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United States Mission to the OSCE

Annual Security Review Conference

Working Session I: Transnational Threats & Challenges

As prepared for delivery by Political Counselor Christopher Robinson
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As we look forward to developments in the Helsinki+40 process, the OSCE's comprehensive security concept is as relevant today as it was four decades ago. As an organization that promotes cross-dimensional security and builds institutional capacity based on the common understanding of threats and challenges we all face, the OSCE's unique approach to security remains a vital part of a "societal response" to transnational threats (TNTs).

Reducing Risk and Building Confidence in State use of ICTs

Threats to information and communications technologies (ICTs) have expanded dramatically in the past decade and are expected to continue to grow. It is imperative that we develop and strengthen our international partnerships to better address the increasingly sophisticated threats to the reliability, integrity and availability of the ICTs we all rely on. The OSCE is uniquely suited to carry forward the work of building trust and confidence regarding states' cyberspace interactions and intentions. Confidence-building measures (CBMs) can reduce the risk of misinterpretation and miscalculation and help avoid conflict.

We welcome the OSCE's efforts to develop an initial set of confidence-building measures. We remain hopeful that when experts from capitals gather here again next month, they will bring a collegial spirit of compromise and cooperation to the next meeting of the Informal Working Group on cybersecurity. An agreement on cybersecurity CBMs would be a major achievement for this organization, a model for cooperation outside the OSCE region, and an accomplishment to highlight at the upcoming Ministerial Council meeting in Kyiv. The OSCE's initial list of CBMs can support a multilateral framework on which we will build enhanced trust. We hope also, eventually, to make concrete progress on cooperative measures against significant cyber challenges. Ultimately, our objective is to advance a common understanding of responsible state behavior in cyberspace through enhanced international understanding, cooperation, and collaboration. We also welcome the OSCE's completion of a U.S.-funded Good Practices Guide on Non-Nuclear Critical Energy Infrastructure Protection from Terrorist Attacks. Cyber attacks on energy and banking infrastructure throughout the world have illustrated the importance of improving the cybersecurity of critical infrastructure. This Guide will serve as an important reference for best practices, in this area, as well as a foundation for future work to enhance cybersecurity in the energy sector.

Addressing Violent Extremism and Entrenching the Rule of Law

In addressing the threat of terrorism, promoting the rule of law and countering violent extremism and radicalization are two areas where the OSCE can make an especially important contribution. The OSCE has demonstrated that it can strengthen counterterrorism capacities by conducting

training programs that promote norms and standards of responsible state behavior and by sharing and helping implement best practices. The OSCE's ability to engage closely with civil society leaders enables it to leverage the efforts of NGOs that have regular access to local community leaders, victims of terrorism, and at-risk individuals. The OSCE's executive structures, particularly the field missions, play a pivotal role in developing local public-private partnerships and community-based counterterrorism initiatives, including counter-narrative proposals.

We were pleased to take an active role in last November's rule-of-law counterterrorism event. Promoting the rule of law is a core competence of the OSCE, and we look forward to implementing several of the key recommendations from that event. We see the OSCE as an active partner in ongoing international counterterrorism efforts, and welcome its deepened collaboration with the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF). The OSCE can, and indeed should, become a pivotal GCTF implementing partner, supporting training and otherwise promoting the implementation of GCTF-elaborated good practices throughout the OSCE region and beyond. We look forward to a joint GCTF-OSCE event on women's empowerment and CVE (or countering violent extremism) in the first half of 2014 hosted by our Turkish colleagues in Istanbul.

Strengthening Border Security and Updating Nonproliferation Principles

Efforts to promote secure borders remain a principal component of the OSCE's TNT work, and we strongly support the OSCE's activities in this area. By strengthening efforts such as the Border Management Staff College (BMSC) in Dushanbe, implementing hands-on "green border" training programs, and addressing corruption-related issues, the OSCE can combat transnational threats while helping establish conditions that foster regional economic growth and integration. The United States has been a generous donor to several of the OSCE's regional efforts and we will continue to support these and related initiatives. We can achieve more when we all align our policy goals and pool our limited financial resources. We call on our participating State and Partner nation colleagues to continue to make concrete commitments to projects earmarked for Afghanistan and regional stability. In particular, we strongly advocate for the BMSC to be fully funded from the OSCE's unified budget in 2014. We also salute the Chairman-in-Office's strong leadership in updating the OSCE's 1994 non-proliferation principles. We hope that a meaningful non-proliferation document will be adopted before the Kyiv Ministerial Council meeting. Such a document can serve as a basis for Ukraine-led cooperation within the OSCE region, as well as a model for collaboration with countries outside the OSCE. We warmly welcome the CiO's leadership in advancing the vitally important non-proliferation cause. In addition, we note with appreciation the work the Conflict Prevention Centre has undertaken to further OSCE nonproliferation goals through its fostering of the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540, particularly in helping states identify needs and develop plans toward fulfilling their obligations under the resolution.

Promoting Police Reform

We are strong supporters of the OSCE's efforts to entrench the rule of law and promote police reform. Our engagement with the OSCE's Community Security Initiative (CSI) demonstrates our abiding commitment to the people of Kyrgyzstan and to the principles of community policing as well as our confidence that long-term stability, economic vigor, and lasting democracy flourish best when Kyrgyzstan actively engages to reduce ethnic tensions and socio-economic inequalities. We encourage the Government of Kyrgyzstan, particularly its Ministry of Interior, to hire, train, and integrate minorities and women into all levels of Kyrgyzstan's structures, and promote transparency and accountability at all levels of government.

Closing

Evolving transnational threats challenge stability within the OSCE space and beyond. Addressing them requires a collective response that builds local, national, and international capacities to enhance societal and community-level resilience. It also obliges us to improve our tools to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our OSCE capacity-building efforts to leverage our limited resources most effectively.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.