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SECURITY TREATY ORGANIZATION, AT THE 2016 ANNUAL
SECURITY REVIEW CONFERENCE**

Vienna, 30 June 2016

**Working session IV:
Countering terrorism – transnational threats in the OSCE area**

Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished Conference participants,

I should like to start by thanking the organizers of the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference for giving me this opportunity to speak at such a respected forum on behalf of the Secretary General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

I should like first to mention that relations between the CSTO and the OSCE have been strengthened in recent years. Meetings of the CSTO Secretary General with the OSCE Secretary General and with the Director of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre have continued. The CSTO Deputy Secretary General represented the organization at the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference in Vienna and at the international conference “Accomplishments and Challenges for the OSCE on the Anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act (1975) and the Astana Summit (2010)” in Astana. The CSTO Secretary General has addressed students and teaching staff at the OSCE Academy in Bishkek.

The statement by the then OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Mr. Ivica Dačić, at the CSTO Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in Dushanbe last year was evidence of the ongoing development of CSTO-OSCE relations. It was the first experience of this kind and we hope that it will be followed up.

In previous years, both the OSCE Secretary General Mr. Lamberto Zannier and the United Nations Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon have addressed the expanded meeting of the CSTO Permanent Council. In that connection, we believe it important to ensure the full participation of representatives of the CSTO as an organization registered under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations in OSCE Ministerial Council meetings, where representatives of NATO and the Council of Europe have spoken previously.

The priorities of the CSTO countries in the OSCE tally for the most part, reflecting vital questions on the European and international agenda. We would single out the tasks of

stepping up efforts to combat terrorism, drug trafficking and radicalization, promoting inter-ethnic dialogue and continuing the discussion on European security.

We trust that these topics will be reflected in the resolutions of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly session in Tbilisi (1 to 5 July) and the decisions of the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Hamburg (8 and 9 December).

We value our co-operation with such a respected and authoritative organization as the OSCE. We believe that it will help to strengthen the security of the Member States of our organizations and promote peace and stability. The CSTO has always been open to this kind of collaboration.

Distinguished Conference participants,

All six CSTO Member States belong to the OSCE. Therefore, when for example during working session IV we talk about the OSCE area and discuss the current transnational threats of terrorism, we understand that they also cover the CSTO's area of responsibility and that the threats are common to us all.

At present, the greatest terrorist threats to the CSTO Member States emanate from the Middle East (Syria and Iraq) and Afghanistan.

According to our assessments, the key challenge is posed by the activities of terrorist groups such as Islamic State and the Al-Nusra Front and the recruitment of citizens from various countries, including citizens of CSTO Member States to militant groups. The subsequent return home of terrorist fighters (according to various estimates, they number between 7,000 and 10,000 people) can create a serious risk of destabilization of the internal political situation in the area of application of the Treaty on Collective Security. I am referring in the first instance to Central Asia and the North Caucasus.

Disappointingly, the international community has still not managed to reliably cut off the financing of extremist organizations and develop effective measures to combat the recruitment, training, arming and movement of fighters. This being the case, it is extremely important to create a broad counter-terrorism front at the international level, to pool the efforts of States and to continue to develop their co-operation, primarily under the auspices of the United Nations.

The CSTO is developing this kind of co-operation with the United Nations. For example in 2016 alone deputies of the CSTO Secretary General addressed the UN General Assembly Special Session on drugs in New York and the UN Chiefs of Police Summit. A presentation was given on the activities of the CSTO in combating drug trafficking to the UN Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267, 1989 and 2253 and on combating terrorism to the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. On two occasions, the CSTO Secretariat has hosted the Sanctions Monitoring Team of the corresponding UN Security Council Committee. The signing of a Memorandum of Co-operation between the CSTO Secretariat and the Counter-Terrorism Committee is under discussion.

Apart from specialist UN and OSCE units, promoting co-operation with other international organizations and structures such as the Anti-Terrorism Centre of the

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is of particular importance to our organization.

In view of the urgent need to combat manifestations of international terrorism and extremism effectively, the CSTO has been systematically building up a working mechanism for responding to potential threats and challenges to collective security resulting from the activities of international terrorist organizations. Data is gathered and analysed in the CSTO on the situation in countries and regions that are sources of a terrorist threat. There are plans in the future to exploit the potential of the Crisis Response Centre being established within the CSTO system to that end, which will provide organizational and analytical support for the activities of the CSTO statutory bodies.

The Secretariat is ready to share information with its partners. Recently, a videoconference took place between the CSTO Secretariat and the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia on the theme “Threats to Central Asia emanating from the territory of Afghanistan and the Middle East”, attended by the CSTO Deputy Secretary General and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General. We see an opportunity for organizing similar events between the CSTO and OSCE Secretariats.

Distinguished Conference participants,

Allow me to tell you briefly about the CSTO activities to combat terrorism.

A special working group of experts from States consisting of staff from security and internal affairs agencies and Security Council apparatus has been set up within the CSTO to co-ordinate joint action to counter extremism and terrorism and meets on a regular basis.

At a meeting of the Committee of CSTO Security Council Secretaries in June 2016, a consolidated list of international terrorist organizations whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the CSTO was approved. This permits co-ordinated action to identify and suppress their activities in the CSTO’s area of responsibility. The list contains 92 organizations. In 2009, 32 organizations were included in that list and 47 in 2010.

The CSTO military capability is one of the main instruments for ensuring the security of Member States, including against the threat of terrorism.

With a view to strengthening the counter-terrorism capabilities of the CSTO troops (Collective Forces), special forces and security forces units of the Member States have been included in the CSTO Collective Rapid Reaction Force to conduct targeted counter-terrorism measures.

The combat training of forces and provision of equipment for the collective security system are organized according to plan. The concept of the joint tactical and special exercises (Interaction, Indestructible Brotherhood, Cobalt and Thunder) includes counter-terrorism activities. For example, in late May 2016, a special tactical exercise with special forces entitled Cobalt 2016 was conducted in Armenia to practise the organization of special operations to stop the activities of terrorist and extremist groups. The measures carried out helped to improve the command system and increase the level of co-operation among national contingents.

During the joint operations and preventive measures entitled Illegal, Channel and Proxy (operations to counter crimes involving modern information technology), apart from dealing with specific tasks, considerable attention is paid to stopping illicit trafficking in arms, ammunition and explosives and the identification of information resources used by terrorist and extremist organizations in their recruitment work. Attention is focused on the identification of channels for the movement of fighters into and out of armed conflict zones.

Preventive and investigative measures carried out as part of these operations resulted in the seizure in 2015 not only of drugs but also of more than 670 firearms and around 11,500 units of different kinds of ammunition. Over 132,000 information resources containing material of a subversive nature and calls to engage in such activity were identified on electronic networks, including over 124,000 information resources fomenting religious discord and of a terrorist and extremist nature. Following these measures, the activity of more than 121,000 resources was suspended and 263 criminal proceedings were instituted.

Over 180,000 violations of migration law were identified, more than 30,000 persons were deported from the Member States, and over 31,000 criminal proceedings instituted, including 651 connected with illicit arms trafficking and 386 with illegal crossing of State borders.

The CSTO Heads of State have sanctioned an operation to combat organized criminal groups engaged in trafficking in human beings, which is currently being implemented. The operation also seeks to identify channels and infrastructure for moving fighters into armed conflict zones.

Since all the CSTO Member States make up a common security area, the formation and development of an effective CSTO legislative framework regulating counter-terrorism activity in all Member States and the harmonization of their national legislation are matters of urgency. Work has been undertaken in the CSTO Secretariat to collate the relevant legal norms developed in the CSTO Member States.

While maintaining the unconditional priority of the competent State agencies to combat terrorism and religious extremism, work is under way in the CSTO to find mechanisms for involving non-State agencies and civil society, religious communities, academic circles, educational institutions, the media, non-governmental organizations and the business community in these activities.

In conclusion, I should like to say that in a world confronted by manifestations of terrorism and violent extremism on an unprecedented scale, it is only by pooling our efforts that we will be able to respond effectively to this phenomenon.

Thank you for your attention.