

**Statement by the Head of the Slovak Delegation  
H. E. Peter Burian  
State Secretary  
of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic  
to  
The OSCE Ministerial Meeting  
(Dublin, 6 – 7 December, 2012)**

ENGLISH only

Chairperson,  
Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me join previous speakers in thanking the Irish Chairmanship for the excellent preparation of the Ministerial Council, its intensive work and pragmatic leadership of the organization during the whole year.

Let me also use this opportunity to specially greet our 57<sup>th</sup> participating State, Mongolia, be warmly welcome to this unique Organization.

Ministerial Council provides opportunity to assess what we achieved in the past year and where we stand in the process of realization of the Astana Summit vision, creation of an indivisible comprehensive security community in Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian region. In this regards we commend the Irish presidency for its balanced approach to all three OSCE dimensions. We also welcome its concentration on quality rather than quantity of substantive decisions and declarations in this respect. Let me make a couple of points we consider important for current and future work of the OSCE.

Firstly, I would like to highlight the importance and necessity of preserving and strengthening the autonomy and efficiency of the OSCE institutions. They contribute to high performance of the organization in crucial areas of implementation of Helsinki commitments and principles. They represent and deliver concrete results of our effective co-operation, something we all should be ultimately proud of. Next year the institution of the High Commissioner for National Minorities, whose work through a silent diplomacy strongly contributes to conflict prevention, will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. I want to use this opportunity to express our appreciation of a highly professional work of High commissioner Vollebaek and his predecessor.

Election monitoring is the flagship activity of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). The ODIHR has played an important role in helping participating States to implement their commitment for realizing free and fair election processes. We believe, however, that ODIHR can and should play similarly an important role in other areas of strengthening respect for human rights and performance of democratic institutions in OSCE participating States. That is why we welcome and support the draft decision on strengthening efforts to combat racism and xenophobia as well as the draft decision on the freedom of peaceful assembly and the freedom of association in the OSCE area.

Finally valuable work of the Representative for Freedom of Media is indispensable especially today, in the time of new digital media. Internet brought us new challenges in the media sector and it is of utmost importance to safeguard the freedom of expression also in this new era.

Mr Chairman,

We made progress and definitely achieved some positive results in our organisation. Nevertheless, the OSCE's *acquis*, particularly, and not only, in the human dimension,

continues to be challenged by a number of participating States. We believe, that stagnation if not a step back in the implementation of adopted commitments endangers the basics of the OSCE concept and hampers our endeavour on the way to the envisaged comprehensive security community.

We call on all participating States to fully comply in good faith with their international commitments. Based on our own transformation experience we can confirm that the international commitments have importance for achieving our current level of prosperity and stability.

Another area which demands our proactive approach in form of new commitments' acceptance is Arms control and Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs). At the Astana summit two years ago we all confirmed that the Vienna document, a key CSBMs document, needed to be updated. Since then, we have managed to agree only on its technical update. It did not help us in bringing this important CSBMs document in conformity with the military reality of the 21st century.

The Conventional Arms Control is a very complex issue. We believe that only a strong political signal from all sides can help to foster talks which might not only bring a significant qualitative shift to the current Vienna document CSBMs, but also to overcome current deadlock in discussions on the future of conventional arms control regime in Europe.

As we are sitting around this table, we all agree that the OSCE represents a unique forum for intergovernmental cooperative dialog. We are all aware that the OSCE community continues to face a wide range of challenges, among others unsolved protracted conflicts. It is our responsibility to address them in order to make the OSCE region a safe, economically stable and a better place to live.

Slovakia is a young country, which experienced a complex and strenuous process of transformation. We are ready to assist other countries addressing the same kinds of challenges. In this regard we understand that the intergovernmental cooperation can take various shapes. Slovakia on its part wants to continue providing a technical support through its various instruments and programmes such as CETIR – Center for Exchange of Transformation and Integration Experience.

Let's make sure that the OSCE keeps pace with the speed of new security developments. We do hope to adopt the tabled decision on Helsinki+40 process, which will, in our view, represent an important political impetus and basic orientation for future results-driven discussions within the OSCE.

Next year one of our neighbours – Ukraine will chair the OSCE. We appreciate the clarity of ideas on Ukrainian's priorities and advanced state of preparations for the Chairmanship. Slovakia is ready to offer full support both in political and practical terms. We wish the incoming Ukrainian Chairmanship every success in this demanding and challenging role.

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

In conclusion, let me express my hope in holding a successful Ministerial Council here in Dublin, which will be demonstrated by adoption of decisions in each of the OSCE's dimension.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.