

Original: ENGLISH



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on the 2009 Annual Security Review Conference

As prepared for delivery by Chargé d'Affaires Carol Fuller
to the Joint FSC-PC, Vienna
September 15, 2009

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

We gather here today to take a look back at the results and accomplishments of the 2009 Annual Security Review Conference. Our discussions as well are intertwined with the dialogue we have undertaken under the umbrella of the Corfu Process. We have already had two productive exchanges - one last week looking at international norms and principles and one just this morning when we considered cooperative security and the varying levels of security in the OSCE area. Accordingly, our session this afternoon is timely and welcome.

As we consider the results of the ASRC, it is important to recall that the security dimension that the ASRC represents is only one of the three OSCE dimensions that reflect our comprehensive view of factors that affect European security. And while on the one hand, we are reviewing commitments and implementation in each of the dimensions during the Corfu process dialogue, on the other, we should integrate observations from the Corfu dialogue back into each of the dimensions. As an example, at the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in a few weeks time in Warsaw, the U.S. Delegation will be sponsoring a side event where a security expert will explore the vital link between the implementation of human dimension and durable European security.

The most notable feature of this year's ASRC was the address by Russian FM Lavrov. In his remarks, FM Lavrov fleshed out Russia's thinking on the current challenges facing European security and provided some ideas on how we might address them. This built on the speech last year by President Medvedev, which has served as the impetus and basis for our Corfu Process discussions.

Madam Chair, we share much of the vocabulary of concern that FM Lavrov used in his remarks. However, the conclusions we drew from that meeting take us to a different destination. The OSCE acquis built up over four decades has clearly brought Europe to a more secure place. Nevertheless, recent trends and events have also exposed some genuine limitations of implementation.

FM Lavrov, in his statement to the ASRC, emphasized the importance of the indivisibility of security and said it should be the basis for our discussions on European security. We agree that this is an important concept, and it is one which the United States fully supports. It is important, however, to be clear what we mean by this term, which is found in such important foundational documents as the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris,

and the Rome Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of NATO Member States and the Russian Federation.

One important component of indivisible security is the comprehensive nature of security as embodied in the three dimensions of the OSCE: human, economic, and political-military. Another important component is the indivisibility of security among states. In that regard, we believe that all states have a right to freely choose their own alliances, and no state should be allowed a “sphere of privileged interests.” A third and related element is the recognition, particularly in the security environment we face today, that the security of Europe and Eurasia is inextricably bound up with global security. Finally, a fourth principle of the indivisibility of security is the appreciation that security within states impacts security among states. Defined in this context, then, we fully share FM Lavrov’s view that security in Europe is indeed indivisible.

As to the ASRC working sessions, we found them stimulating and worthwhile. We share the conclusions from the first session that the OSCE should improve its instruments and mechanisms with respect to conflict prevention, have a unified approach and more effectively utilize its institutions and field missions to that end. In that respect, and in the spirit of constructive engagement with our partners, we plan to distribute shortly a proposal for an OSCE Crisis Prevention and Response Mechanism that could be enacted either through a PC or Ministerial Decision. We welcome the comments and reactions of other delegations and look forward to making tangible progress in this important area.

At the arms control session, we agreed with those who urged that the CFE treaty remain a cornerstone of European security. We further agreed that priority should be given to countering any further erosion of the CFE regime and to preventing an adverse impact on other arms control instruments. In that respect, we hope that intensified negotiations on a draft parallel actions package will help us resolve the impasse over the CFE. It might be useful to consider targeted proposals to improve the Vienna Document that don’t require reopening it for negotiation. We also believe that our focus should be on seeking ways to improve implementation of existing CSBMs and commitments.

The final session on counterterrorism provided a powerful illustration of the kinds of new threats facing the OSCE area and provided some valuable insights into opportunities for a shared response. We share the view that the OSCE is uniquely suited to look at the broad array of factors, such as socio-economic characteristics and ethnic, religious and ethnic environments, which can fuel radicalization leading to terrorism. This is clearly an area where we can, and should, look at cross-dimensionality. We look forward to working with partners of the OSCE to develop some targeted proposals of cooperation to combat these threats.

We shared the CiO’s assessment at the close of the meeting that the ASRC could - and it did - make a valuable contribution to the basis of our now ongoing discussions in the Corfu Process.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.