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SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT  
STATES, AT THE MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

Vienna, 22 July 2010

Mr. Chairperson,  
Distinguished Permanent Council participants,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I should like to extend sincere good wishes to you all on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and to thank the Kazakh Chairmanship for inviting me once again to the OSCE headquarters and giving me an opportunity to address such a representative meeting.

It is pleasing to note that as long ago as August 2005 the Council of the CIS Heads of State supported the Republic of Kazakhstan's initiative to chair the OSCE, and that it has become the first member of the Commonwealth to head such an important and prestigious organization. Our Kazakh colleagues are successfully dealing with this challenge and are receiving collective support from the other members of the CIS, in particular with respect to the preparations for and holding of an OSCE Summit in Astana this autumn.

It is symbolic that the Kazakh Chairmanship coincided with the commemoration of a significant date, namely the 65th anniversary of our victory in the Great Patriotic War. All the peoples of the former Soviet Union made a decisive contribution to the achievement of that victory. In the CIS this anniversary year was declared the Year of Veterans of the Great Patriotic War under the motto "We won together". I am certain that we shall never forget the heroic feats of those who saved the world from fascism to give us a future.

Another jubilee date is also drawing closer – in December 2011 the Commonwealth will celebrate its 20th anniversary. The journey taken by the CIS has been far from easy. The Commonwealth has experienced no end of criticism and pessimistic forecasts. However, for all the uncertainty of the current assessments we must not overlook the most important fact – the CIS has withstood the test of durability and confirmed its significance and steadfastness in terms of integration.

We cannot deny the obvious fact that inter-State co-operation within the CIS area has been uninterrupted and that it has proceeded in accordance with its own objective logic and motivation. Its basis has been and continues to be the preservation of mutual ties and

complementarity of the countries' economies, a long-term experience of multilateral co-operation and a common historical and cultural heritage.

Two years have gone by since my previous statement at a similar meeting. This short period of time has been fairly difficult for the world community as a whole and for the Commonwealth, primarily because of the global financial and economic crisis.

If we analyse the economic situation in the Commonwealth countries, we can see that positive trends prevailed here until the autumn of 2008. We observed steady growth in the gross domestic product and the volume of foreign trade. The financial and banking sector also developed at a rapid pace. This enabled the supreme authorities of the CIS to adopt a package of documents to supplement the Concept for the further development of the Commonwealth with new specific agreements, including the Strategy for economic development until 2020 and the Plan for the implementation of its first stage between 2009 and 2011, priority areas for co-operation in the transport sphere, a set of joint measures to enhance food security and a number of other measures.

However, the financial and economic crisis called for the introduction of amendments to the documents adopted and practical efforts undertaken. It must be stressed that under these unusual conditions the leaders of our countries demonstrated a willingness to find agreeable answers to the challenges of the times and were able to maintain the policy of stepping up co-operation.

For example, following a decision by the Council of the CIS Heads of State a permanently functioning conference at the level of CIS financial ministers was established to draw up a plan of joint measures to overcome the consequences of the global financial and economic crisis.

Today, we can say with certainty that the measures adopted together and individually in the Commonwealth States made it possible to mitigate the effects of the crisis on the national economies. Today, according to the CIS Statistical Committee, virtually all of the Commonwealth countries have seen an increase in the most important indicators compared with 2009.

It is entirely understandable that the supreme authorities of the CIS focus their attention primarily on economic, scientific and technical co-operation. In addition to this, positive trends are becoming stronger in other key areas as well.

In the humanitarian sphere, for instance, the formation of common educational and cultural spaces is continuing, activities in the field of science and mass communications are being co-ordinated, work with young people is being enhanced in a qualitative way and relations in sports and tourism are being expanded.

All these processes are being developed at a practical level on the basis of the joint plan for priority measures in the sphere of humanitarian co-operation among the CIS countries for 2009 and 2010.

Over the last two years, around 100 humanitarian projects and events of significance for the Commonwealth have been carried out. The CIS Humanitarian Co-operation Council

and the associated Inter-State Fund are playing an active role in the implementation of these projects.

The annual forums for artists and scientists of the CIS countries are also of importance here.

I should like to highlight another area of co-operation, namely the observation of elections in CIS member States. Over the last two years, around 2,000 people from CIS countries took part in the monitoring of 15 electoral campaigns. With a view to increasing the awareness of the conclusions drawn by the CIS election observation missions, we are ready to circulate their statements on the election results, *inter alia* within the OSCE.

Furthermore, election monitoring was the topic of discussion at round-table meetings organized by the Executive Committee of the CIS in 2008 and 2010 with the participation of representatives of international organizations, including the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

We endeavour to maintain constant working contacts with ODIHR observers during the election observation process, and we exchange views on the conduct of election campaigns and on their results.

Co-operation in election monitoring enables us to draw a more objective conclusion on the elections held and identify areas for further improvement of the electoral process, including the improvement of election observation methods. It is our intention to continue and intensify this kind of co-operation.

Systematic steps to jointly counter global threats and challenges to regional and universal security can be included among the CIS's assets. This work is based on targeted long-term programmes, and a system of co-operation among the competent security agencies has been successfully established and is in operation. In this connection, the joint activities of the CIS countries are carried out with due regard for the leading role played by the United Nations and the need to develop co-operation with other international institutions and their specialized agencies.

The CIS countries as a whole believe it is extremely important to ensure the stable functioning of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in order to strengthen the basis for collective security. That document has stood the test of time and proved itself as a stable basis for the further improvement of co-operation.

In this connection, particular mention should be made of the efforts of a number of CIS countries, namely Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. These countries have concluded a Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, which entered into force in March of last year.

In the context of the nuclear question, the proposal by Kazakhstan regarding the conclusion under the auspices of the United Nations of a Treaty on the Complete and Universal Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons deserves the closest attention.

Extremely important is the initiative by the Russian Federation, which is currently chairing the CIS, to draw up a Treaty on European Security. On 26 March of this year, the

Council of the CIS Foreign Ministers examined and approved that initiative. The majority of the Commonwealth countries supported the decision to foster on a collective and individual basis the discussion and promotion of the draft Treaty aimed at formalizing the principle of indivisible security in the pan-European area.

For the first time, international organizations operating in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area have also been invited to participate in the work on that Treaty. These international organizations include the European Union, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

In this regard, the holding of consultations among the leaders of the aforementioned international organizations, at the initiative of the Kazakh Chairmanship, on 17 July of this year in Almaty during the OSCE Informal Ministerial Meeting was especially useful.

Meetings of this kind are extremely important to review and monitor compliance with the norms, principles and commitments adopted to counter the new threats and challenges to security and stability in the twenty-first century. Such meetings make it possible to exchange views on the global situation and help to further strengthen relations of trust and mutual understanding. This undoubtedly extends the boundaries of co-operation to ensure security both within the OSCE and with respect to the activities of other international organizations. Unfortunately, it must be noted today that hotbeds of instability persist in the area of responsibility of both the OSCE and the CIS and that terrorist and criminal threats are on the increase. A particularly worrying fact is the unpredictability of possible new threats, the ineffectiveness of the measures to identify them and provide early warning, and the cynicism and increasingly aggressive nature of criminal elements, regardless of the slogans they hide behind.

Also on the agenda today is the question of improving the existing system of international security and creating the kind of model that would prevent the emergence of military conflicts in Eurasia and would preserve efficient and effective instruments for conflict resolution.

The CIS is particularly concerned about the conflict zones persisting on its territory, notably the recent crisis in Kyrgyzstan.

The Commonwealth of Independent States has undertaken and continues to undertake considerable efforts to move all these conflicts from the stage of confrontation to the phase of political dialogue and a search for compromises and solutions.

The CIS's peacekeeping efforts in the establishment of peace and harmony in Tajikistan are recognized as being most productive.

As regards the resolution of the crisis in Kyrgyzstan, the CIS countries are actively co-operating with the OSCE and the United Nations. I must not forget to also mention the co-operation between the CIS countries and NATO in carrying out peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan.

While we welcome the OSCE's considerable efforts to resolve conflicts on the territory of CIS member States, I should like to stress that the Commonwealth of Independent

States has significant instruments at its disposal for finding ways of gradually resolving these conflicts. Nevertheless, the Executive Committee of the CIS is ready to co-operate with the OSCE and other international organizations in this difficult task.

Given these circumstances, it is very important that common international standards for security should be systematically and more actively adopted by the international community, both at the level of individual States and within the framework of international associations. In this context, the CIS member States recognize that the key link and main centre for the regulation of international relations is and should remain the United Nations. The CIS member States would like to see a global strategy to counter new threats and challenges formulated and successfully implemented by the international community under the auspices of the United Nations and on the sound basis of international law.

Distinguished colleagues,

A flexible and systematic co-ordination of activities and co-operation on the part of the international and regional organizations concerned with security, including the OSCE and the CIS, must continue to be an integral part of the modern-day security architecture. The Commonwealth of Independent States is ready for joint efforts of this kind.

Thank you for your attention.