



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
TO THE OSCE, UN AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

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**Statement of the Delegation of Croatia
delivered by Mr. Mario NOBILO,
Director for Multilateral Affairs in the MFAEI
at the 740th (reinforced) PC Meeting
14 November 2008**

- Like other member countries Croatia expects that the MC in Helsinki will produce important decisions in all areas of activities of the OSCE. We trust that the innovative approach of the current Chairmanship in preparing the Declaration will meet with the positive spirit in producing the consensus text with meaningful political messages.
- After six years marked by the failure to agree on the Declaration at previous Ministerial Councils OSCE deserves that member countries rally their voices in reaffirming the core values and principles of the Organization
- What do we expect from Helsinki? To a large extent this is contained in the statement delivered by the EU Presidency and Croatia shares these points of view.
- The year 2008 has witnessed events which have irrevocably affected the political and security relations in the OSCE region. Certainly among them are the independence of Kosovo and the conflict in Georgia. There are important repercussions of strategic movements on our Continent which have led to the residues of the Cold War era and significant redeployment of military forces including of the nuclear arsenals.
- This situation has led to important initiatives at strengthening of political and security architecture in Europe. The ideas of President Sarkozy and President Medvedev rank highly among them and they deserve to be assessed carefully and with responsibility. In this context our Organization despite its weaknesses and often deserved criticism continues to play an indispensable role in providing co-operation and partnership among its participating states and across the three dimensions. But it is the political will, first and foremost, that needs to be displayed in order to consolidate the existing structures that we have jointly created over the decades. The OSCE is still relevant and capable of confronting current challenges to European security. Our Organization with its achievements as a norm-setting body, with its comprehensive approach to security issues across the three dimensions, its institutions and field presence is well equipped to deal with great challenges in our Region which now faces other global crises such as financial and energy insecurities, climate change and international terrorism.
- The proposal to hold the Summit of the OSCE looks attractive in principle provided that it is well prepared and oriented in the context of strengthening of our Organization and respect for and implementation of its core values.
- We have a new *niche* to give to multilateral institutions a new sense of purpose. We shouldn't miss this opportunity even if the Meeting in Helsinki seems to take place too early in view of

pending political evaluation of strategic issues that are about to take place in the forthcoming weeks and months.

- For Croatia we would like to underline some priorities that need to be addressed in the Declaration:
 - (i) need for identification of priority issues in all areas of activity so as to focus on viable projects of interest to a wider membership. This refers particularly to the competencies of the Economic and Environmental Committee;
 - (ii) the importance of the stability of the region of South-Eastern Europe, constant vigilance in addressing challenges and problems that may arise. To this end 2009 is a crucial year when each country, based on its individual merits and achievements, should proceed further towards the membership of the EU. This objective should be pursued as an important investment into the stability of SEE and the of the European Continent;
 - (iii) in the process of reaching the membership of the EU as well as of NATO the contribution of OSCE field operation is of great importance. In this context conditions for the termination of their mandate, when conditions are fully met, should also be a success story.
 - (iv) strong support to the activities of the ODIHR and to its newly appointed director in bringing all participating States to a closer co-operation, particularly on issues such as election monitoring;
 - (v) our consultation and decision making process has been gradually improved and operational capacities strengthened but there is plenty of room to improve our working methods. Providing legal personality to the OSCE should also contribute to the improvement of the functioning of our Organization.
- While keeping an optimistic note we remain realists. We are aware of the difficulties and of problems that sometimes divide us as well as of current conflicts which are seen with the different interpretation of fundamental principles of the OSCE. The preparatory work until now has opened possibilities for successful outcome of the Helsinki Ministerial. We trust that the Finnish Chairmanship in Office will continue to do its best.