

2003 Mediterranean Seminar

”The comprehensive approach to security: The OSCE experience and its  
relevance for the Mediterranean region”

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Statement by the

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Mr. Chairman, Ambassador Everts – Personal Representative of the CiO,  
Mr. Minister of State of Jordan,  
Mr. Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, CiO- Designate,  
Mr. Secretary General of the OSCE,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you very much for inviting me, as President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE, to address this 2003 OSCE Mediterranean Seminar. I welcome the decision to devote this year's seminar to *The Comprehensive approach to security: "The OSCE experience and its relevance for the Mediterranean region"*.

I warmly thank the Jordanian hosts for the excellent arrangements in organising this Seminar and for welcoming all of us in this historic and pivotal country. It is truly significant to hold this Seminar here in Aqaba. I congratulate Jordanian officials for their continuous active involvement in OSCE activities. Jordanian parliamentarians – I am delighted to say - regularly attend and contribute to the meetings of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. I had the opportunity yesterday in Amman to meet with the Speaker of the Jordanian Senate and the Deputy Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies and I must say the prospects for parliamentary co-operation between the OSCE PA and the Jordanian Parliament are encouraging.

The OSCE can have a contribution to creating a more favourable atmosphere in the Mediterranean as a whole, and here in the Middle East in particular by sharing its experience in overcoming the divisions of the past. This OSCE Mediterranean Seminar, I am convinced, will convey an important message to the region regarding the OSCE's Comprehensive Approach to Security.

I believe the Mediterranean dialogue in the OSCE has become an example of good cooperation between the OSCE and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. I very much appreciate Secretary General Jan Kubis' presence and excellent presentation in the First OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Mediterranean Forum held in Rome a few weeks ago. I could not agree more with Ambassador Kubis when he stated that "Inter-institutional support within the OSCE family, including the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly with reference to the OSCE Mediterranean dialogue concerning also each other's activities is an important contribution to maintaining related issues high on the agenda of the Organisation".

Our meeting on the margins of the Rotterdam Annual Session with the Chairman of the Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, Ambassador Petrov, is another example of our fruitful co-operation. A Delegation of the Assembly also had the opportunity to meet with the Contact Group in Vienna in connection with our Winter Meeting, and we hope to make these meetings a regular event during our presence in Vienna every February.

I am very pleased to be accompanied in this Seminar by my fellow parliamentarians. Including Mr. Michel Voisin, Head of the French Delegation in the Assembly and Special Representative for the Mediterranean has been for some years now the main advocate in our Assembly to further develop the Mediterranean Dialogue in the Parliamentary Assembly. Mr. Panos Kammenos, Vice-chairman of the Assembly's Committee on Political Affairs, has also been very active in developing the Mediterranean dimension in our Assembly. He represented us in the OSCE Mediterranean Seminar held in Rhodes last year. Also, by a distinguished Member of the Turkish Delegation.

Mr. Chairman,

The OSCE's experience in comprehensive security is very relevant to the Mediterranean. Allow me to reflect on the concept of Comprehensive Security.

In the last thirty years the approach to security has been enriched by new dimensions, which have substantially modified our vision of security. At the same time new concepts and definitions emerged, new methodologies of how to avoid and/or prevent conflicts became a major issue of discussion. As the world has become more complex and interdependent, security cannot longer be seen only from a military point of view. One of these Approaches to security is "Comprehensive Security", which as will be explained later in my presentation. It looks to security not only in military terms but it takes into account other aspects such as the economy, the environment, etc.

Comprehensive Security has its roots in a proposal made in the late seventies by the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security, also known as the Palme Commission, which revised the traditional approach and stressed the importance of *"...conflict prevention, transparency, confidence measures, the non offensive character of the military forces and its doctrine, demobilization, disarmament, and ecological security"* when dealing with security.

The end of the Cold War, the process of globalisation and the increasing importance of "non-state-centred aspects" put Comprehensive Security approach in the top of the agenda and no longer security can be seen only limited to the protection of one's territorial integrity. Thus, international organisations, Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), etc. became active players in the field of security as well as new aspects became relevant, such as environmental, social, economical, political, cultural. issues.

I fully agree with Professor Hsiung of New York University when he defines comprehensive security as an approach where geoeconomics have become more relevant to security than the military. He asserts that *"...after the Cold War ...economic security rivals military security in importance"*.

To sum up, Comprehensive Security is a new approach to security that sees security as a complex topic focused not only in territorial integrity and military issues but also in economic, social, political, environmental, and cultural

dimensions. It gives great importance to the needs of human beings as well as it expresses its concern about the lack of social justice and inequality. It considers that security actors are no longer limited to states, but also new actors are becoming increasingly important, such as NGOS, and international organizations, such as the United Nations or the OSCE. As a consequence, security is a dynamic concept with no precise definition. New concerns, challenges and problems concerning security have changed and will continuously change our view of security and thus, the approaches used to solve security problems.

The OSCE is the classic institution exemplifying the concept of Comprehensive Security.

Since the first Conference of Security and Cooperation in Europe in Helsinki in 1973 and its effective institutionalization on 1 January 1995 the OSCE has taken a broad and comprehensive view of security exemplified by the “three baskets” of the Helsinki Final Act. The first basket is related to political and military aspects, the second basket deals with co-operation in the fields of economics, science, technology and the environment, and the third basket is concerned with co-operation in the humanitarian field and other fields as well as human rights.

The OSCE, which initially was a process to reduce tensions between East and West, became finally an active actor in reducing tensions as well as being relevant in the different peace processes that took, and still take place, in Europe. One of its major activities is to prevent conflicts and here is where its comprehensive approach to security plays a major role through the three baskets. It approaches security through “arms control, preventive diplomacy, confidence- and security-building measures, human rights, election monitoring and economic and environmental security”. It conducts missions to prevent or minimized tensions in Kosovo, Bosnia Herzegovina, in Georgia, etc. In sum, looks to security as a broader issue not limited to military terms and territorial integrity. Furthermore, its work is relevant in order that conflicts are avoided because it looks to the roots and background of possible, or existing conflicts in order to reduce tensions and increase stability in the problematic hot spots.

Mr. Chairman,

Since my election as President of the Assembly in July 2002 I have encouraged the Assembly to address a number of issues related to Security in the Mediterranean, including the above. As I mentioned, I was the first President of the Assembly to lead a Delegation that met with the OSCE Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners in Vienna, and also I organised a successful meeting involving experts, parliamentarians and governmental officials on the margins of our Rotterdam Session. I have just returned from a visit to Algeria, which I hope will be the first one of a series of visits to the region.

For a long time I have developed, both as a politician and as an academic a deep interest in Mediterranean issues. When elected President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly I made one of my objectives to enhance and further develop the Assembly’s involvement in the Mediterranean whilst increasing our

co-operation with our Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. It has also been my objective to enhance, in the meetings of the OSCE PA, the dialogue between the parliamentary delegations of the Mediterranean Partners.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly as a whole reflected its interest in enhancing the Mediterranean dialogue in the OSCE by adopting in Rotterdam the Resolution on the OSCE Mediterranean Dimension. This Resolution was introduced by US Congressman Benjamin Cardin. The Resolution points the need for the OSCE to enhance its role in the Mediterranean region by further promoting its Mediterranean dimension to achieve closer co-operation with the Mediterranean partners.

The resolution underlines that both the OSCE participating States and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation should aim at promoting security and co-operation in the region through a comprehensive process of enhanced political dialogue, economic co-operation and intercultural exchanges, as well as through the strengthening of democratic institutions and respects for human rights.

We encouraged the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation to use the framework and mechanisms of the OSCE, including those devoted to conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation, as a model for enhancing security, promoting co-operation and protecting human rights in the region.

The chapter on the Mediterranean contained in the Helsinki Final Act was a clear recognition of shared historical, cultural, economic ties with the then CSCE region (today's OSCE). This relationship has been reinforced since, enabling the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation – as they are now called – to participate regularly in OSCE events, including those in the Economic and Environmental Dimension.

The Assembly has been supporting the OSCE's Mediterranean dimension and trying, from a parliamentary perspective, to enhance relations with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, and also among the partners themselves. Willingness on implementing outreach programmes for the Mediterranean – both in the OSCE and in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly – is essential.

As Secretary General Kubis reminded the Assembly in Rome, The involvement of the OSCE in Mediterranean affairs is not new, dating back to our founding documents of 1975. The OSCE in its comprehensive approach to security, its focus on conflict prevention and eliminating risks to security stemming from socio-economic and environmental factors as well as human rights violations provide an adequate framework for cooperation between Northern, Southern, and Eastern shores of the Mediterranean.

Solidarity and co-operation are fundamental OSCE values. The OSCE is a unique organisation, including 55 participating states from Europe, Central Asia, and North America. All these 55 participating states share and uphold the same values and work together toward a common objective, the creation of a free, democratic, prosperous and undivided Europe. Continuous dialogue and

**the free exchange of views and ideas aimed at enhancing co-operation, building confidence and security between states and societies as well as within societies are important assets of the OSCE.**

**Over the last years the OSCE has engaged in an increasingly intensified dialogue with its partners for co-operation from the Mediterranean region and Asia. It also strengthened its working relationships with numerous other international organisations and institutions. I believe there is a growing awareness in the OSCE that only a free, democratic, prosperous and undivided Europe will be able to promote security, stability and prosperity in the adjacent area and also that European security will benefit from positive developments in other regions, including the Mediterranean.**

**Security in the OSCE area is ultimately linked to security in the Mediterranean area. However, the great diversity of States included in the Mediterranean which may be divided in four sub-regions: the Mediterranean EU, the Balkans, the Middle East and the Maghreb, complicate the level of negotiations and political dialogue.**

**Furthermore, three sub-regions that were previously regarded as different political spheres – South Eastern Europe, the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East – must now be regarded as a complex security arena in which the OSCE has a general interest.**

**Mr. Chairman,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Defining the “Mediterranean” is however not easy. Geographers, geologists, political scientists, and specialists in geopolitics differ radically on what they believe the Mediterranean to be. Some perceive it as comprising only those littoral states surrounding the Mediterranean, Aegean, and Adriatic seas. Others would view it as more broadly encompassing those with military and economic interests in the region. There are those who believe the Black Sea to be an extension, whilst others write of a so-called “arc of crisis”, encompassing the Middle East, the Gulf, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Though many may disagree with the above definitions, historical evidence is conclusive – the Mediterranean has been the scene of endless military conflicts over the last 3000 years. Today, we must approach the Mediterranean area from the point of view of international cooperation.**

**European security in the Mediterranean should be based on the implementation of policies of co-operation with the countries in the Southern Regions destined to contribute to the elimination of the social and economic causes of instability; to the reinforcement of democratisation; and to the restoration of an inter-cultural dialogue.**

**Among policies of co-operation, bilateral and multilateral policies for economic co-operation and aid have a primary role.**

**A number of nations and international institutions have substantial programmes of economic co-operation and assistance notably the EU and the US. I focus on one;**

**The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership that started in Barcelona seven years ago, is still the one of the main international instruments to meet such challenges. The key objectives of the Barcelona Conference were:**

- To establish a common Euro-Mediterranean area of peace and stability based on fundamental principles including respect for human rights and democracy;**
- Create an area of shared prosperity through the progressive establishment of a free trade area between the EU and its Partners and among the Mediterranean Partners themselves, accompanied by substantial EU financial support for economic transition in the Partners themselves, accompanied by substantial EU financial support for economic transition in the Partners and social and economic consequences of this reform process, and**
- Develop human resources, promote understanding between cultures and rapprochement of the peoples in the Euro-Mediterranean region as well as to develop free and flourishing civil societies.**

**The Fifth Euro-Mediterranean Conference held in Valencia in April 2002 signified a great impulse in the implementation of the Barcelona Process and in improving the relations between the European Union and the twelve countries from the South-Mediterranean. Closer co-operation in the Mediterranean between the EU, NATO, and the OSCE is necessary to continue this process.**

**Increasing communication and co-operation among the different international organisations focusing on security in the Mediterranean is essential to harmonise such a notion of security while increasing confidence between Western Countries and countries in the Southern Mediterranean.**

**It is also widely recognised that huge disparities of wealth and environmental resources between the countries on the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean are potentially destabilising. Poverty breeds resentment and alienation thereby fuelling support for radical Islamic movements.**

**Mr. Chairman,**

**The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly held its First Parliamentary Forum on the Mediterranean a few days ago in Rome. I concluded that in helping promote the Mediterranean dimension of the OSCE, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will continue:**

- **Regular meetings with the OSCE Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation in conjunction with the Assembly's Winter Meetings held in Vienna every February.**
- **The Annual Mediterranean Parliamentary Forum – held in Rome in October 2003 and to be held in Greece in October 2004. Three other Parliaments have offered to host this Forum – our programme of co-operation is therefore secure.**
- **Side Meetings on the Mediterranean, involving parliamentarians and experts from the Partner States, organised on the margins of the Assembly's Annual Sessions.**
- **Intensify our contacts and exchanges with our Parliamentarians from the Partner countries: by programmes of visits; and by including representatives from the Partner States in the activities of the Assembly, including election monitoring projects and visits to OSCE field missions. I am writing to all the Speakers in all of the countries that have partnership status inviting him to nominate a group of deputies to join us in our observation mission to Moscow, and there will be future invitations sent out so that it becomes a matter of routine. I shall also invite delegation to accompany us on our important visits to the Field Missions of the OSCE.**
- **The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will continue to actively participate and contribute in the annual OSCE Mediterranean Seminars (Dubrovnik 2001, Rhodes, 2002 – Aqaba, 2003) and beyond.**
- **Following a series of meetings in Algeria I have extended an invitation to the Foreign Minister to address our Winter Session in Vienna. I will be honoured if Mr. Bak would consent to attending and speaking at our July Annual Session in Edinburgh.**
- **I fully intent to build upon the good contacts we have made with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and I have been invited to attend their next meeting in Dakar, Senegal.**

**This represents just some of our exciting and relevant programme for the future. We are committing resources to help achieve our objectives. I very much hope that the OSCE allocates the necessary resources for significant outreach programmes.**

**In our joint efforts to promote solutions to Mediterranean problems parliamentarians of the OSCE are able to shape public opinion and mobilize political, legislative, human, financial and budgetary resources in order to give these issues due attention in their respective parliaments.**



**Two preconditions, however, must be met for a successful OSCE coordinated effort to build confidence and ensure stability in the Euro-Mediterranean region:**

- **The Mediterranean region possesses its own specific dynamics and security challenges. The OSCE model of cooperative security, with all its conditionalities, can be proposed to, but not imposed upon the Mediterranean region.**
- **No progress can be achieved without the active participation and contribution of the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.**

**The work ahead is not easy, but we must always remember that parliamentarians directly elected by the people can provide an important input to the process. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, as a unique OSCE institution promoting parliamentary involvement in the activities of the OSCE and facilitating inter-parliamentary dialogue – will do its most to enhance the Mediterranean dimension of the OSCE and the relations with our Partners for Co-operation in the South Mediterranean.**

**Thank you**