



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

**Report by the
OSCE Secretary General,
Ambassador Marc Perrin de Brichambaut,
to the 14th OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting**

Brussels, 4 December 2006

“Furthering the Coherence of the OSCE”

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, in your opening speech to the Permanent Council in January, you urged us all to seize the opportunities that lay before us and to accept the responsibilities of our tasks. In taking forward this appeal, the Belgian Chairmanship has done much to help focus and improve the work of the OSCE. Our work over the next two days will pay tribute to your energy and ambition.

After the anniversary year of 2005, this year has featured hard work from all participating States, guided by the Chairman-in-Office, to strengthen the work of the Organization. As Secretary General of the OSCE, I welcome the spirit of this attention and look forward to the decisions that you will take during this Ministerial Council.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The OSCE agenda is expanding not decreasing.

Today and tomorrow, the OSCE participating States will be providing collectively to the Organization the guidance it needs in bringing forward the values they share. These values are held true by us all, but the commitment for their implementation is very demanding, as they touch upon a broad array of subjects and go deep in our societies.

Can the participating States effectively co-operate and help each other in implementing the commitments to which they have agreed, given their different perspectives and different situations?

In addressing this question, the OSCE faces the **strategic challenge of coherence**.

Coherence must be built at three levels.

- First the OSCE faces the imperative of ensuring coherence between the body of commitments which participating States have entered into and the necessary process of their adaptation and implementation.
- Second, greater coherence is needed between the three Dimensions of the OSCE, and its various Institutions and units.
- Third, there has to be coherence between the priorities of action that are set for the OSCE and the resources that are required to advance them.

With your permission, I will explore each of these levels in more depth.

How can we ensure that the body of commitments to which participating States have agreed is reflected in a coherent process of implementation?

The common *acquis* of standards and commitments that are adopted and constantly refined lie at the core of the OSCE and act as a compass guiding the behavior of participating States in all instances.

They are a reason for pride and also a responsibility, as we must live up to the aspirations they have encouraged in their own societies.

Implementation is not a one-off decision. It is a path of persistent engagement and patience, characterized by many small steps and progressive changes in attitudes, cultures and institutions.

Peer pressure and mutual assistance are the two approaches privileged by the OSCE to encourage progress along this road.

Participating States have also stressed over the years the importance of multi-Dimensional approaches to security, where all initiatives reinforce each other. Great progress has been achieved on this score. Much remains to be done for participating States to reach comparable stages in the process of transition to fully democratic States and societies, respecting all the rights of the individual.

In times of uncertainty and change, the OSCE participating States will face new challenges to their values. In this sense, implementation of past commitments always opens the way to adaptation and to further implementation.

The ODIHR Report, “*Common Responsibility: Commitment and Implementation*,” made the point eloquently: “The OSCE must live up to the aspirations of an earlier

generation, as well as the spirit of the OSCE's achievements, which continue to encourage so many in the region and beyond.”

Living up to the responsibilities of the past implies the responsibility to act in the present and to continue working in the future. We must all co-operate in an even-handed and constructive manner to ensure that the living body of OSCE commitments are always fully implemented and continuously adapted to new realities. These commitments are agreed to by consensus for the sake of collective peace and security, and we should never settle for less.

The second challenge of coherence is that of balancing activities across the three Dimensions and between the Institutions of the Organization.

Our approach to security is and should remain comprehensive and multi-dimensional. The link between human rights, security and development has been integral to the OSCE since the Helsinki Final Act. We cannot afford weak links in this chain.

Developing coherence across the three Dimensions is integral, and it should be, to everything the OSCE does. The logic is simple and concrete: Many challenges to the security of our States and their societies are complex, dynamic and trans-national. The threat posed by international organized crime is a case in point. Tackling such challenges demonstrates the value of a comprehensive approach that cuts across the OSCE's three Dimensions and makes the most of the synergy between them.

On this point, I draw your attention to the OSCE-led Environmental Assessment Mission to fire-affected territories in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region, further to UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/60/285. This mission was led by the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, and, we hope, will lay the basis for further co-operation on a key question of shared concern.

The convening of a Donor Conference in Brussels and the recent launch of the international programme of economic rehabilitation within the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict also illustrates the imperative of multi-dimensionality leading the OSCE. The Economic Rehabilitation Programme will help lay the foundation for greater confidence with the aim of stimulating progress at the political level in the talks on conflict settlement.

The view that security can only be comprehensive and multifaceted is shared with many, in particular by other international organizations. We must ensure with other European and international organizations a common purpose and close co-

operation. Overlapping memberships and mandates should be, indeed, a positive attribute as well as a resource for the OSCE, working to the benefit of all participating States.

I wish to mention here the Partner States, which play an important role in bringing new perspectives to OSCE debates. Sharing experience as well as the compendium of OSCE values and commitments must remain the logic of our interaction.

We must also ensure greater internal cohesion in what is a highly decentralized Organization. On this, I look forward to continued close co-operation between all parts of the OSCE family, and chiefly the Field Operations, which advance the OSCE's comprehensive approach at the grass-roots level.

The spirit of the multi-dimensional approach to security is demonstrated every day by the actions of the OSCE Institutions. The High Commissioner on National Minorities remains as sharply relevant today for tackling delicate issues as it was when established in 1992. The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights presents a model for setting standards of good practice in building democratic institutions and adapting them continually to changing circumstances. The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media works patiently and ceaselessly to provide participating States with early warning on violations of freedom of expression.

Based on the bedrock value of co-operative security, OSCE Institutions work naturally and fluently across the three Dimensions to help participating States to help themselves in implementing their commitments and adapting them for new needs.

The third requirement of coherence is to balance priorities and the resources for their pursuit.

We are aware that the context of our work within the OSCE family is not easy. As is their right, participating States enjoin the Organization to work within limited resources, and you have reminded us of the realities of 'zero growth' of the budget for the Organization and its Institutions.

This reality imposes on all of us the responsibilities of discipline and method. Discipline, in terms of considering where and how to design programmatic activities for the upcoming year. Method, because decisions can and should only be exercised in a systematic and strategically-determined manner.

Managing a de-centralized Organization such as this, with its comprehensive approach to security, is a tall order. Improving our effectiveness in a restrained budgetary environment calls for greater transparency and more internal co-ordination. Steps are being taken here, and we can do more. The launch of Performance based Programme and Budgeting is a case in point. It is important

here that we maintain momentum in moving from the pilot cases to a gradual roll-out of what is internationally recognized as efficient methodology.

Equally, realistic taskings that are adequately resourced are a key ingredient for success.

Ensuring coherence as we adapt the OSCE to new circumstances and tackling new threats – this requires participating States to make choices. Choices about how to husband resources, choices about where to invest new efforts, and choices about where the Organization adds value.

In making choices, it is incumbent upon us that we retain the Organization's focus on core activities like preventing armed conflict, protecting human rights, strengthening democracy and promoting good economic governance and environmental responsibility. These core tasks should not be diluted; they continue to constitute the historic legitimacy of the OSCE.

Over the next two days, you will take decisions and issue statements that will further define and strengthen the OSCE's role. I wish you every success in these important efforts.

It is my duty to call on your continued support to provide resources and human talent for OSCE activities, both through the unified budget and extra-budgetary contributions.

For my part, I intend to implement the mandate to support the current and future Chairmanships and to ensure the decisions that all of you have taken together are implemented. I will also remain an active participant in the process of strengthening the effectiveness of this Organization that I feel so passionately about.

Experience shows that the Organization can respond with innovation to new risks determined by the participating States based on a pragmatic assessment of our priorities. It is our responsibility to assess with care which issues the OSCE can and should address and how the Organization should do so with coherence.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our mission statement is simply put: The OSCE works for stability, democracy and prosperity throughout fifty six states and their societies by building a common sense of purpose through political dialogue about shared values and by focusing on practical work, including where invited in the field, that makes a lasting difference.

The OSCE is not a military alliance or an economic union. It is a community of values as much as a community of interests. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that the commitments designed to uphold those values are applied and remain in force. This is the difficult task of all participating States, led by the Chairman-in-Office who acts as the catalyst for their engagement.

This Organization is a political forum, whose vitality derives from the political will engaged in its workings by each and every participating State. I thank participating States for this necessary attention. I look forward to the new political impetus that will result from your deliberations and count on the leadership of Spain, as the future Chairman-in-Office, in taking this forward in 2007.

Thank you for your attention and your continued support.