

**Welcoming Address by Ambassador Ivo Petrov,  
Chairman of the OSCE Permanent Council,  
to the Follow-up Conference of the UNCTC Special Meeting with  
International, Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations  
Vienna, 11 – 12 March 2004**

It is my utmost pleasure to welcome you at the Follow-up Conference of the UNCTC Special Meeting with International, Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations, hosted by the OSCE in co-operation with the UNODC. I am very pleased to see that we have a great attendance not only from our partner organizations, but also from a large number of OSCE participating States and UN member States. This interest is a good sign, promising serious follow-on activities in the area of counter-terrorism. May I offer my warmest greetings to all of you who are here to do some very important work.

The fight against terrorism remains a tremendous challenge. We have continued to witness horrific terrorist attacks in many parts of the world, including in some OSCE participating States. That is why counter-terrorism is and will remain high on the agenda of the OSCE during the Bulgarian Chairmanship of the Organization, as was the case with previous Chairmanships. This year Bulgaria has placed particular importance on the implementation of OSCE documents and commitments. What is called for are practical robust measures to fight terrorism, to be implemented to a large extent in co-operation with other international agencies.

The OSCE, as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, conducts its anti-terrorism activities under the aegis of the UN and in close co-ordination with the UNCTC. In this respect the OSCE has maintained close contact and co-ordination with the UNCTC, as demonstrated by the important address of Ambassador Arias, Chairman of the CTC, to the OSCE Permanent Council in November last year, which charted important areas where CTC saw

special need for the increased contribution of regional organizations in the global anti-terrorism effort.

With the pragmatic approach that is so characteristic of our Organization, we have concentrated our efforts on concrete areas where we can make a real difference - airport security, policing, combating shoulder-fired missiles, secure travel documents, to name but a few. Our Organization is not sparing any efforts and resources to support the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1373 and other pertinent resolutions within its region by employing its comparative advantages and in close co-operation with other international, regional and sub-regional organizations and initiatives.

That is why regular exchanges of views between our organizations like this one are of great importance for achieving unified and concerted global action, required for the success of the fight against terrorism. Therefore we are pleased by the positive assessment of the UNCTC on the way the OSCE is contributing to the implementation of the relevant international documents in this area and fulfilling the role of regional organizations in the fight against terrorism, mandated to them by the UNSCR and the CTC in its special meetings, as well as on the achieved level of co-ordination and interaction with other international, regional and sub-regional organizations and initiatives.

Indeed, the OSCE has strengthened its working relations with the UNCTC and other international organizations and should continue to do so in the future. Special mention goes to OSCE's joint work with the UNODC in the area of anti-terrorism legislation. Significant in this respect is the progress that the OSCE has accomplished on ratification and implementation of the 12 Universal Anti-terrorism Instruments - ratification rate for the 55 OSCE participating States has risen considerably – from 65 % on 11 September 2001, to 83% as of 11 January 2004. So far a total of 25 participating States (i.e. 45%) have become party to all 12 Instruments. This has only been accomplished through our close collaboration with UNODC.

In our efforts to combat terrorism we give due regard to the respect for human rights. With reference to this, I would like to draw your attention particularly to the Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism which aims to “establish a framework for comprehensive action to be taken by participating States and the Organization as a whole to combat terrorism, fully respecting international law, including the international law of human rights and other relevant norms of international law”. We appreciate that this provision is one of the elements of the Vienna Declaration to be adopted at the end of your discussions tomorrow.

OSCE’s Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, which has played a major role in this respect, continues encouraging and supporting legislative implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1373 and the 12 Instruments. ODIHR also conducts analyses of human rights protection in measures against terrorism, and in general works closely with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Council of Europe on matters related to terrorism and human rights.

The OSCE documents on anti-terrorism recognize the close link between terrorism and trans-national organized crime, trafficking in drugs, human beings and arms, and money laundering. The Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) has undertaken a number of initiatives designed to implement the recommendations contained in the Bucharest Plan of Action, as well as those in the Bishkek Programme of Action. Specifically, the Bishkek document highlighted the importance of the creation of anti-money laundering structures and legislation. In this regard, the UNODC Global Programme against Money Laundering and the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities co-operate closely on activities aimed at combating money laundering and suppressing the financing of terrorism.

Also the ability of national police services to respond efficiently and appropriately to such issues is crucial to the efforts to successfully prevent and combat terrorism. In this respect, the OSCE through its

Strategic Police Matters Unit (SPMU) is engaged in activities supporting participating States in strengthening law enforcement institutions in fighting the various aspects of trans-national organized crime, developed in co-operation with other relevant organization in this area.

The list of co-operative activities between the OSCE and other organizations is long, so let me conclude by saying that we all consider it a recognition of OSCE's ability to interact successfully with other organizations that the CTC has supported the idea to convene this meeting here.

Therefore I wish to you all on behalf of the Bulgarian Chairmanship-in-Office of the OSCE fruitful work in further enhancing the interaction between organizations.

Thank you for your attention.