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**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND AT THE  
2010 ANNUAL SECURITY REVIEW CONFERENCE**

14 to 16 June 2010

**Working Session II: The role of the OSCE in early warning,  
conflict prevention and resolution, crisis management and  
post-conflict rehabilitation**

Mr. Chairperson,

First of all, I should like to thank the two speakers for their inspiring contributions. It is a core task of the OSCE to prevent conflicts in and between participating States. There is hardly any other international security organization with such a complex toolbox of diplomatic and operational instruments for conflict prevention and resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation as the OSCE. At the same time, great demands are made of the Organization and its participating States on account of protracted conflicts and other potential sources of conflict in the OSCE area, as the tragic events in summer 2008 in Georgia and now in Kyrgyzstan have once again demonstrated to all of us. There is therefore a need for progress on three levels: first, the political will to use the existing mechanisms – such as the 1991 Berlin mechanism or the relevant provisions of the 1992 Helsinki Document; second, greater efforts to effectively implement existing OSCE commitments; and third, further development of the above-mentioned toolbox.

Various States have presented a series of interesting ideas on this subject in the framework of the Corfu Process. Switzerland welcomes the idea of explicitly involving all three dimensions in the process of increasing the OSCE's capacities for conflict prevention and resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation, since conflicts are frequently rooted in economic hardship or in the violation of human rights or democratic and rule-of-law principles. In some cases there is a link with transnational dangers such as terrorism or trafficking in human beings, arms or drugs. To improve conflict prevention, the implementation of OSCE commitments in all three dimensions is therefore essential. In this context, Switzerland regards the OSCE field operations as a significant comparative advantage for validating the OSCE commitments and contributing in this way to stability in Europe. With this in mind, for example, we consider it very important for the OSCE to be given access to the entire Georgian territory including Abkhazia and South Ossetia so that it can contribute to post-conflict rehabilitation and to preventing a renewed outbreak of the conflict.

To ensure effective monitoring of the implementation of commitments the OSCE structures must remain capable of acting. Although they must take account in their co-operation with participating States of their specific situations and needs, institutions like the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights or the Representative on Freedom of the Media, for example, can fulfil their tasks only if they are independent. The Media Representative in particular plays an important role as an early-warning mechanism in the event that a growth of extremism is observed in public opinion in one or several countries. The capacities of the Secretariat, particularly the Conflict Prevention Centre, need to be strengthened so that they can fulfil their early-warning function more effectively. The Swiss delegation is willing to examine how we can better assist the OSCE in the area of mediation and mediation support, as we do with the United Nations. Moreover, the possibility of increasing the scope for action of the OSCE Chairmanship and the Secretary General in the event of acute crises should be considered. We should like finally to mention another OSCE body that could be useful in crises if the participating States were to make use of it. I am talking about the OSCE Court of Conciliation and Arbitration. We urge all States that have not yet ratified the Stockholm Convention to do so.

As mentioned earlier, we are in favour of giving the OSCE broad scope in conflict prevention and resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation. I should like here to emphasize two aspects, namely the question of national minorities and displaced persons. Many real and potential sources of conflict in the OSCE area are rooted in tensions in dealing with transborder national minorities. As a result, the High Commissioner on National Minorities already has an important function in conflict prevention that needs to be further strengthened. The Bolzano Recommendations offer valuable guidelines for dealing with transborder national minorities while respecting good-neighbourly relations at the same time. Switzerland urges participating States to make the corresponding recommendations politically binding.

The OSCE should pay greater attention in its work to refugees and displaced persons while avoiding overlaps with other international actors, of course. As the Kazakh Chairmanship has noted, large migratory movements can occur before the outbreak of a conflict because of negative economic and human rights factors. These phenomena could be taken greater account of in the elaboration of early-warning mechanisms. In the interests of effective post-conflict rehabilitation the OSCE field missions, in co-operation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, should support the participating States even more in the reintegration of displaced persons. The United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the follow-up to them provide a valuable frame of reference in this context for the development of political concepts with regard to internally displaced persons.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.