



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Secretary General Lamberto Zannier
Opening Remarks**

**Conference on Preventing Terrorism through Countering Radicalization
and Violent Extremism in Europe
Budapest, Hungary
29-30 May 2013**

Mr. Minister,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank our hosts for providing me the opportunity to address this distinguished audience. I welcome the present conference in Budapest, which demonstrates Hungary's commitment to tackle international terrorism. In addition, I have the pleasure to use this occasion to acknowledge that the OSCE-UNODC co-operation in countering terrorism is further consolidating, and that our Joint Action Plan for 2013-2014 is being effectively implemented.

All 57 OSCE participating States share the conviction that terrorism represents one of the most considerable threats to peace, security and stability as well as to human rights and economic development. Moreover, the OSCE firmly rejects any connection of terrorist activities with such human factors as race, ethnicity or religion. Dreadful terrorist acts have no justification, they “undermine the very values that unite” the OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation. The recent attacks in Boston, Reyhanli, London and Paris demonstrate that terrorism and conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism represent an ever increasing challenge in the OSCE region and beyond. In that context, the conference topic couldn't be more timely and relevant.

A strategic way forward to prevent terrorism is to halt the radicalization spiral that leads to violent extremism and terrorism. Activities focusing on countering radicalization need to involve those who are credible partners in the eyes of those that are being “targeted”. I am therefore particularly pleased that many civil society representatives are here today.

OSCE Participating States have repeatedly underlined the unique attributes and comparative advantages of our Organization in tackling terrorist threats based on our comprehensive, co-operative and indivisible approach to security. This approach links the politico-military, economic and environmental and human dimensions of security, thereby providing a framework for coherent and sustained actions in preventing terrorism.

Our participating States adopted the OSCE Consolidated Framework for the Fight against Terrorism in 2012. This document underscores that effective prevention of terrorism requires countering violent extremism and all forms of radicalization that lead to terrorism – the so-called VERLT – defining it as a strategic focus area for the activities of the Organization. In line with this concept, the OSCE continues to develop its awareness-raising and capacity building programmes with the following inter-related objectives:

- To promote a multi-dimensional understanding of VERLT and develop preventive actions that complement criminal justice responses;
- To address human-rights aspects and to support the formulation and implementation of human-rights compliant policies to counter violent extremism and terrorist radicalization;
- To encourage multi-stakeholder co-operation between public authorities, civil society, business community and the media.

More recent activities target very specific issues, including some that had been overlooked in the past. For example, the important and irreplaceable role women play in countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism. To address the problem, the OSCE organized expert roundtables focusing on preventing women terrorist radicalization and on the role and empowerment of women in countering violent radicalization.

The OSCE also initiated a discussion on youth engagement. Together with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights we are developing a guidebook on the use of community policing to prevent terrorism and counter VERLT. Moreover, the OSCE Office in Tajikistan is carrying out the first ever OSCE field programme in this field.

Let me briefly touch upon another important theme of our conference, which is the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes. Terrorist organizations use the Internet for recruitment, training, propaganda and dissemination of information as well as for planning, financing and incitement of terrorist acts.

The use of the Internet by terrorist groupings continues to be a serious security challenge. Since 2005, our Organization has held four OSCE-wide events and three national workshops focused on the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes. These meetings were open for the private sector as well as for the civil society. Most recently the OSCE organized a series of four online expert forums, two of which focused on countering the use of social networks for terrorist purposes and on strengthening public-private partnerships.

During these events, several areas were identified as deserving additional international attention. For instance, there is the need for more structured

engagement between authorities and social network operators, such as Facebook. New approaches need to be developed to engage Internet users in countering radicalization and violent extremism. The OSCE is exploring possible ways to provide support in tackling these issues.

In conclusion, the terrorist threat is neither temporary nor on the wane. In fact, it is as relevant today as it was ten years ago and even before. What has changed is the international response to terrorism, as preventive efforts have caught up with operational measures.

The OSCE is in the midst of these efforts. While our participating States recognize the leading role of the United Nations when it comes to international efforts to fight terrorism, the OSCE Secretariat, its Institutions and 16 Field Operations provide a framework for multi-stakeholder dialogue, awareness raising, exchange of expertise and networking. Drawing on a unique set of technical skills and a wide-spread field presence, the Organization is well-placed to promptly respond to specific requests of assistance from our participating States.

The next two days will give us an ideal opportunity to review the debate and to challenge current wisdom on countering VERLT. Together with my colleagues we will use this occasion to share OSCE's views on these highly pressing issues.

I wish fruitful discussions to all of you!