

Canadian Delegation to the
Organization for Security & Cooperation
in Europe



ENGLISH only
Délégation du Canada auprès de
l'Organisation pour la sécurité et la coopération
en Europe

**DELEGATION OF CANADA TO THE OSCE
STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR FREDERICKA GREGORY
763 MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
4 JUNE 2009**

On the Report by the Secretary General to the Permanent Council in accordance with the Helsinki Ministerial Decision on OSCE Contribution to the Implementation Phase of the Alliance of Civilizations Initiative.

Madame Chairperson:

Canada appreciates the Secretary General's Report on the evolution of the Alliance of Civilizations Initiative, following his recent participation in the Alliance's Second Forum in Istanbul in April, in which Canada also participated.

I would like to make the following points and observations:

- Canada remains firmly committed to supporting tolerance, combating discrimination, and to promoting respect among cultures and faiths. That is why Canada has recently joined the "Group of Friends" of the Alliance, as this Initiative under UN auspices has made significant progress since 2006.
- At the Istanbul Forum, we heard further clarification from the Alliance that it does not seek to substitute existing organizations or initiatives, rather to complement them by providing a global platform for building partnerships and dialogue.
- Taking this clarification into account - and with an eye to existing mandates and resources - we believe that the OSCE could certainly continue to interact with the Alliance, provided that our institutional contacts and dialogue are kept informal, and that they are focused on areas where there are common interests and mutual benefits. The OSCE Secretary General, in his report today, has outlined three pragmatic areas where such future interactions could be envisaged.

- In this connection, we do not see the need for creating any formal institutional arrangements between the OSCE and the Alliance. This position is not a reflection of any negative views on the Alliance, rather it reflects Canada's longstanding policy of keeping the OSCE focussed on its core business and core programs and on achieving. We are also not in favour of any OSCE unified budget growth that may result from a scheme of collaboration.

Thank you Madame Chairperson.