



**Annual Security Review Conference 2012**

**Closing Remarks by Ambassador O'Leary  
Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council**

**Thursday 28 June 2012**

Good afternoon colleagues, and welcome to the closing session of the 2012 Annual Security Review Conference.

Before I set out some of the key findings and recommendations from the different sessions, I would like to take this opportunity to thank those people who played a key role in organising this conference. In particular, I would like to thank John Crosby and Gudrun van Pottelburg from the CPC for their immense efforts over the last six months. As always, our colleagues from Conference Services and the interpreters ensured that the day to day running of the event worked flawlessly.

I would also to thank the moderators, rapporteurs and of course the keynote speakers for their contributions to making this event a successful and interactive one.

I also want to thank colleagues from FSC Support Section and from the UK delegation for organising the displays on show in the hall outside. In this regard, I would like to remind heads of delegations that the Olympic Truce display remains open for signature by the participating States and the Partners for Cooperation.

As I said in my remarks at the Opening Session, our strong view is that there is an absence of political will to use the existing tools at our disposal. As a contribution to overcoming this, we suggested that discussions at the ASRC could help us to reach a common understanding of where we are now and what we can agree to begin doing together to fully realise the security community, as mandated by our leaders in Astana. In this regard, I think that the Conference has been a success. Delegations have taken advantage of the different sessions to set out their views on where we are now and how we can move forward together.

The following are some of the key findings and recommendations from our discussions over the last two and half days. This does not of course aim to be an exhaustive list and the Chairmanship will issue a full report of the proceedings before the summer recess.

- The OSCE is built on the underpinning components of indivisible, comprehensive and co-operative security. In that respect, many participants emphasised the importance of meeting the security needs of all participating States, of pursuing the implementation of all OSCE commitments in its three dimensions in a balanced way, and of avoiding divisions or splits into different *de facto* security communities within the OSCE area. In that context, resolving underlying political differences and overcoming security and trust deficits remains crucial to us addressing together with common purpose the many and multi-faceted security challenges in the OSCE area which demand unified efforts.
- There was widespread support for further developing the ‘Helsinki + 40’ concept, involving the four consecutive OSCE Chairmanships of Ireland, Ukraine, Switzerland and Serbia, and the previous Chairmanship, Lithuania, in a building blocks approach to making concrete progress towards realising the common vision in the Astana Declaration of a Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community. These efforts should be pursued in a consistent and structured manner.
- The preceding OSCE Security Days organised by the Secretary General, a new and innovative initiative to engage civil society, think-tanks, Government and academia in wider, open dialogue on security issues, was highly appreciated. Continuing it as an annual event was widely recommended.
- A recurring theme throughout most of the sessions was the enduring need to strengthen co-operation and co-ordination with other sub-regional, regional and international security organisations. This remains key to ensuring the OSCE, bringing its comparative advantages to bear as relevant to specific circumstances, adds value and complements the efforts of other actors while avoiding wasteful duplication. Fostering regional and sub-regional ownership and strengthening civil society involvement was suggested by a number of participants. In this regard, I want to add that the Chairmanship hopes to publish the final report of Ambassador Lundin on the relationship between the OSCE and other International Organisations in the coming week.
- Turning to ***transnational threats and challenges***, the world today is increasingly exposed to a wide range of inter-linked transnational security threats and challenges. They are evolving and spreading and require a collective, effective response by the international community, mindful that solutions purely at the national level may simply displace the threat.
- The establishment of the new Transnational Threats Department, in line with Vilnius Ministerial Decision No. 9/11, was widely welcomed as an important, positive step towards making the Organization’s work to address TNTs better co-ordinated, increasingly coherent and more visible. Many pointed out that this OSCE work should be pursued in a concerted, comprehensive and cross-dimensional manner, paying due attention to human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law in particular. It

must also be balanced in scope, properly evaluated and complement the work of others so that synergy is truly achieved.

- A great many participants highlighted the imperative for participating States to adopt before the Summer Recess the draft decisions on (1) OSCE Strategic Framework for Police-Related Activities, (2) OSCE Concept for Combating the Threat of Illicit Drugs and the Diversion of Chemical Precursors, and (3) OSCE Consolidated Framework for the Fight Against Terrorism. These are key documents in providing guidance to the TNT Department on its future work. Moreover, their adoption would enable progress already achieved to be noted at the Dublin Ministerial.
- The adoption of PC Decision No. 1039 on the establishment of an Informal Working Group to elaborate a set of CBMs to reduce the risks stemming from the use of Information and Communication Technologies was also seen as an important step forward. This is particularly the case because, by including a comprehensive approach, the OSCE is well placed to complement the work of others in this field, including at the regional and sub-regional level. Participating States were encouraged to ensure their experts contribute actively and creatively to the work of that Informal Working Group in the coming months. This is especially important if the wish of many participating States that a set of such CBMs can be adopted at the Dublin Ministerial is to be realised.
- It was also stressed that groups involved in creating transnational threats are flexible and operate with great speed to take advantage of opportunities. It is important therefore that the participating States can also react rapidly to effectively tackle these threats.
- On **early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation**, there was widespread recognition that the OSCE's role in the conflict cycle remains one of its core tasks. In that respect, Ministerial Council Decision No. 3/11 on 'Elements of the Conflict Cycle' was seen as a key development and its implementation, which has already begun, particularly crucial to making meaningful progress in strengthening the Organization's capacities to address the conflict cycle. The Secretary General's Report related to that MC Decision, due by 16 July, was eagerly awaited; many expected it to give an impetus for further work and discussions among participating States on what else needs to be addressed in the conflict cycle.
- Participants emphasised the need to make better use of the Organization's current instruments within existing mandates while not undermining the consensus principle. The imperative of facilitating and ensuring swift and effective decision-making on a quick response, especially when a participating State requests OSCE support, was stressed. In addition, the importance of embracing a comprehensive and cross-dimensional approach, and the negative consequences of 'grey zones' was

highlighted. A number of participants underlined that political will lay at the heart of decisively addressing conflict.

- This was especially true in the case of the protracted conflicts. In that context, many delegations further stated that these conflicts remain one of the main sources of tension and threats to security and stability in the OSCE area. The settlement of protracted conflicts was thus underscored as a top OSCE priority, to be resolved by political means, and the sides were called upon to make further progress. Support to the established formats, fully respecting the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and international law was expressed by the majority of participants.
- There was general agreement that more could and should be done to involve women in addressing peace and stability as called for in UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions. Many participating States suggested that these efforts should be consolidated within an OSCE-wide Action Plan related to the implementation of that resolution. If developed in time, that Action Plan could be adopted at the Dublin Ministerial Council. Others highlighted the importance of strengthening mediation efforts and paying greater attention to post-conflict rehabilitation competences.
- Regarding *conventional arms control and CSBMs*, there was broad acknowledgement that these regimes are major instruments for ensuring military stability, predictability and transparency, and are thus key pillars for a reliable, indivisible, co-operative security community.
- Unfortunately, there remains a lack of progress in overcoming the stalemates in these regimes. These stalemates, especially the reduced levels of transparency and the *de facto* or *de jure* exemption of the application of arms control regimes and CSBMs in the 'grey zones', are having a detrimental impact on what should be cornerstones of mutual trust and confidence. Views differed on why that has happened and what needs to be done about it.
- Many participants pointed to the need to modernise further the Vienna Document 2011 in a number of areas to correspond to changes in military force levels and practices as well as technological advances. In that context, they called for further impetus with discussions on all proposals being intensified. Other participants were of the view that further progress will need to be evolutionary and require time, patience and respect for different national positions. Others believed that advances in CSBMs cannot be separated from other security aspects, particularly in the face of non implementation or selective compliance.
- Participants recognised the importance of the CFE Treaty within the European security architecture, for which the Vienna Document could not be a substitute. Many noted that consultations on the CFE in the 36 format had reached an impasse. While many capitals are considering ways to overcome this impasse, it was widely recognised this would not be an easy task given the numerous linkages between CFE and some national approaches to military aspects of security.

- Other participants also highlighted the need to continue efforts on the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security as well as in the field of Small Arms and Light Weapons, including by maintaining a gender focus in line with UNSCR 1325.
- Moving finally to *Partners for Co-operation*, it was widely recognised that security in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area are tightly interlinked, as vividly manifested by the historic events we have seen and continue to see in North Africa and the Middle East as well as by developments in Afghanistan, including preparations for its 2014 transition. New opportunities and challenges to the people of these countries, as well as to OSCE participating States, continue to emerge.
- The Organization, with its wide ranging *acquis* and solid experience in all three OSCE dimensions of security has much to offer its Partners for Co-operation. The dialogue between the OSCE and the Partner States, involving civil society, should lead to enhanced practical co-operation, bringing concrete added-value to Partner States in areas such as transition, electoral reform, good governance, CSBMs and CBMs, socio-economic measures, addressing TNTs and the role of women in peace and stability.
- These should be pursued through, for instance, capacity-building, exchange of information and pooling of resources. A number of projects have already been identified and others, tailored to their needs, may be considered in response to explicit requests from individual Partners. In this regard, the recent Valencia workshop on environment and security issues in the Southern Mediterranean region is very welcome follow-up.
- Mongolia's request to become an OSCE participating State was welcomed by many participating States.

As I said, these are just some of the main recommendations made during the conference.

It is of course imperative that we all reflect carefully on the suggestions, comments and recommendations made during the last two and a half days to see how we can build on these discussions in our efforts to fully realise the Security Community. The Chairmanship looks forward to working closely with all delegations in the months ahead to see how this can best be achieved.

This brings me to the end of this session, but before I close this year's Annual Security Review Conference, I would like to thank all delegations for their constructive engagement and high-level involvement over the past two and a half days and wish you all a pleasant afternoon. To those of you who are travelling back to your capitals after this meeting, I wish you a safe journey.

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