



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

**The Secretary General**

**Brussels, 9 July 2008**

### **Statement by the OSCE Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut**

#### **Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council Check against delivery**

Mr. Secretary General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to be back in Brussels to address the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. This is becoming a good tradition which I very much appreciate, and I thank the NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, for this kind invitation.

The OSCE and the EAPC have much in common.

First, of course, there is our membership. Of the 56 OSCE participating States, 50 are represented here today. Both the OSCE and the EAPC know intimately the joys of multilateral diplomacy in a forum of this size.

More importantly, the OSCE and the EAPC share a fundamental interest in the promotion of stability across the Euro-Atlantic, and Eurasian region. Our tools and mandates may differ, but we share this fundamental objective, and many of our programmes and activities are complementary. It is from this basic

perspective that I welcome this opportunity to share some thoughts with you today.

Mr. Secretary General,  
Excellencies,

I last had the opportunity to address this forum one year ago. Much has happened over the past twelve months to test the resilience of the OSCE's comprehensive, cross-dimensional approach to security. We have seen heated debates over some of the most basic commitments that have held the OSCE community together, such as election observation standards and CFE Treaty commitments. Events in Kosovo have divided the OSCE community.

The OSCE's traditional conflict prevention role is being rigorously tested. In Georgia, events have been moving with worrying speed, with a series of incidents including that involving an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) over Abkhazia, Georgia on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April and exchanges of fire in South Ossetia, Georgia. Tensions remain very high in and around the conflict zones in Georgia of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and the potential for the emergence of a stand-off at a high level of military deployment is real.

The OSCE is actively seized of these matters. Twenty three OSCE Ambassadors are returning from Georgia to Vienna. A number of important initiatives have been made and are being explored. However, they do not seem to have had an impact on the facts on the ground thus far.

The Finnish Chairmanship is working at several levels to alleviate tensions and consolidate the basis for longer term stability. This has included making good use of the OSCE's unique position as an inclusive platform for political and security dialogue – through a series of high level discussions in Vienna, including the invocation by Russia and Georgia of OSCE crisis management mechanisms.

The OSCE Mission to Georgia is also forging ahead with an ambitious *Economic Rehabilitation Programme* in the South Ossetian conflict zone to address needs on the ground and build confidence over the longer term.

In another area, the OSCE is playing a role that is very different but no less important, that is Kosovo. Tensions there remain largely under control, but a deeply rooted and sustainable peace is still a long way off. In fact, the international community may have entered a period of prolonged complexity in the region, characterized by ambiguity and ever present risk.

Working alongside NATO as an integral part of the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), and adhering to strict status neutrality, the OSCE continues to monitor and support democratic rights and institutions across all of Kosovo's municipalities and in all communities. In current conditions, the importance of the OSCE Mission's scope of action and access can hardly be overstated.

It is vital that, despite a challenging political context, the OSCE continue to support efforts to build a mature society in Kosovo that is structured, multi-ethnic, democratic and tolerant, and one that is committed to respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

More broadly in South-Eastern Europe, we have made great progress in resolving the disputes that tore apart the former Yugoslavia in the last decade, but much remains to be done. For this, coordinated and coherent international action is vital, and the OSCE has an important role to play. And this can only happen, provided States develop a clear vision of the role they expect each organization to play.

Monsieur le Secrétaire général,  
Excellences,

L'importance d'une action internationale efficace se vérifie également dans d'autres parties de notre région. Ici, je souhaiterais évoquer brièvement l'engagement de l'OSCE en Asie centrale et en faveur de la stabilité en Afghanistan.

En Asie centrale, l'OSCE joue un rôle de premier plan par le biais de ses cinq opérations de terrain en apportant son soutien aux États et aux sociétés de la région dans le cadre de leurs efforts visant à ancrer la sécurité globale. Elle s'est engagée dans des actions de longues haleines, visant à consolider les institutions démocratiques de ces États et à créer les conditions de leur sécurité dans toutes les dimensions.

Le fait que la Présidence de l'OSCE soit assumée par le Kazakhstan en 2010 souligne l'importance de l'Asie centrale pour la sécurité dans l'espace de l'OSCE tout entier.

L'Afghanistan est un partenaire de l'OSCE pour la coopération. A Madrid, les Ministres des affaires étrangères de l'OSCE ont reconnu que l'Organisation devait jouer un rôle dans la stabilisation du pays, compte tenu de sa proximité avec l'OSCE et les trois États participants d'Asie centrale avec lesquels il partage une frontière.

Notre Conseil Permanent examine une série de projets visant à aider à sécuriser les frontières entre les États participants d'Asie centrale et l'Afghanistan, et par un renforcement de l'assistance dans les domaines liés à la police et à la lutte contre le trafic de drogue.

Le succès d'un futur engagement de l'OSCE dépendra de l'intérêt que lui portera l'Afghanistan, du soutien des pays de l'Asie Centrale, de la Russie et des autres, de l'affectation de ressources adéquates et d'une coopération effective avec les autres

organisations internationales en Afghanistan, principalement l'ONU, l'UE, l'OTSC et bien entendu l'OTAN à travers l'ISAF. À cet égard, je tiens à remercier le Secrétaire général de l'OTAN pour l'intérêt qu'il témoigne à cette initiative.

Dans ce domaine et dans de nombreux autres, l'OSCE et l'OTAN sont d'étroits partenaires. Notre coopération est sur la bonne voie, que ce soit sur le terrain ou entre les sièges. Nos équipes respectives se sont réunies la semaine dernière à Vienne pour des consultations portant sur toute la gamme des activités des deux organisations.

Mr. Secretary General,  
Excellencies,

We cannot address politico-military affairs in isolation from the economic and human dimensions of security. In particular, the democratic transitions still underway in some OSCE participating States face a long and difficult road. The OSCE works every day, through its nineteen Field Operations and its specialized Institutions, to support political transformation by helping States implement the commitments they have undertaken to guarantee freedom of the media, to conduct free and fair elections and electoral campaigns, and to protect national minorities and human rights.

These commitments are vital for building genuine stability and security in Greater Europe. Yet, as in the area of politico-military dialogue and crisis management, OSCE support in this area can only be effective to the extent that the Organization's participating States are willing to take advantage of it.

Today, as in the past, we continue to see divisions in the OSCE community over core 'values' questions, with some States increasingly questioning commitments, standards and practices. In these circumstances, the experience of the OSCE as an inclusive forum for dialogue, a persistent actor and a platform for regular peer

review makes it uniquely placed to confront and overcome these differences, and to resume our pursuit of the vision set forth in the Paris Charter of 1990 – a vision of an OSCE area composed exclusively of healthy, legitimate States governed on the basis of democracy and the rule of law.

Today's context may be difficult, but the OSCE has the expertise and the experience to continue to help States work toward this goal.

Mr Secretary General,  
Excellencies,

It is a fact that the debate about the security structures in Greater Europe has been reopened.

The current uncertainty with regard to the future of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, or CFE, remains and concerns not just the Treaty's 30 States Parties, but the entire OSCE community, since the Treaty has provided an important foundation for Europe's system of military transparency and predictability. The Finnish Chairmanship, while not a party to the Treaty, has urged the entire CFE community to do everything it can to maintain the integrity of the Treaty, and to ensure the full implementation of all Treaty commitments.

The question of security across Greater Europe requires, indeed, constant debate as the situation evolves and new trends emerge. This is why I read President Medvedev's speech in Berlin on June 5th with interest. The Russian President highlighted the importance of European security for Russia and underlined his desire for 'unity between the whole Euro-Atlantic area from Vancouver to Vladivostok.' In challenging times, I believe the OSCE can embody precisely such a vision of unity. If the participating States engage fully in this process, I have no doubt that this ambitious goal remains within our grasp.

The OSCE binds the North Atlantic, Europe and Eurasia together in a forum for permanent dialogue and joint action, founded on an ambitious concept of security. It is a place that has the potential to weave together all the strands of Greater Europe, along with its various institutions.

Exploring these ideas would require addressing the legitimate concerns of the States of this region, including those in the political-military area. At the same time, the essentials that we have already acquired must be preserved in terms of shared values and democratic commitments. At the heart of the OSCE lies the principle that security requires political-military co-operation between States, the development of healthy economic and environmental governance, and the protection of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. This cross-dimensional approach is the OSCE's signature strength, and it is the inheritance of 33 years of work between all members of Greater Europe.

On this basis, we have achieved together so much in the past. Let us ensure this foundation remains as we move towards the future.

Thank you for your attention. I look forward to your comments.