



ҚАЗАҚСТАН РЕСПУБЛИКАСЫ
THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

Address of H.E. Dr. Marat Tazhin,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan
16th OSCE Ministerial Council
Helsinki, December 4, 2008

Dear Mr. Chairman,
Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to express my gratitude to the Finnish Chairmanship and, particularly, Minister Alexander Stubb for the fruitful work and excellent organization of the Ministerial Council here in Helsinki. I would also like to welcome the incoming Greek Chairmanship, and I wish Minister Dora Bakoyannis every success in carrying out this important mission.

The familiar world order has changed significantly in recent times. This relates to our Organization as well.

In such circumstances, it is crucially important to overcome a lack of understanding and ensure uniformity in interpretation of international norms. Only then will we be able to create an environment for the development of optimal confidence measures, which are essential for strengthening cooperation in the OSCE area.

Kazakhstan just recently welcomed the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Western and Muslim countries at the 'Common World Forum' – subtitled 'Progress Through Diversity' – a conference that took place in Astana in October.

Perhaps, for the first time ever, more than fifty States of different cultural and confessional persuasions agreed on a unique document – **the Astana Declaration** – which, in our opinion, is an excellent platform for continuing political dialogue.

To develop an agenda and strategy for our future OSCE Chairmanship, Kazakhstan this year elaborated and adopted a state programme titled 'Path to Europe'. Our goal is to bring relations with European countries to the level of

strategic partnership, actively employ European models to improve our laws, attract advanced technologies and expertise in management and institutional evolution.

We introduced a package of amendments to the laws on elections, political parties and the media to the Kazakhstan Parliament this November.

We consider these steps as an important component of our Chairmanship. As Chair we will focus on preserving and strengthening the OSCE as the largest regional security forum – open for an equal dialogue on the basis of **development of all three dimensions of the Organization**. We believe that restoration of balance among the three dimensions without diminishing the importance of any of them is a top-priority task.

Mr. Chairman,

Today the main topic on our agenda is the Organization's relevance and its ability to adjust to modern realities. It is important for us to take a decision as to whether the OSCE can become a real instrument in ensuring the principle of common and comprehensive security or whether it exists as a mute player on the global security scene.

We need to relieve the Organization from the **accusations of selectivity and application of double standards**. Apparently, measures being undertaken to increase its effectiveness are not sufficient.

It is important to continue improving the existing OSCE instruments, including field missions. We believe that expectations and approaches of host countries must be determinant for field missions in implementing their tasks.

We also believe that the OSCE needs to develop closer partnerships with other regional structures, namely with the SCO and CSTO on issues of the post-conflict rehabilitation of Afghanistan.

All the above mentioned issues speak in favor of convening a highest level meeting to discuss the future of European security.

I would like to express our support to the corresponding initiative of Russia to elaborate a document on European security. I think, the OSCE is good platform to tackle the issues of consolidating common security architecture in the Euro-Atlantic.

The OSCE must adjust to the changed reality, preserve its influence and become a renewed platform for dialogue that unites Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian areas.

Thank you for your attention.