 1.3.7 Other rules of procedure and working methods of the OSCE were applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to the Conference.
- 1.3.8 The seating arrangement is shown in the annex.
- 1.3.9 On the margins of the Conference, on 17 May 2010, a side event was held on women's contribution to security. The report of this meeting is annexed to the present document.

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<sup>\*)</sup> See Annex, list of participants.

## **1.4 Agenda**

**Tuesday, 18 May 2010**

8.30–9.15 a.m. Registration of participants

9.15–10 a.m. **Opening session**

Co-Chairpersons:

- Mr. Konstantin Zhigalov, Deputy Minister, Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office
- Mr. Shim Yoon-joe, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the OSCE

Opening statements

- Mr. Chun Yung-woo, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea
- Mr. Konstantin Zhigalov, Deputy Minister, Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office
- Ambassador Mara Marinaki, Chairperson of the Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Co-operation, Permanent Representative of Greece to the OSCE
- Mr. Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, Secretary General of the OSCE

10–10.30 a.m. Coffee break

**10.30 a.m.–1 p.m. Session 1: Dialogue on security and co-operation in the OSCE – multilateral security co-operation on Northeast Asia**

Moderator: Mr. Gregory S. Logvinov, Ambassador-at-Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Six-Party Working Group on a Mechanism for Peace and Security in Northeast Asia

Rapporteur: Mr. Roland Bless, Director of the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

This session will focus on:

- The six-party process and its implications for a regional security dialogue and the non-proliferation regime
- The OSCE Corfu Process – experiences to date

## Speakers

- Mr. Cho Hyun-dong, Ambassador, Director-General of the North Korean Nuclear Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea
- Ambassador Mara Marinaki, Chairperson of the Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Co-operation, Permanent Representative of Greece to the OSCE
- Mr. Hiroshi Kawamura, Director of the European Policy Division, European Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

## Discussion

Conclusions and remarks by the moderator

1–3 p.m.

Lunch hosted by Mr. Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, Secretary General of the OSCE

**3–5.30 p.m.**

## **Session 2: Economic development, environmental challenges and promotion of good governance**

Moderator: Mr. Cho Hyun, Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea

Rapporteur: Mr. Viet-Luan Nguyen, Counsellor, Permanent Representation of France to the OSCE

This session will focus on:

- Energy security and environmental challenges
- Facilitation of international transport
- Economic development and promotion of good governance, with a special focus on Afghanistan

## Speakers

- Ambassador Vitautas Nauduzas, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Transport Issues
- Mr. Anuson Chinvanno, Director-General, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand
- Mr. Marc Baltes, Deputy Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

## Discussion

Conclusions and remarks by the moderator

**7 p.m.**

Dinner hosted by Mr. Yu Myung-hwan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Republic of Korea

**Wednesday, 19 May 2010**

**9.30–11.30 a.m.**

**Session 3: Women's contribution to security**

Moderator: Ambassador Eoin O'Leary, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the OSCE

Rapporteur: Ms. Lauren Knight, Desk Officer, Northern, Central and Eastern Europe Section, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia

This session will focus on:

- Enhancing women's participation in political and public life
- Promotion of the role of women in matters of peace and security at all levels through relevant OSCE decisions and UN Security Council resolutions

Speakers

- Ms. Sarah Boyd, Gender Policy and Co-ordination Section Officer, Australian Agency for International Development
- Ms. Nana Kalandadze, Adviser on Gender Issues, OSCE/ODIHR
- Mr. Gonchig Ganbold, European Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Mongolia

Discussion

Conclusions and remarks by the moderator

**11.30 a.m.–12 noon**

Coffee break

**12 noon– 1.30 p.m.**

**Closing session**

Co-Chairpersons:

- Mr. Konstantin Zhigalov, Deputy Minister, Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office
- Mr. Shim Yoon-joe, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the OSCE

Closing statements

- Concluding statement by Mr. Cho Hyun, Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea
- Concluding statement by Ambassador Ertan Tezgör, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for the Asian Partners for Co-operation
- Concluding statement by Ambassador Mara Marinaki, Chairperson of the Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Co-operation, Permanent Representative of Greece to the OSCE
- Concluding statement by Ambassador Rokas Bernotas, Lithuania/OSCE Troika

1.30 p.m.	End of Conference
1.30 p.m.–2.30 p.m.	Luncheon
2.30 p.m.–7 p.m.	Cultural programme: Visit to Changdeokgung Palace; Performance at the Nanta Theatre.

## 2 Summary of the opening ceremony

### *Report by Ms. Rita Marascalchi, Senior External Co-operation Officer, OSCE Secretariat*

The opening ceremony was co-chaired by Mr. Konstantin Zhigalov, Deputy Foreign Minister - Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, and by Mr. Shim Yoon-joe, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the OSCE. It started with opening remarks delivered by Mr. Shim Yoon-joe, followed by the opening statements of Mr. Chun Yung-woo, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea; Mr. Konstantin Zhigalov, Deputy Minister and Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office; Ambassador Mara Marinaki of Greece, Chairperson of the Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Co-operation; and Mr. Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, Secretary General of the OSCE.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Shim Yoon-joe welcomed all the participants to the Conference, which was the third of its kind hosted by his country since becoming an OSCE Partner for Co-operation in 1994. He said that the Conference was taking place at a critical juncture in the security context of both the OSCE and Asia, and recalled that the OSCE had launched the "Corfu Process", while Asia was faced with challenges arising from the Afghanistan situation and the North Korea nuclear issue. In that regard, he appreciated the fact that the agenda encompassed the three OSCE dimensions of security, thus stressing the value attributed by Korea to the OSCE's comprehensive approach. He noted the deteriorated security environment in the Korean peninsula and pointed to the relevance of taking due account of the humanitarian aspects of relations with North Korea. He also stressed the need for further engagement by the international community in Afghanistan.

Vice Minister Chun Yung-woo stated that the Korean Government highly valued its partnership with the OSCE, and expressed hopes for co-operation in building a mechanism for multilateral security co-operation in Northeast Asia.

He then provided an update on recent developments in the region. The Republic of Korea valued any arrangement that could contribute to enhancing peace and security and had been eager to promote multilateral and co-operative security. Unfortunately, multilateral security in Northeast Asia was at an exploratory stage, and the first step in that direction, a Working Group on a Northeast Asia Peace and Security Mechanism in the context of the Six-Party Talks, had still not performed substantive work. The biggest challenge in building a multilateral security co-operation mechanism in Northeast Asia lay in injecting enough substance into the agenda to keep the process alive. What was needed in Northeast Asia was an expansion in the scope of shared values and a community of security interests.

He then pointed to the North Korean nuclear issue, the reunification of the Korean peninsula and the legacy of history in the region as the main variables for the development of multilateral security in Northeast Asia.

In conclusion, he expressed his hope that the outcome of the Conference would serve as a source of inspiration for efforts to build an architecture of comprehensive security co-operation in Northeast Asia.

In his opening statement, Deputy Minister Zhigalov mentioned Kazakhstan's good relations with Korea and praised the host country for its dedication to the OSCE partnership. He stressed the special attention paid by Kazakhstan to the OSCE Asian Partnership. That was



demonstrated by the appointment of a Personal Representative of the CiO for the Asian Partners and by the organization on 7 June in Istanbul of a high-level special event with the OSCE Partners on “Security and Economic Co-operation in Eurasia in the Twenty-First Century”.

He appreciated the inclusion of Afghanistan among the agenda items. Kazakhstan was committed to continuing bilateral initiatives, such as the training of Afghan students in Kazakh institutions, and to supporting further implementation of OSCE projects for improving border management and security in relation to Afghanistan, as well as possible new activities. The international community in London had pledged further support to Afghanistan in pursuing socio-economic development and in building solid democratic institutions.

Deputy Minister Zhigalov reiterated Kazakhstan’s commitment to continuing to enhance dialogue and co-operation with the Asian Partners and to encouraging further use of the Partnership Fund to promote useful exchanges of experience and best practices.

In conclusion, he stressed that the Asian Partners could make an important contribution to the Corfu Process and could draw useful inspiration from the OSCE’s experience in promoting multilateral security in other regions.

Ambassador Marinaki thanked Korea for hosting the Conference and welcomed Australia, which was participating for the first time in an OSCE Conference with the Asian Partners. As Chairperson of the Asian Contact Group, she appreciated the mutually enriching dialogue being conducted in the Group and the productive co-operation that was evident from the number and quality of the activities already implemented through the Partnership Fund. The workshop in Mongolia on combating human trafficking and the field visit in Thailand on best practices in substituting opium cultivation and trafficking through development projects and border security deserved special mention.

Greece supported and attached great value to the inclusion of the OSCE Partners in the Corfu Process, based on the conviction that security in the OSCE area was interconnected with security in Asia.

Genuine security could be achieved only through a comprehensive approach, and it was encouraging that such an approach was reflected in the agenda of the Conference. She appreciated in particular that the topic of women’s contribution to security had been included in the agenda and had been the object of a side event on the previous day. Gender equality constituted an important priority for Greece and provided an essential contribution to building common security.

In his opening statement, the Secretary General thanked Korea for hosting an OSCE conference for the third time and noted that, for the first time, the agenda covered all three dimensions of security, signalling Korea’s commitment to embracing the OSCE’s comprehensive approach. Such a comprehensive approach to security constituted the foundation and the guiding lines of the OSCE project currently being further examined in the context of the Corfu Process.

As a contribution to the first session, he set forth the main features of the OSCE’s experience: the endorsement by the OSCE participating States of agreed principles and commitments; the

provision by the CSCE/OSCE of an inclusive platform for permanent dialogue; and the comprehensive concept of security encompassing the politico-military, the environmental and economic as well as the human dimensions.

The topics foreseen for the second session, namely, energy security, environmental challenges, international transport and good governance, represented serious challenges in which the OSCE had a targeted role to play. In Athens, in 2009, the participating States had offered the OSCE as a platform for dialogue on energy security in order to strengthen co-operation in the energy field, including at the regional and subregional levels. An important step in that direction was represented by the conference that had recently taken place in Ashgabat on strengthening regional co-operation in Central Asia for promoting stable and reliable energy within Eurasia. Environmental degradation, the unsustainable use of natural resources, poor water management and climate change, all had important security implications and the OSCE had been consistently working on each of those issues at the regional level and with individual countries, as well as with international organizations, in particular assisting the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

For the OSCE, promoting good governance was vital for sustainable development and political stability. In that context, it was important to discuss Afghanistan. The OSCE was already engaged through co-operation on issues related to border security and could consider doing more with Afghanistan, for example, carrying out good governance activities promoting transparency, predictability and improved co-operation.

The topic of the third session, on women's contribution to security, deserved particular attention in the OSCE context and was also being discussed in the context of the Corfu Process. In conclusion, the Secretary General invited the participants to explore how the OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation could take advantage of the OSCE's experience in working towards comprehensive security; to critically examine the challenges faced by the OSCE; and to look for the best ways to address them.

### 3 Reports by session rapporteurs

#### 3.1 Session 1: Dialogue on security and co-operation in the OSCE – multilateral security co-operation on Northeast Asia

##### *Report by Mr. Roland Bless, Director of the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media*

In introducing the topic, the Moderator, Ambassador-at-Large Gregory S. Logvinov, defined the six-party talks on the denuclearization of North Korea as a virtual process rather than a real one. The negotiations among the six participating nations (China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and the United States of America) were stalled over North Korea's persistent non-compliance with UN Security Council resolutions and its violations of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

The first speaker, Ambassador Cho Hyun-don, gave an overview of recent developments, such as North Korea's second nuclear test in early 2009, which had led to the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1874 (2009), as well as its proclamation of itself as a nuclear-weapon State in April 2010. Recalling that North Korea was the only country that had announced its withdrawal from the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, he emphasized that the North Korean nuclear issue posed a serious challenge to the international non-proliferation regime. Touching on North Korea's intentions and situation, he pointed out that the rationale behind North Korea's nuclear ambitions might never become entirely clear. With regard to the sinking of a South Korean naval vessel in March 2010, he explained that the Republic of Korea was conducting a scientific and thorough investigation to determine the cause of the sinking.

Ambassador Cho also shed light on the approach adopted by the Republic of Korea to the North Korean nuclear issue, making clear that his country remained committed to the Six-Party Talks. Although boycotted and undermined by North Korea, the talks had helped to establish closer co-operation among the five other negotiating partners. He also explained that his country was pursuing a two-track approach, consisting in implementing UN Security Council sanctions while keeping open the doors for dialogue and seeking a comprehensive and fundamental resolution to the North Korean nuclear issue through the "Grand Bargain" initiative. Further, he described the Six-Party Talks as a valuable platform of a multilateral nature, but admitted that they were some distance away from developing into a regional security mechanism.

Ambassador Marinaki, the second speaker, outlined the main features of the overarching discussion that the OSCE was currently engaged in, namely the Corfu Process. She recalled that the founding principles of the OSCE had created the most advanced regional security concept anywhere in the world, which addressed three dimensions and hence encompassed much more than just the military aspects of security. As those principles had clearly showed signs of erosion during the Georgian crisis in the summer of 2008, the Corfu review process had been launched with the aim of revitalizing the basic mechanics of the OSCE, as agreed upon in Helsinki.

After its informal start on the Greek island of Corfu in mid-2009, the Ministerial Council meeting in Athens had moulded the Corfu process into a formalized endeavour, which was

currently being carried on by the Kazakh Chairmanship and potentially might culminate in a Summit of Heads of State and Government by the end of 2010. She pointed out that the myriad proposals that had been put forward were a typical feature of such a dialogue and that possible delays should not be seen as negative. On the way to the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, more than four thousand proposals had been presented, reflecting the true nature of the “Helsinki spirit”.

The third speaker, Mr. Hiroshi Kawamura of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, agreed that the most pressing issues regarding North Korea related to its nuclear and missile programmes. He then described another worrisome aspect of North Korea’s behaviour, namely, the kidnapping of an unknown number of Japanese citizens to North Korea between 1977 and 1993. After years of denial, only in 2002 had North Korean leader Kim Jong Il admitted to the abductions. Of the 17 known cases, only five of the victims had returned home, while the 12 unresolved cases also included citizens of Thailand, Romania and Slovakia, and possibly people from France, Italy and the Netherlands.

The way forward for Japan consisted of several elements, the Six-Party Talks remaining the most important one. The effectiveness of the talks, however, was jeopardized, since North Korea not only used its nuclear arsenal as a bargaining chip, but also the talks themselves. As the negotiations were not an aim in themselves, but should convince North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons, it was premature to look upon the Six-Party Talks as representing a real security framework. There was no security co-operation in Northeast Asia to date. Only a few multilateral instruments existed in East Asia. The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was noteworthy in that respect, being the only multilateral platform North Korea participated in, which could learn from the OSCE experience. More institutionalized contacts and sharing of experience could help. Japan would continue to participate in regional co-operation mechanisms such as the ARF but would, at the same time, firmly stand by its arrangement with the United States, as no one questioned the role of the USA in guaranteeing stability in Northeast Asia.

A lively debate took place, comparing the main features of the Six-Party Talks with the fabric of the OSCE process. The view was generally expressed that North Korea’s position was a direct challenge to the post-World War II arrangements, especially the United Nations, as well as to the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. While the OSCE took a cross-dimensional approach to security, the Six-Party Talks were monothematic, focusing on the denuclearization of North Korea. It was also suggested that mine-clearance activities in Northeast Asia should be used in future as a vehicle for fostering multilateral bonds, as such activities had amply shown their cross-border potential for confidence-building in the OSCE region.

The resemblances between the OSCE and the Six-Party Talks were identified as lying in their multilateral blueprint, while being complemented by bilateral diplomacy. The Asian Partners were invited to voluntarily follow OSCE principles in their foreign policies, also in the security context linked to Afghanistan.

Dialogue within the OSCE, including within the ongoing Corfu Process, might be slow, but at least it was a process. Overcoming the self-exclusion from dialogue which North Korea practised remained a major challenge to any future Northeast Asia security architecture.

### **3.2 Session 2: Economic development, environmental challenges and promotion of good governance**

#### ***Report by Mr. Viet-Luan Nguyen, Counsellor, Permanent Representation of France to the OSCE***

The Moderator, Mr. Cho Hyun, Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea, highlighted the importance of a comprehensive approach for dealing with economic and environmental challenges.

The first speaker, Ambassador Vitautas Nauduzas, stressed the fact that energy security and transport issues were closely interrelated. To promote energy and transport security, a twofold approach based on the political will of the OSCE participating States, as well as the economic interests of private companies, was needed. To increase energy security, it was necessary to promote the diversification of energy supplies. The five Central Asian countries were facing four integrated problems: water scarcity, environmental degradation, and threats to transport and energy security. Only a regional approach could be effective in dealing with those challenges, and the revitalization of the transport corridor connecting Europe and Asia was essential. The OSCE could furthermore contribute to enhanced security by promoting faster border crossings, simplified customs procedures and reliable supply of energy resources. Energy and transport security would be among the priorities in the economic and environmental dimension of Lithuania's Chairmanship in 2011.

The second speaker, Mr. Anuson Chinvanho, Director General of the Department of International Organizations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, spoke of the importance of access to energy sources. Thailand was actively promoting alternative renewable sources and had implemented various voluntary policies and measures in addressing both adaptation and mitigation components in respect of climate change. Climate change had to stay high on the political agenda. Thailand was strongly supportive of the ongoing work being done on that issue by the United Nations. Food and energy crises were serious obstacles to the efforts directed towards reducing poverty and hunger and could undermine the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. The OSCE's strategy to address threats to security and stability in the twenty-first century was particularly relevant in that context. Thailand had followed the deliberations in the OSCE attentively and believed that concerns, best practices and experiences could be shared amongst all parties. The Asian Partners for Co-operation, in particular the countries that were large importers of energy, such as Thailand, could benefit from the OSCE's experience and expertise in alternative and renewable energy.

The third speaker, Mr. Marc Baltes, Deputy Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, stated that the key comparative advantages of the OSCE lay in its nature as a broad political platform and in its presence on the ground with field missions. Energy security had emerged as a crucial element on the OSCE political agenda. Even if energy issues were being discussed in other fora, the OSCE could offer its political platform to further develop the dialogue on energy security. Some of the main energy producers, main energy consumers and main energy transit countries were among OSCE participating States. Concerning environmental security issues, there was a direct link between energy efficiency, the use of renewable energy resources and the mitigation of climate change. The OSCE had been tasked by the 2007 Madrid Declaration to play a complementary role in addressing the

possible security aspects of climate change. On transport issues, the OSCE Co-ordinator's office was focusing on promoting good governance at border crossings, and on improving the security of land transportation and its facilitation. The OSCE could also play a valuable role in promoting the adoption and implementation of international legal instruments to facilitate cross-border trade and transport operations.

Mr. Eoin O'Leary, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the OSCE, expressed the view that the OSCE should concentrate on projects with a strong security focus. He emphasized the importance of good governance and transparency concerning border crossings. The security implications of climate change would be high on the agenda of Ireland's Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2012 in the economic and environmental dimension.

Mr. Hiroshi Kawamura, Director of the European Policy Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, said that Europe and Asia could co-operate in particular by promoting the use of renewable energy resources. Japan was supporting Central Asian countries in developing their transportation capabilities.

Mr. Nguyen Thanh Hai, representative of the ASEAN Regional Forum, recalled that there were many similarities between the ARF and the OSCE and called for increased co-operation between the two organizations, in particular on economic and environmental issues.

Mr. Han Jin Bae, Director of the International Security Affairs Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Korea, recalled that the Republic of Korea was one of the top ten energy consumers in the world and was importing oil mainly from the Middle East. Korea had taken measures to secure maritime routes against piracy and was also diversifying its energy supplies. In that context, the Republic of Korea had been very active in Central Asia, notably in Kazakhstan and East Siberia, in promoting the development of oil and gas infrastructure. Furthermore, his country was eager to support the stabilization and sustainable development of Afghanistan, to which a Korean provincial reconstruction team would soon be dispatched.

Mr. John Bernhard, Permanent Representative of Denmark to the OSCE, spoke of the importance of a strong mandate for the OSCE regarding Afghanistan. He also noted that the OSCE needed to deal with the security implications of climate change.

Ms. Julie Raschka, delegate of the Mission of the United States to the OSCE, said that energy security was an important part of the OSCE's comprehensive security concept. Diversification was vital, and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative was offering practical steps to promote good governance and transparency in the energy sector. She furthermore stressed the need and the importance of building capacity in Afghanistan as well as promoting border management and good governance in the region.

Mr. Richard Maude, Director General of the Europe Division of the Australian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, recalled his country's resolute engagement in Afghanistan. Australia would financially contribute to the newly established Peace and Reintegration Fund. It would also welcome intensification of the OSCE's engagement with Afghanistan, especially in the fight against illicit narcotic drugs and in counter-terrorism activities.

The moderator proposed the following conclusions:

- The ongoing dialogue between the OSCE and the Asian Partners for Co-operation provided an adequate framework and mechanism for exchanging ideas and best practices on economic and environmental challenges;
- The economic and environmental issues were often intertwined; the OSCE concept of comprehensive security was particularly relevant for dealing with them;
- During the current session, the need for policy co-operation had been stressed; partnerships between governments and civil society as well as between the OSCE and other relevant international organizations should be promoted.

### **3.3 Session 3: Women's contribution to security**

***Report by Ms. Lauren Knight, Desk Officer, Northern, Central and Eastern Europe Section, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia***

Ambassador Eoin O'Leary, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the OSCE, opened the session by noting the growing prominence of the issue of women's role in security over the past decade, with UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) about to celebrate its tenth anniversary. He also referred to the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality and recalled the side event on women and security that had taken place on the eve of the present Conference, which had focused on UN Security Council resolution 1325 and the conflict in Afghanistan.

The first speaker, Ms. Sarah Boyd, of the Australian Agency for International Development, examined the role of UN Security Council resolutions in promoting the role of women in peace and security and Australia's experience in the Asia-Pacific region. The importance of women's inclusion as an integral part of a comprehensive approach to security was increasingly recognized. The tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 provided a good opportunity to assess progress on gender equality and take stock of what more could be done. States that had adopted national action plans, as called for in resolution 1325, were to be commended. She discussed the destructive and debilitating effects of sexual violence in conflict, noted the relevant UN Security Council resolutions [1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009)] and described field work in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia and northern Iraq. Female representation in formal peace processes was noticeably low. However, women were successfully mobilized at local levels to foster peace and reconciliation within their own communities. She shared examples of Australian work in the Asia-Pacific region designed to incorporate gender perspectives into peace operations and post-conflict decision-making and governance, including the recruitment of female police officers in the Solomon Islands, support for women's electoral participation in Afghanistan, and the promotion of women's representation on local councils in East Timor.

The second speaker, Ms. Nana Kalandadze, Adviser on Gender Issues with the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), discussed women's participation in political and public life. She outlined the evolution of the OSCE's political commitments on gender equality: the commitment to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms without regard to sex contained in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act; the affirmation of the essential role of gender equality in the 1991 Charter for European Security; the identification of priority areas for action in the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality; and, most recently, the decision on women's participation in political and public life that had been adopted at the Ministerial Council meeting in Athens in December 2009. Significant policy measures had been taken by several OSCE States to improve gender equality, but women's representation in parliaments was still an area where improvement was needed and where progress over the past 15 years had been slow, particularly in parliamentary upper houses. She described the work of the ODIHR in implementing OSCE gender equality commitments, including the development of a handbook for monitoring women's participation in elections, and the monitoring and assessment by the OSCE of female franchise in Afghanistan's 2009 presidential and provincial council elections. In conclusion, she reported on the main outcomes of the side event on women's contribution to security that had taken place on the day before the Conference. Those conclusions related to:



- The need to recognize women not just as victims but as agents for resolving conflict;
- The importance of adequate female representation in governance and security institutions; and
- The need for increased networking and provision of expertise to current projects, particularly in Afghanistan.

The third speaker, Mr. Gonchig Ganbold, of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Mongolia, spoke about Mongolia's experience in promoting gender equality and its co-operation with the OSCE. He noted that high levels had been achieved in women's education in Mongolia, and described the challenges that remained for further promoting women's rights and political participation. Mongolia was currently developing legislation to provide for gender equality and the empowerment of women, which was expected to be debated by the national parliament. The country greatly valued its partnership with the OSCE, and had hosted a workshop on combating human trafficking in Ulaanbaatar in February 2010. The event had assisted participants to identify next steps for the anti-trafficking agenda. He acknowledged the contribution to gender equality in Mongolia of civil society institutions, many of which were grouped under the National Network of Mongolian Women's Non-Governmental Organizations.

In the general debate that followed, the participants addressed three main themes: sharing the experiences of their countries and organizations in promoting gender equality; the relationship between political commitments and their implementation on the ground; and gender equality in Afghanistan.

On the subject of the participants' own experiences, it was noted that, in many countries, national plans setting out concrete steps toward gender equality had proved useful in their efforts to promote women's rights and full political participation. Participants described a variety of policies which had been effective in advancing gender equality, including, *inter alia*, increased access to flexible working hours and to child care, a quota system for female candidates for political office, establishment of an interministry working group on gender equality, the recruitment of female police officers to manage cases of violence toward women and children, the establishment of an innovation award for women's empowerment and the provision of support centres for victims of sexual violence. Several participants acknowledged the usefulness of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality.

Regarding the relationship between political commitments to gender equality and their implementation on the ground, participants agreed that women's activity in peace and security matters at the grass-roots level predated many of the relevant political commitments, with one participant pointing to the example of women's involvement in conflict-prevention and post-conflict monitoring during the breakup of Yugoslavia. Several participants observed that political instruments establishing a monitoring or review mechanism were most effective in ensuring that political commitments translated into practical measures. Some participants noted that the collective experience of OSCE participating States and Partners constituted a useful resource. Other participants expressed the view that the focus should be on the implementation of existing commitments on gender, not on the negotiation of new ones. One participant said that the notion of human security, including the placing of gender equality and human rights within the security sphere, did not align with narrower traditional concepts of security in Asia. It was therefore difficult to secure political commitments on women and security, and the focus in the region should instead be on efforts at the civil society level.

Regarding women in Afghanistan, the Afghan delegate said that women would be well represented in upcoming parliamentary elections, with female candidates accounting for 368 out of the total of 1,268 candidates. A ten-year action plan to put women's rights at the centre of Afghanistan's peace and reconstruction agenda had been developed, but significant barriers to its success remained, including damaged infrastructure, cultural restrictions and poor governance. Afghanistan welcomed the engagement of the OSCE, and called for the establishment of a dedicated communications network between OSCE participating States and for greater support by the OSCE for the rights of women in Afghanistan. The United States voiced full support for women's participation in Afghan society, which it considered critical to Afghanistan's political and economic progress.

In the course of the debate, two questions were posed to the speakers. The first was how to best encourage the retention in the workforce of women during their 30s, which were women's primary childbearing years. Ms. Kalandadze noted that legal frameworks protecting women in the labour force, and policies that encouraged shared responsibility between men and women for childcare were essential to strong female participation in the workforce. She said that key lessons that could be derived from existing national action plans were the importance of conducting broad consultations with stakeholders in developing gender equality policies and of allocating sufficient funding to provide for implementation of practical measures. Mr. Ganbold added that flexible working hours were critical to ensuring that career and family were complementary, not mutually exclusive.

The second question related to the reason why so few countries had national action plans, as called for in UN Security Council resolution 1325, despite the fact that a decade had passed since its adoption. Ms. Boyd explained that the major problem was the difficulty in effectively co-ordinating the work of different government ministries, rather than a lack of political will. Furthermore, the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1889 (2009) had slowed processes down, as countries were revising draft national action plans to ensure they covered recommendations from both Security Council resolutions.

Ambassador O'Leary identified two main conclusions of the discussion. First, women needed to be central to societies in every sense, and should be fully represented across all aspects of political and social life. Where women were excluded from decision-making, policies were created that were not only bad for women, but also bad for the population as a whole. Second, women were critical to the successful prevention and resolution of conflicts, and should participate as central actors in those processes.

## **4 Summary of the closing session**

### ***Report by Ms. Rita Marascalchi, Senior External Co-operation Officer, OSCE Secretariat***

The session was co-chaired by Mr. Konstantin Zhigalov, Deputy Foreign Minister and Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, and by Mr. Shim Yoon-joe, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the OSCE. Concluding remarks were delivered by Mr. Cho Hyun, Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs of the Republic of Korea; Ambassador Ertan Tezgör, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for the Asian Partners for Co-operation; Ambassador Mara Marinaki of Greece, Chairperson of the Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Co-operation; and Ambassador Rokas Bernotas, representing Lithuania, incoming holder of the OSCE Chairmanship.

Ambassador Shim Yoon-joe expressed the hope that the outcome of the Conference would serve to further enhance the ongoing dialogue with the OSCE. Discussions in the three sessions had contributed to a keener understanding of the OSCE approach, in particular of the importance of human-dimension commitments, and of the relevance of gender in security matters. The nexus of gender and security was something that merited close attention on the Korean Peninsula. He recalled that, each year, a number of North Korean defectors sought refuge in the Republic of Korea and suggested that the security implications of that population of defectors should be considered.

In his concluding remarks, Deputy Minister Zhigalov noted the participants' agreement regarding the contribution that multilateral security co-operation could make to resolving both traditional and non-traditional security issues. He reiterated Kazakhstan's commitment to strengthening peace and security in the Asian region.

With reference to the first dimension, he noted that the OSCE Summit that might take place in 2010 could offer OSCE participating States the opportunity both to reaffirm their commitments at the highest level and to support further OSCE activities on non-proliferation, an item high on the Kazakhstan Chairmanship's agenda.

In the second dimension, he stressed Kazakhstan's commitment to expanding the role of the OSCE in the areas of transport and communications. Good governance, improved security and the facilitation of international land transport were vital for strengthening security, stability, regional co-operation and economic development in the OSCE area and beyond. The vigorous involvement of the OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation was crucial for achieving those objectives. Climate change, energy security and the efficient use of natural resources constituted important issues to be addressed with a view to ensuring global sustainability and overcoming the economic and financial crisis.

Additional measures were needed to promote gender balance and women's participation in political and public life, in accordance with the relevant OSCE commitments.

In conclusion, he stressed that peace and prosperity could be achieved only through co-operation.

Deputy Minister Cho Hyun referred to the international investigation on the sinking of the Republic of Korea's corvette in March 2010, anticipating evidence of North Korean responsibility. He noted that the war between South and North Korea had technically not

come to an end and that such an incident might reopen it. That constituted the main difference with the OSCE area, as in Northeast Asia many problems still needed to be resolved in order to create a regional entity providing regional security.

The Republic of Korea would like Northeast Asia to be inspired by the wisdom and courage of the CSCE/OSCE and therefore considered its dialogue with the Organization to be extremely valuable.

Ambassador Tezgör noted the interest emerging in Asia for the OSCE *aquis*, matched by an increasing attention being turned towards Asia by western organizations. He pointed to the importance of the OSCE multidimensional approach to security as laying the groundwork for promising dialogue and co-operation with other multilateral fora. He informed the participants about the special meeting being organized on 7 June in Istanbul on the eve of the summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA). By bringing together 20 members with different perceptions of security, CICA constituted in itself a security-building measure. Asia and OSCE Asian Partners in particular could take greater advantage of CICA, and stronger OSCE-CICA relations could provide useful added value.

Ambassador Marinaki summarized the ideas and proposals for possible follow-up in the framework of the OSCE Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Co-operation that had emerged during the discussions. The potential usefulness for the Asian region of the OSCE's inclusive, co-operative and comprehensive approach to security had emerged as a theme that enjoyed widespread support. A number of opportunities were already foreseen for continuing dialogue on such issues, for example, in the context of the Contact Group and of the Corfu Process, while further inputs might be derived by enhancing the interaction with the ASEAN Regional Forum.

In the second session, consistent support had emerged for furthering OSCE's engagement with Afghanistan. Additional potential areas for follow-up could be identified in the context of responding to the challenges faced by landlocked countries and improving the efficiency and security of transport connections in Central Asia and with Afghanistan. Those issues could be usefully followed up at the OSCE Conference with the Asian Partners planned to take place in Mongolia in 2010, as well as through concrete activities to be implemented under the Partnership Fund.

The topic of women's contribution to security had been extensively discussed both at the side event and in the third session of the Conference. The main recommendations that had emerged from the discussions in the side event had provided the participants with useful inputs and food for thought. The practice of holding side events in the context of the OSCE Conference with the Asian Partners should be continued, as such events represented a useful instrument for intensifying the OSCE's co-operation with its Asian Partners and enriching it with new inputs. That practice could also provide a useful channel for establishing a two-track dialogue. A strong interest in furthering co-operation and exchanging experiences on gender matters had emerged and would be followed up in the work of the Contact Group.

Ambassador Rokas Bernotas anticipated some elements of Lithuania's priorities in the three dimensions as incoming holder of the Chairmanship of the OSCE. In the first dimension, Lithuania would focus on fighting terrorism, combating drug trafficking and cyber crimes and enhancing border security. In the second dimension, the priorities would include good

governance, the fight against corruption, climate change, and energy and transport security. In the third dimension, the focus would be on freedom of the media, the building of independent human rights institutions, election issues and hate crimes. Central Asia and Afghanistan would continue to receive OSCE attention. The guiding principle would be continuity with the Kazakh Chairmanship in leading the Organization and in pursuing the dialogue with the Asian Partners.

In conclusion, he invited the Asian Partners to make suggestions to the incoming Chairmanship, in terms both of the elaboration of its priorities and of concrete recommendations for future co-operation between the OSCE and its Asian Partners.

## **5 Annex**

### **5.1 List of participants**

#### **Germany**

Ambassador Hans Ulrich Seidt	Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Seoul
Mr. Matthias Vollert	Political Counsellor, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Seoul
Ms. Karin Plattner	Legal Assistant, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Seoul

#### **United States of America**

Mr. Casey Christensen	Counsellor, United States Mission to the OSCE
Mr. Alex Johnson	Policy adviser, United States Helsinki Commission
Ms. Julie Raschka	Political specialist

#### **Austria**

Ambassador Josef Muellner	Embassy of the Republic of Austria
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#### **Azerbaijan**

Ambassador Roshan Jamshidov	Embassy of Azerbaijan in Korea
Mr. Khazar Farhadov	Counsellor, Embassy of Azerbaijan in Korea
Mr. Vagif Jafarov	Second Secretary

#### **Belgium**

Mr. Mattias Van Hecke	Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Belgium in Seoul
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#### **Bulgaria**

Ambassador Kossio Kitipov	Ambassador of Bulgaria to the Republic of Korea
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#### **Canada**

Ms. Nicola Kim	Second Secretary, Embassy of Canada in Seoul
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#### **Denmark**

Ambassador John Bernhard	Permanent Mission of Denmark to the OSCE
Ms. Anne-Cathrine Riebnitzsky	Author, advisor

Ms. Sofie Dyhr Intern, Political, Danish Embassy in Seoul

### **Spain / European Union**

Mr. Enrique Asorey Head OSCE/Council of Europe Division,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-  
operation

Mr. Brian McDonald Head of Delegation of the European Union  
to the Republic of Korea

Mr. Uwe Wissenbach Counsellor/Deputy Head of Mission

### **Finland**

Mr. Stefan Lee Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of  
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### **France**

Ambassador Elizabeth Laurin Ambassador in Korea

Mr. Sebastien Jaunet First Secretary, Embassy of France in Seoul

Mr. Thierry Berthelot First Counsellor, Embassy of France in  
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Mr. Viet-Luan Nguyen Counsellor, Permanent Representation to the  
OSCE

### **Greece / OSCE Troika**

Ambassador Mara Marinaki Permanent Representative to the OSCE

Ambassador Petros Avierinos Ambassador of Greece to Korea

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Mr. Filipp Nicosia First Secretary, Embassy of Italy in Seoul

Mr. Nicolo Lanciotti Political Assistant, Embassy of Italy in  
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### **Kazakhstan / OSCE Chairmanship**

Mr. Konstantin Zhigalov Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of  
Kazakhstan, Special Envoy of the CiO

Ambassador Ertan Tezgör Ambassador, Personal Representative of the  
CiO

Ambassador Vitautas Nauduzas

Personal Representative of the CiO on  
Transport Issues

Mr. Yerbolat Sembayev

Deputy Head of the OSCE Department,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic  
of Kazakhstan

Mr. Olzhas Idrissov

Attaché, Permanent Mission of the Republic  
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Mr. Wouter Bosschaert

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### **Poland**

Mr. Piotr Szostak

First Secretary (Political and Cultural),  
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### **Portugal**

Ambassador Henrique Borges

Ambassador of Portugal to the Republic of  
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Dr. Paulo Graca

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Portugal in Seoul

### **Romania**

Mr. Sever Cotu

Charge d'Affaires a.i.

### **Russian Federation**

Ambassador Gregory S. Logvinov

Ambassador-at-Large, Ministry of Foreign  
Affairs of the Russian Federation,  
Chairperson of the Six-Party Working  
Group on a Mechanism for Peace and  
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### **Serbia**

Ambassador Slobodan Marinkovic

Embassy of the Republic of Serbia, Seoul



### **Slovenia**

Mr. Jernej Cimpersek	Deputy Head of the Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the OSCE
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### **Switzerland**

Ambassador Thomas Kupfer	Embassy of Switzerland in the Republic of Korea
Mr. Daniel Cavegn	Deputy Head of Mission and Counsellor of the Embassy of Switzerland in the Republic of Korea

### **Czech Republic**

Ambassador Dusan Strauch	Ambassador, Adviser to the Ministry
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### **Turkey**

Ambassador Erdoğan İŞCAN	Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the Republic of Korea
Mr. Orhan Yalman OKAN	First Secretary at the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey in Seoul

### **Ukraine**

Ambassador Volodymyr Belashov	Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the Republic of Korea
Mr. Taras Fedunkiv	Second Secretary, Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Korea

## **PARTNERS FOR CO-OPERATION**

### **Afghanistan**

Ms. Sayeda Mojgan Mostafavi	Deputy Minister for Technical and Policy Matters, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Afghanistan
Ambassador Mohammed Karim Rachimi	Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Korea
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Mr. Yama Mohammad Nader	Director of Programmes, Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG)
Ms. Mahtab Jafari	Director for Women Affairs, Wardak Province

### **Australia**

Mr. Richard Maude	Director-General, Europe Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
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Mr. Jeff Robinson	Chargé, Embassy of Australia, Seoul
Ms. Lauren Knight	Desk Officer, Europe Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ms. Jennifer Mason	Second Secretary (Political), Embassy of Australia, Seoul
Ms. Sarah Boyd	Senior Policy Officer, Gender Policy and Coordination Section, Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)

## **Japan**

Mr. Hiroshi Kawamura	Director, European Policy Division, European Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan
Mr. Kayuza Ono	Deputy Director

## **Korea**

Mr. Yung Woo Chun	Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade
Ambassador Yoon-Joe Shim	Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the OSCE
Mr. Hyun Cho	Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs
Mr. Yoon Lee	Director-General for Policy Planning
Mr. Hyun Dong Cho	Director-General for North Korean Nuclear Affairs
Mr. Han Jin Bae	Director, International Security Affairs Division
Mr. Kwang Ho Lee	First Secretary, International Security Affairs Division
Mr. Sang Soo Lee	First Secretary, Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Vienna
Ms. Chi Young Park	Second Secretary, International Security Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Ms. You Na Oh	Second Secretary, International Security Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Mr. Sang Hoon Lee	Third Secretary, International Security Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
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Mr. Joon Sik Moon

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### **Morocco**

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Mr. Said Dahabi

First Secretary, Embassy of Morocco in  
Seoul

### **Tunisia**

Ambassador Mustapha Khammari

Ambassador of Tunisia to the Republic of  
Korea

## **ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

### **OSCE Secretariat**

Mr. Marc Perrin de Brichambaut

Secretary General

Mr. Oleksandr Pavlyuk

Head of External Co-operation

Mr. Marc Baltes	Deputy Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities
Ms. Rita Marascalchi	Senior External Co-operation Officer
Ms. Aldona Szymanski	Senior External Co-operation Assistant

### **OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media**

Mr. Roland Bless	Director, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media
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### **Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights**

Ms. Nana Kalandadze	Adviser on Gender Issues, OSCE/ODIHR
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### **INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

#### **Office of the UNHCR**

Ms. Anne Campbell	Representative of the UNHCR, Seoul, Republic of Korea
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### **Secretariat, Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia**

Ms. Alla Dymshits	Head, Economic and Environmental Issues Section
Ms. Gaukhar Ashirbekova	Assistant to the Executive Director

### **International Committee of the Red Cross**

Mr. Thierry Meyrat	Head of Regional Delegation, ICRC Regional Delegation for East Asia
Mr. Craig E. Strathern	Delegate in charge of Multilateral Affairs, ICRC, Kuala Lumpur
Ms. Yoon Kyung Kim	ICRC Liaison Officer in Seoul

### **CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM, INVITED BY THE HOST COUNTRY**

Mr. Nguyen Thanh Hai	Deputy Director-General for Policy Planning, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Viet Nam
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### **NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTIONS**

Ms. Alla Kuvatova	Executive Director, Association of Women's NGOs on Gender Equality and Prevention of Violence against Women, Tajikistan
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## 5.2 Seating arrangement

	<p>Turkey Czech Republic Switzerland Sweden Slovenia Serbia Russian Federation Romania Portugal Poland Netherlands Norway Lithuania / Troika</p>	
<p>Ukraine SG OCEEA FOM ODIHR UNHCR CICA ICRC ARF CIO NGO Egypt Morocco Tunisia Afghanistan Australia Japan Korea Korea Korea Mongolia Thailand</p>		<p>Kazakhstan / CIO PR Kazakhstan / CIO PR Kazakhstan / CIO Italy Ireland Greece / Troika France Finland Spain / EU Spain / EU Denmark Canada Bulgaria Belgium Azerbaijan Austria USA Germany</p>

### **5.3 Report on the side event on women and security**

#### ***Report by Ms. Julie Raschka, Political Specialist, United States Mission to the OSCE***

As a complement to the third session of the Conference, the OSCE Secretariat, in co-operation with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), organized a side event on women and security. The event focused on the role of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) in peace-building and conflict prevention and the integration of gender in national security policy.

Presentations were made by Ms. Anne-Catherine Riebnitzsky, a former lieutenant in the Danish military mission in Afghanistan, and Ms. Alla Kuvatova, from the Association of NGOs on Gender Equality and Prevention of Violence against Women in Tajikistan. Ms. Riebnitzsky shared her experiences in promoting women's role in security in Afghanistan and highlighted the fact that women were an important – if often overlooked – resource for preventing and resolving conflict. Ms. Kuvatova pointed out that increasing women's participation in decision-making was critical in ensuring that due attention was paid to women's issues. She also called attention to the need for States to adopt and – most importantly – implement national action plans in response to UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

During the wide-ranging discussion, the speakers and other participants emphasized the importance of education and female role models as a means of promoting empowerment of women to take charge of their own futures and to improve the situation in their countries for the benefit of their children. Examples cited at the meeting and existing analysis from other countries indicated that, when included in post-conflict reconstruction efforts, women served as critical sources of information and as the initiators of change at various levels and on a variety of issues, including security and justice reform, public oversight and transparency in decision-making, etc.

Several participants pointed out that support of a few key men on the local council could ease project implementation and enhance the sustainability of efforts. Economic empowerment of women could also play a key role, particularly in post-conflict situations or in areas of extreme poverty. Overall, the participants stressed the need to focus on practical programmes that would bring results.

A number of participants emphasized the need to mainstream a gender perspective throughout governmental and civil society activities. It was noted that, while the ultimate goal of the efforts in that area was to understand and address the specific ways in which conflicts affected women and men, it would remain unattainable unless women were adequately represented in governance structures and in security-sector institutions.

The participants also focused on the protection of women and girls, particularly against domestic violence and sexual violence during armed conflict.

Several speakers emphasized that UN Security Council resolutions and OSCE Ministerial Council decisions would not bring change on their own. They could act as a catalyst for the development of national implementation plans, which were key to translating political commitments into reality. Such plans were an expression of the commitment of civil society and governmental actors to making women's empowerment a priority.

The development and implementation of such plans were lagging, however. A number of participants stated that they would welcome advice on how to turn their countries' political commitments into practical implementation. They pointed to the need to create an expert network to exchange information and experience, on either an international or a regional level. The side event was mentioned as a useful first step in that regard.

A participant from Afghanistan recommended that the OSCE set up an office in Afghanistan, as the most effective way for the Organization to provide much-needed assistance. The speaker acknowledged the difficulties inherent in such an undertaking and therefore suggested that the OSCE find a way to support the Afghan Office of Women's Affairs, the national human rights commission, and other offices involved in protecting and empowering women and girls. The OSCE should also consider the creation of joint programmes on an integrated approach to gender, peace and security. The speaker also recommended that the international community send more advisers to work with the Government of Afghanistan at the local level. Other speakers noted the importance that their countries attached to providing support to Afghanistan, including projects on training and capacity-building for women.

The participants expressed appreciation to the organizers and sponsors of the side event for the opportunity to foster partnerships and exchange expertise for the promotion of women's political participation, their enhanced role in conflict prevention and peace building, and greater equality between women and men in all areas of the public and private spheres.