

ASTANA DECLARATION

By the Chairperson-in-Office

Distinguished Delegates,

Let me sum up the proceedings of this Expert Conference on Successful Strategies, Effective Policies and Best Practices to Prevent Terrorism, in what I would like to call the

“Astana Declaration”.

Based on discussions and consultations, I understand that the OSCE participating States,

Supporting the OSCE counter-terrorism approach based on a comprehensive concept regarding security, anchored in the rule of law and respect for human rights;

Willing to develop policies and share best practices in preventing the spread of terrorism;

Focusing on strategies and policies designed to prevent and combat terrorism as a transnational threat; the implementation of the international legal framework related to terrorism; the role of national capacity and institution-building; public-private partnerships (PPPs) and the role of regional organizations; and the identification and sharing of effective policies and good practices to counter the violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism;

Jointly collecting ideas, proposals and possible recommendations for an OSCE Summit Document designed to enhance the capabilities of the participating States to prevent terrorism;

Taking note of the report of the Secretary General on the Implementation of MC.DEC/2/09 on Further OSCE Efforts to Address Transnational Threats and Challenges to Security and Stability (SEC.GAL/107/10), which contains recommendations to further guide OSCE counter-terrorism activities in the context of addressing transnational threats;

1. State that terrorism is a global, regional and local phenomenon and requires an equally multifaceted and comprehensive response. International co-operation and co-ordination are key to facing this transnational threat.

2. Terrorism should not be associated with any religion, culture or ethnic group. While there are many drivers of terrorism, it is often individually perceived injustices that lead individuals to choose violence as a means to address grievances. Addressing legitimate grievances resulting from adverse economic, political and social conditions should be part of a comprehensive approach to preventing terrorism.

3. Global efforts to counter terrorism are not effective unless regional and sub-regional action is taken. Regional organizations are often better equipped to know and act upon the security concerns of their constituents and to deliver targeted assistance in capacity-building guided by international instruments and standards.

4. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy should be the strategic platform under which regional organizations can build consensus, co-ordinate their efforts, and work together towards effective and active implementation of the Strategy, as well as the monitoring of its implementation.

5. Countering terrorism is a shared responsibility. Effective action to counter terrorism requires active public-private partnerships (PPPs) between governments and civil society, the private sector, the media and academia. Such collaboration needs to be institutionalized to ensure sustainability and effectiveness.

6. Efforts to prevent terrorism should focus special attention on the role of women and youth, both as victims and as potential perpetrators of terrorist acts. Women can have a stabilizing influence in communities and play an important role in countering and preventing violent extremism.

7. The respect and promotion of human rights are in themselves one of the most effective tools for preventing terrorism and the violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism. Counter-terrorism measures which violate international human rights standards are counter-productive. They undermine the rule of law and the credibility and ability of public authorities to address the threat, thus diminishing participating States' long-term security.

8. The universal conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, as well as relevant regional legal instruments, not only codify and criminalize terrorist offences, but also establish the jurisdiction and the legal framework

for effective mutual legal assistance and extradition. There is a need to enact relevant domestic laws to criminalize the offences outlined in the international legal instruments relating to counter-terrorism.

9. Academia has a vital role to play in preventing terrorism. Especially youth need to be made resilient to simplistic extremist propaganda that offers violence as a solution for tackling grievances.

10. Law enforcement agencies should pay particular attention to providing timely and factual information to the media to ensure accurate reporting. The media, in turn, should take particular care not to sensationalize terrorism-related incidents unintentionally and thus play into the hands of terrorists.

11. The Internet has become a primary tool for use by terrorists to identify, recruit and train new members; collect and transfer funds; organize terrorist acts; and incite terrorist violence. The Internet has also become a potential target as well as a means for carrying out cyber attacks. Effective counter-measures require international co-operation and need to uphold privacy rights and freedom of expression.

12. Better knowledge of effective national approaches and best practices will enrich the toolbox of the participating States in dealing with the violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism.

13. Investment in early recognition and confidence-building between communities and government representatives is crucial. Political, social and economic policies geared towards inclusion of minority groups and individuals should be developed as an integral part of counter-terrorism strategies.

14. The security situation in Afghanistan has wider implications for regional as well as international security.

15. The participating States would consider the following OSCE follow-up activities:

- Initiating and implementing a public-private partnership counter-terrorism project on the security of tourism and related transportation infrastructure. As a first step, an expert seminar should be convened in 2011 in Vienna with the participation of the OSCE participating States, tourism operators, and counter-terrorism-related international structures.

- Strengthening and deepening OSCE capacity-building activities with governments and civil society to prevent terrorism, especially in the area of the violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism, making full use of the Organization's comprehensive concept of security.
- Stepping up activities as a regional implementer, assisting OSCE participating States in applying the existing international legal instruments, and offering a platform for exchanging best practices related to the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.
- Holding annual OSCE conferences on countering terrorism.