

Delegation of Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER GROUCHKO,  
DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE  
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE OPENING OF THE OSCE  
ANNUAL SECURITY REVIEW CONFERENCE**

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Mr. Chairman,

The format of this meeting provides us with an opportunity to engage in a frank discussion of the key issues involved in ensuring security within the OSCE area.

Twenty years after the end of the Cold War, there is still no reliable, comprehensive and integrated security architecture throughout the area extending from Vancouver to Vladivostok. The OSCE has played a positive role in overcoming inter-bloc confrontation, but has failed to take its place as the shaper of such an architecture. The politico-military aspects of security have been gradually filtered out of the political dialogue and attention to confidence-building and arms control instruments has waned. At the same time, the Charter for European Security, which was formally adopted in Istanbul in 1999, clearly states that “the politico-military aspects of security remain vital to the interests of participating States. They constitute a core element of the OSCE’s concept of comprehensive security”.

Today we have all become witnesses to a growing trend towards a fragmentation of the “common and indivisible security space” whose formation was called for in the Charter for European Security. Numerous regional organizations are operating in this space quite separately from one another and in accordance with a logic of their own, as they pursue their own agendas in the security area. At times, these agendas coincide in tactical terms, but more often they are in competition with, and even in contradiction to, one another. As a result, Europe is being split, individual States or whole groups of countries are becoming isolated and harm is being done to our common security. This situation runs directly counter to Article 8 of the Charter for European Security. Let me recall what that article says: “Within the OSCE no State, group of States or organization can have any pre-eminent responsibility for maintaining peace and stability in the OSCE area or can consider any part of the OSCE area as its sphere of influence”.

Clearly, these processes cannot but affect the security interests of Russia, which by all standards — cultural, social and in terms of spiritual values — is an integral part of Europe. Our country, having restored the economic, political and military role that it has historically played, does not regard its security in isolation, that is to say outside of a global and regional context. However events may unfold, we shall find the means to ensure our own security

through our own efforts, but we would prefer to continue to invest in a mechanism of interaction and co-operation in the interests of all members of the Euro-Atlantic community and in the interests of maintaining stability on a global scale. And the fact that Russia intends to do everything it can to free the way for natural integration processes within the area of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and has no intention of joining either NATO or the European Union (EU) does not in any way signal a weakening of its readiness to engage in joint activities on a basis of parity.

The world has changed and the radically new kind of security conditions that have arisen require innovative and genuinely collective approaches.

We are today proposing that we take a pause, that we undertake a fundamental assessment of the situation and that we give joint thought to the future, suspending for the time being the implementation of projects that hold no promise of contributing to the drawing together of Europe.

President Dmitry Medvedev of the Russian Federation has put forward an initiative for the drafting of a new legally binding document — a Treaty on European Security — that would set out both the concrete principles to govern mutual relations and also the mutual obligations of States and organizations active in the security area over the medium and long term. As part of the work on this document it would be useful to refer to the Platform for Co-operative Security that was adopted at the OSCE Istanbul Summit in 1999 and that sets out the principles governing interaction among organizations in the OSCE area. It goes without saying that such a treaty must be based on the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and must genuinely embody the key principle of the Helsinki Final Act, namely the indivisibility of security.

With a view to conducting a substantive dialogue on security issues aimed at reaching specific understandings, we propose the convening of an international forum at the highest level involving all the countries and leading organizations of the Euro-Atlantic area, including the OSCE, NATO, the EU, the CIS and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

We are convinced that only through this kind of broad and honest discussion shall we be able to reach a new consensus on security issues and create the foundation, required today as never before, for pooling efforts and capabilities as we seek responses to new risks. We trust that as the work on this document proceeds, our concerns regarding the way in which security conditions are evolving will be listened to in a spirit of partnership and taken into account.

We are perplexed by the voices raised calling for a policy of “containing Russia”, *inter alia* by expanding NATO and building up military capabilities on our borders.

Russia respects the right of other countries “to be or not to be” members of military alliances. But let us give some thought to this option, for the continuation of the “open door” policy is nothing more than a signal to the effect that NATO alone can ensure real security. This policy in fact calls into question the purpose of all the other instruments, such as the OSCE and the CSTO, if they are unable to fully guarantee security. A policy of this kind weakens pan-European security and results in the emergence of new fault lines within it.

This situation is further complicated by the seemingly insoluble crisis surrounding the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, one of the co-operative security instruments born literally out the pain of Europe's entire preceding history, by the general stagnation of the arms control process, and also by US plans to deploy elements of an anti-missile defence system in Europe. I shall make no mention in this statement of the destabilizing effect of that project on the strategic balance between Russia and the United States of America, which for decades has served as the basis for the maintenance of stability in the world. I shall touch instead on another point. The third US anti-missile defence system deployment area has been heralded by Washington as a panacea against missile threats, but the fact is that this project is being implemented behind closed doors, with no account taken of the interests of Russia or, for that matter, of other European countries as well. In effect, our continent is being turned into a kind of strategic frontline and a hostage to the politico-military aspirations of a single nation. Can this represent genuine partnership? Russia is proposing a clear and precise alternative to these plans — a collective programme of action that would make it possible to neutralize reliably missile threats without provoking an arms race or giving rise to new divisions.

We are also concerned at the attempts being undertaken under the guise of global responsibility to provide justification for scenarios envisaging the use of force or the threat of its use without authorization by the United Nations Security Council, and also the enshrinement of such scenarios as doctrinal politico-military premises within the North Atlantic Alliance.

A serious challenge has arisen in the form of the unilateral proclamation of independence by Kosovo, a step that has set an extremely dangerous precedent in leaving the framework of the fundamental principles of the Helsinki Final Act. As a result, issues involving the territorial integrity of States and the inviolability of borders have once again moved to the centre of the European agenda. The conflicting array of approaches to "frozen conflicts" is fraught with the danger that these conflicts may ultimately enter a "hot" phase. One of the lessons of the "Kosovo story", where it is still not too late to return the situation to a legal framework, is that it is essential that clear and systematic principles for conflict settlement be devised, principles that must be observed by all OSCE participating States and that must be applied to all the conflicts in its area.

Generally speaking, however, the erosion of the principles for ensuring security has advanced so far that we now all need to consider legal guarantees that would reliably ensure the interests of all the members of the Euro-Atlantic community.

Mr. Chairman,

There is today no single area of international relations, whether having to do with non-proliferation, countering terrorism, resolving local crises and conflicts, or ensuring energy security and the stability of financial markets (and this list could be further extended), where Russia is not acting to promote security.

We are convinced that the time has come for all of us to rise above “bloc-based solidarity” and give thought to the fate of a common Greater Europe and to its future. We are ready to engage in joint efforts to formulate a long-term and predictable pan-European security system.

Thank you for your attention.