



## **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe**

### **Opening Remarks**

**Lamberto Zannier**  
**OSCE Secretary General**

### **2015 OSCE Asian Conference on the Changing Global Security Environment and Visions of Multilateral Security Co-operation in Asia**

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Ambassador Song,  
Ministers,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank our Korean hosts for organizing an event which promises to be interesting and stimulating. Special thanks in particular to Ambassador Song and the Korean Delegation in Vienna for their excellent work and co-operation with the OSCE Secretariat and the Swiss Chairmanship of the Asian Contact Group in preparing this conference.

As the OSCE continues efforts to advance dialogue and co-operation with its Asian Partners, Korea's role remains critically important. Over the years, the Republic of Korea has been providing considerable financial and human resources to our Organization. Recent support to the OSCE's activities in Ukraine illustrates once again its commitment not only to the OSCE but also to peace and security. In particular, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Republic of Korea and other Asian Partners for their support and generous contributions to the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine and other OSCE activities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We convene here today at a critical time for global and regional security. Armed conflict is once again a reality on European soil and the East-West divide is growing, undermining the very foundations of both European and international security. But we also face a range of new threats to security with a transnational character, several of which we will discuss during the course of this conference. Instability beyond the OSCE region, including in the southern Mediterranean and Afghanistan, is fueling radicalization and violent extremism that lead terrorism, inspiring individuals in many OSCE participating States and Partner countries to leave their homes and become foreign terrorist fighters. At the same time, natural disasters and tensions over natural resources pose increasing risks to international security. We witness migration at an increasingly large scale and this puts pressure on societies in recipient countries. We also face far less visible but quickly growing threats from cyber crime.

What all these rapidly evolving security threats have in common is that their impact is increasingly global. The OSCE participating States and Asian Partners for Co-operation are both affected by these threats, whose magnitude and complexity require international co-operation and joint action to confront them effectively. The long-standing OSCE-Asian

Partnership offers a valuable platform for all stakeholders to adapt to the changing international security scenario by sharing experiences and best practices, and to strengthen our relationship across regions, creating new synergies.

Thanks its flexibility, the OSCE has progressively adapted itself to tackle emerging security challenges. At the 2014 Ministerial Council in Basel, the participating States once again demonstrated their commitment to addressing changing security needs, adopting two Declarations on the OSCE's role in countering kidnapping and hostage-taking committed by terrorist groups, and the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters respectively. The OSCE has also broken new ground in the field of cyber security, as it remains to date the only international organization that has adopted a set of Confidence-Building Measures to reduce the risks of conflict stemming from the use of information and communication technologies. Finally, the Organization is striving to increase its ability to deal with the environmental dimension of security, as demonstrated by last year's Ministerial Council Decision on enhancing disaster risk reduction. The Organization is now working across the OSCE region to support its participating States in implementing activities in line with these documents. I am very glad that co-operation opportunities in these thematic areas will be explored during this conference, as the OSCE is certainly well equipped to share some of its expertise.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Ambassador Žugić just reminded us, the Helsinki Final Act's ten fundamental principles of security have served as the foundation of the European security order for decades. Although the crisis in and around Ukraine has shaken this foundation, these principles are sound, and the OSCE concept of comprehensive security is more relevant than ever.

The OSCE's operational response to the crisis mobilized the Organization's entire toolbox across its three security dimensions and once again proved its effectiveness. At the strategic and political level, the OSCE has demonstrated its added value as an inclusive platform for dialogue, despite the current climate of bitter divisions and deep mistrust.

Although the OSCE's security concept was developed in a specific historical and geopolitical context and as such cannot and should not be blindly transferred and implemented elsewhere, it still offers many core principles and mechanisms that could be relevant for strengthening security in Asia.

The agreement on a set of principles for inter-state co-operation in Asia could provide a foundation for a regional platform for dialogue where Asian states could raise security concerns and work together to address them. For instance, the risk of incidents in the context of peaceful military activities and exercises could be mitigated through the development of confidence- and security-building measures that provide transparency and predictability. The OSCE has developed significant expertise and valuable experience in this field, and it stands ready to share lessons learned from its advanced regime of arms control and confidence and security-building measures.

You have already set up a number of security frameworks that could interact with the OSCE to share best practices and lessons learned. ASEAN and its Regional Forum, the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat, and the East Asia Summit are all good examples, and the OSCE is ready to explore co-operation opportunities with them as well as with the Northeast Asia Peace and Co-operation Initiative.

The OSCE Secretariat is also open to developing further contacts and co-operation with these and other regional institutions in Asia, for instance through increased interaction at the working level and desk exchanges, which we have already successfully introduced into our working relationships with the UN, the European Union, and other regional organizations and institutions. The OSCE also remains committed to discuss and develop new projects and activities with its Asian Partners for Co-operation.

Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for your attention. I look forward to our discussions.