



Vienna

**Reinforced Permanent Council 1 July 2004: Statement by Ambassador  
Krister Bringéus**

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Mr Chairman,

1. Sweden obviously subscribes to the statement made by the Netherlands on behalf of the EU. I would just like to add a few words on issues of particular importance to my government.
2. But before doing so, let me Mr Chairman congratulate you for a job well done during the past six months, and wish you all success working your way towards Sofia. There is one specific point where I would urge you to show particular leadership. It concerns the new scales of contributions. We need a quick solution. No scales – is no budget – is no OSCE. And that we don't need.
3. Chairman, the OSCE is increasingly responding to a number of "new" threats. And it is of course necessary to respond to these new threats. But in this process we should not lose track of the OSCE's primary tasks – we know which they are. Here, I would like to stress, the field operations have a crucial role to play. It is through the field operations that the OSCE can act in a concrete way.

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4. We should also not lose track of the so called frozen conflicts.  
Renewed efforts are required by this organization and by the parties. If we would be able to report progress in Sofia, this would indeed be a tremendous step. On Georgia: in a situation where we see possibilities for progress, it is of utmost importance that the potential of the OSCE is fully used.
5. Chairman, it will come as no surprise to you that the gender aspect is an issue to which we attach great importance. Let me be clear - this is one area where improvement is needed in our organization. We are disappointed that the OSCE is lagging behind other organizations when it comes to representation of women.
6. There is a need for the gender aspect to be integrated in all parts of the OSCE's work. At the Annual Security Review Conference, Sweden proposed that the OSCE could provide an arena for a first female military exchange of experience from crisis management operations. I promise you: we will follow up on this idea.
7. We fully support the work in the Working Group so skillfully co-chaired by Norway and Russia, and would like to see the speedy adoption of a revised gender action plan. For our part we are strongly committed to the concept of an equal opportunities ombudsman, and has suggested that this concept be promoted among all 55 participating States.

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8. The combat against trafficking in human beings is indeed a priority for our organization. We are pleased by the appointment of the Special Representative, Dr. Helga Konrad, earlier this spring and convinced that her appointment will bring new impetus to the OSCE's efforts to counter this evil.
  
9. Chairman, my last point concerns the OSCE's outreach activities. Under the able leadership of ambassador Härkönen, work is going on to implement the ministerial decision from Maastricht. For our part, we would like to see these efforts resulting in a more substantial meaning of the partnerships – through concrete activities. We believe that the OSCE could make valuable contributions in Afghanistan. We also believe that the OSCE's lessons learned in conflict prevention could be useful in other regions than our own and should be spread there. Thank you, Mr Chairman.