



**Speech by Terry Davis, Secretary General
of the Council of Europe
at the 14th OSCE Ministerial Council
Brussels, 4-5 December 2006**

Because this has been a long day and much has already been said I will not only make the usual promise to be brief - I will also keep my promise.

All 46 Council of Europe member states are also participating countries in the OSCE. You, the Ministers, are in charge of both organisations, deciding our political priorities and the allocation of the means to achieve them. I will reveal no secret by saying that our responsibilities grow faster than our budgets. But I am not here to complain - even though the emphasis, as you will note, is on the word here. My task is to make sure that the Council of Europe provides maximum value for money to our governments and to our citizens and taxpayers and this is what I am doing and will continue to do.

Using the available means efficiently requires a lot of internal effort, but it also has an external dimension – proper coordination and cooperation with other organisations. I know that I am stating the obvious, but the fact is that while we are all committed partisans of cooperation and coordination, in practice and on the ground these good intentions are too often forgotten and ignored.

This is not good enough. In my book, working together means identifying, planning and deciding together, and not simply issuing invitations to each other's events. If we want to be cost-efficient, we must not be afraid to allocate responsibilities according to our comparative advantages, not political opportunism, institutional egos or a twist of fate.

This is the approach to which both the Secretary General of the OSCE and I are committed and are putting to practice. I should like to take this opportunity to thank Marc Perrin de Brichambaut for the excellent cooperation and support which has helped to enlarge the scope of cooperation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe. To quote a few examples: in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the complementarity of our work in the education field; in Albania, the joint effort on setting up a civil population registry; throughout the Western Balkans, co-operation in the field of local democracy.

But there are limits to what a Secretary General can do. In most cases, the "sin" of insufficient coordination and irrational use of resources is not committed in Strasbourg or Vienna but in the capitals of our member states and participating countries. Far too often, the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing, and the cost is real and measurable in time, money and effect.

From my side, I have asked the Secretariat of the Council of Europe to prepare a list of specific projects which could benefit from a genuinely joint effort by the two organisations. They include activities in the struggle against terrorism, trafficking in human beings and the fight against intolerance and discrimination. I know that I can count on the Secretary General of the OSCE to do the same but at the end of the day, our success will depend on support from our decision-makers and that, ladies and gentlemen, is you.