



Chairmanship: Finland

**PERCEPTION PAPER OF THE CHAIRMAN-IN-OFFICE ON
RENEWING THE SPIRIT OF HELSINKI ***

We, the Foreign Ministers of participating States of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, meet in the birthplace of the Helsinki process to set a course for our future action. We underscore the role that our Organization has played in erasing the lines that once divided our countries. We also recognise the indispensable contribution of our Organization to the establishment of unique arms control and confidence building regimes. We are committed to use the OSCE to promote security and co-operation in its region, guided by the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We reaffirm that the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent jointly agreed OSCE documents remain the foundation of our work. We will apply the OSCE principles in a consistent manner and in keeping with international law, contributing to the formation of a common and indivisible security space free of dividing lines. We remain dedicated to a co-operative and comprehensive approach to security based on our common values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

We undertake to reconfirm common purpose as the basis for our action. In order to respond to today's challenges in the spirit of Helsinki:

- We reaffirm our adherence to all OSCE principles and commitments. All OSCE commitments, without exception, apply equally to each participating State. Their implementation will remain the basis of our common work also in the future. We pledge that our States will be accountable to each other and to their citizens in implementing OSCE principles and commitments.
- We continue to support each other in working towards our common goals. We recognise the OSCE's continued contribution to the stability and consolidation of democracy in all its participating States. We will endeavour to further strengthen the effectiveness of the Organisation. We will deepen our practical efforts in support of OSCE participating States, further developing concrete programmes through OSCE institutions and field operations in close consultation with the host countries. We will continue OSCE activities in Kosovo in close co-operation with the United Nations and other international institutions.

* The Chairman-in-Office requested this perception paper be attached to the journal of the day on 5 December 2008. The text is identical to Rev.3/Corr.1 of the draft Ministerial declaration.

- We are determined to address unresolved conflicts in the OSCE area as a matter of priority. We are seriously concerned over their negative consequences for regional and human security, and will re-invigorate our efforts to promote their settlement. Lasting solutions can only be based on a negotiated settlement in accordance with OSCE principles. We call on the parties to the Transnistrian settlement process to resume without preconditions constructive work in the 5+2 negotiating format to achieve a durable solution. We welcome the constructive and positive momentum in the peace process for the political settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict established after the meetings of the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan and the signing of the Moscow Declaration on 2 November 2008.
- We commend the prompt action by the Chairman-in-Office in response to the armed conflict in Georgia in August 2008. We call on all the parties to fulfil commitments in accordance with the agreements of 12 August and 8 September. We support a continued role for the OSCE in monitoring the ceasefire and working to restore confidence, and will strengthen OSCE field presence throughout the affected areas. The Geneva process, co-chaired by the EU, UN and OSCE, provides a useful platform for building security and stability in the region and addressing the question of refugees and displaced persons.
- We are convinced that action to safeguard arms control regimes negotiated within the OSCE framework is urgently needed. We call on all States Parties to the CFE Treaty to implement their treaty obligations and work together on conditions to enable all Parties to ratify the adapted CFE Treaty to restore the viability of the regime, a cornerstone of European security.
- We will assist participating States to address threats to their citizens and societies. We will strengthen OSCE action in countering terrorism and tackling problems related to small arms and light weapons, as well as combating trafficking in human beings and illicit drugs. We will fight intolerance and discrimination, advance gender equality and promote the development of our pluralistic societies. We will raise awareness of and enhance cooperation in addressing potential security implications of climate change as well as other global threats and challenges.
- We will further develop partnerships in a globalising and increasingly interconnected world. We will enhance our dialogue with the OSCE's Parliamentary Assembly as the Organization's parliamentary dimension. We value the OSCE's relations with our Mediterranean and Asian Partners, and are ready to share our experience in developing co-operative security with other regions. We will deepen our co-operation with other international and regional organisations and institutions on the basis of the Platform for Co-operative Security.

Renewing the spirit of Helsinki requires a willingness to consider new ways to strengthen security across the OSCE area. We take note of recent initiatives of Presidents of Russia and France regarding the strengthening of security from Vancouver to Vladivostok and consider the OSCE a natural forum to follow-up on them. We will engage in substantive exploratory talks building on the ideas and ambitions embodied in this declaration, taking into account the contribution of all existing security institutions in Europe. With a view to promoting our common values, strengthening comprehensive and indivisible security and contributing toward conflict settlement we will be ready to consider the possibility of convening an OSCE High Level meeting.