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OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
TO THE INTERNATIONAL
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(1) Intro | Why am I (glad to be) here?

- It's **not** the **first time** I'm addressing the Permanent Council.
(I already have but in a different capacity on BiH & MN).
- But it's the **first time** I'm here in the **capacity** of a **Foreign Minister**.
- I think the **timing couldn't be better**.

(2) Slovakia within OSCE

(a) Economic & Environmental Dimension

- There's **no security** without **stability**. The potential of the **2nd dimension** is **enormous**.
- **Slovakia** is **chairing** the **Economic & Environmental Committee**.
 - It's a place for issues with **direct impact** on **well-being** of **our citizens** and their security.
(concrete things: natur/disasters, corruption, enviro/degradation, energy disruptions etc.)
 - **Areas** where **OSCE** should **focus** and **create** its **visible brand name** vis-à-vis **citizens**.
- **Stable energy supplies** are also very **high** on the **agenda** (not only for my country):
- Our contribution: **Energy Conference** organized by **OSCE**, **Energy Charter** & **SK MFEA**
 - I would like to **invite you** to **take part** in the conference on **10 Oct 2014** in **Bratislava**.

- Outcomes of the conference will be utilized in **OSCE handbook on protection of energy networks from natural disasters**. I invite your experts to contribute.

(b) Security Sector Reform

- **No discussion** on security is **complete** without **Sec/Sector Governance & Reform (SSG/R)**.
- It's **recognized** in **many OSCE activities** (conflict prevention, early warning & crisis/man.).
- But we **still lack** a **coherent approach** in light of **today's challenges** which could (1) **promote reform** processes in the most **needful regions**, (2) **help to perform activities effectively** in different areas through synergies (*police, border management, fight against terrorism, drug crime*) and (3) **support reform and management of military resources**.
- For all of this, **national ownership** of SSG/R is **vital**.
- **Slovakia, Swiss Chairmanship** and inc. **Serbian Chairmanship** introduced and financed an **extra budgetary project** aiming to **raise awareness** about **importance** of SSG/R.
 - The activities were supported by **joint OSCE-UN Conference** (in **Vienna; 7 July 2014**).
 - The aim to **strengthen OSCE & UN cooperation** on SSG/R.
 - The **creation** of the **OSCE Group of Friends of SSG/R** **chaired** by **Slovakia** aims to (1) **share understanding** on SSG/R, (2) **build informal dialogue** among OSCE executive structures and its Field Missions, (3) **support coherent approach** and necessary reform processes where needed and (last but not least) to **rationalize** available **resources**.

(3) OSCE | Where we stand

- **Now**, it's the **critical moment** for Euro-Atlantic & Euro-Asian security.
- The **system** that started in **Helsinki** almost 4 decades ago is **unraveling**.
 - It shaped the East-West relations after the fall of the Berlin Wall.
 - It also helped the transformation of post-communist countries (including Slovakia).
- The order based on **agreed norms** and **behavior** has been **challenged**. The Helsinki principles and **international law** have been **put into question** as **never before**.
(since the Berlin Wall fell).

(4) Ukraine & violated Helsinki principles

- In December last year, **OSCE Ministerial** in **Kiev** saw a powerful movement against a corrupted system.
 - **Ukraine's call** for the rule of law, democracy, justice and respect for human rights were seen as a manifestation of **European choice**.
 - We stressed the **need to seek national consensus** through **inclusive** and democratic **dialogue**.
 - However, **divergent views** and **actions** both **within** and **outside** Ukrainian society have been **misused** to fuel **tensions**. At that time, **hardly anyone predicted** the situation would deteriorate so dramatically.
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- The '**holy**' **principles** of **territorial integrity**, border inviolability, of no threat or use of force have been **violated**. Illegal annexation of neighboring country's territory took place as well as military incursion of illegal armed formations supported massively by propaganda tools.
 - All this has created an **unprecedented** econ. and energy **challenge** for **Ukraine** as well as the whole of **Europe**.
 - The **East-West relations** have reached their **all-time low** since the end of the Cold War.

- The crisis shows that the **era of confrontation** & division in Europe is **not over**.
(as it should have been according to the Paris Charter)
- The vision of a stable Eurasian community as envisaged by the **Astana Summit Declaration** has also **not been materialized**.
- And, at the end of the day, **we still don't have a solution to all these challenges**.

(5) **THE question = how is this still possible in the 21st century?**

What have we done wrong? Why have things gone so far?

- Firstly, we have **failed to listen to each other** and to **hear** each other out.
- Secondly, we have **failed to bridge the gap** between **declaratory & genuine adherence** to principles and commitments.
- We have also been **unable to reverse** the protracted **erosion** of the **Eur/security** system.
- Lesson learned 1: We (by far) **don't make enough use of synergy** betw. **existing structures**.
- Lesson learned 2: **OSCE is anything but useless**. It showed its **real potential** with **Ukraine**.
- I praise the work of the OSCE **Special Monitoring Mission** deployed to de-escalate the crisis.
- We should support **expansion of OSCE presence** in Ukraine.
- It's got an **irreplaceable** role in **observing the ceasefire** and the **borders**.
- OSCE is the **only organization** that proved it can **change the reality on the ground**.
- And, at the same time, pursue **strategic dialogue** on efforts to soften and facilitate conflicts.

(not so long ago it had been forgotten, neglected & underestimated by many)

(6) How to get out & restore what is important ...

- Sometimes, it **seems** as if we are **returning to the 70s & 80s** but **this is not a new Cold War.**
- We need to **replace the culture of confrontation** with one of **cooperation & joint action.**
- Only **inclusive** and **result-oriented dialogue** addressing **claims of all sides** constitutes a road to **solution.**
- This is where **OSCE comes to the fore** as a bridge between East and West.
A place of **creative ideas**
- **Assault on territorial integrity** of a sovereign and independent state **cannot go unanswered.**
- Every country has the **right to determine** its own **future.** **Nobody can redraw borders.**
- *Here comes the BUT:*
- **Sanctions, embargoes** and counter-embargoes **cannot** be the **main objective** – **only a tool.**
- **Long-term,** they **fuel** further **confrontation** and **mistrust** and hurt all involved.
We all know about this. **We all see** this in **practice.**
- **Deterrence** and **balance of power** (the opposite of shared commitments and values) is in **nobody's interest.**
- The **door for dialogue** needs to remain **open** to address differences.
OSCE is such a '**door**'.

(7) Future role of OSCE

- It's probably **too early for comprehensive answers** to the dynamic developments & changes.
Here are some THOUGHTS that might help:
- **OSCE** should be both: (1) a **framework** to overcome the crisis and (2) **part of the solution**.
- **Violation of Helsinki** and other **principles should not prompt** us to start **rethinking them**.
- **Instead of doubting**, we need to **make them** more **effective** & their **violation more difficult**.
- The growing number of **defensive measures** & **adversarial policies** is **anachronistic** & **dangerous**.
- We've accumulated a **legacy of divergent security perceptions** which are the **roots** of the current dead-end.
- Ukraine was preceded by:
 - (1) **Divergent perceptions** of NATO and EU **enlargements**.
 - (2) **Erosion** of the **conventional arms control** regime in Europe.
 - (3) Backsliding on **implementation** of OSCE **commitments** (*esp. in the human dimension*).
 - (4) **Lack of determination** to **resolve frozen conflicts** (*we have more of them than before*).
- We should free ourselves of **prejudices** & **mutual suspicion**.
- **Repairing spoiled relations** will be **painful** & **long-term** but we've no other option, do we?

- If we truly want to **achieve historical reconciliation**, we need to **discuss issues openly, based on reality rather than perception**.

(8) Strategic challenges

- The **on-going crisis** is to large extent the result of a **failure to implement domestic reforms**.
(*transformation: rule of law, dem/institutions, good govern., media freedom, HR, economy*)
- We need **joint efforts** to address the **real threats** that endanger our common security.
(*terrorism, org/crime, illicit trafficking in drugs & human beings + surge of militant Islam*)
- There's a **growing gap of values** in the OSCE region. We should **identify the ones we share** and formally **recognize them** in order to have a **common foundation** to start from.
- We must **avoid unilateral steps** and maintain intense **communication at all levels**.
- And most importantly, we have to put **all difficult issues on the agenda** (not avoid them).
- Along comes the **readiness** to make **concessions** and **keep promises**.
- We can achieve this by being **strictly realistic** and **look to the future** (with the past in mind).
- The **work on conventional arms control** in **Europe** has to be **revived** in order (2) to reverse the disturbing **trend of decreasing military predictability** and **transparency** and also (2) to **reinvigorate discussions** on a **sustainable arms control regime**.
- Let's **find ways to prevent the use of energy as a weapon & instrument of political pressure**.

There IS space for **mutually beneficial projects** in this strategic area.

- We need **new/updated European security framework** including the **revision of EU-Russia and EU-NATO cooperation formats** that would **better suit the current situation**.

(9) Imminent steps to take

- I subscribe to the efforts of the **Swiss Chairmanship** to launch a **discussion** on how to **reconsolidate European security** and the **OSCE is at the heart** of these efforts.
- **Helsinki +40** Process is (1) an opportunity to **acknowledge failures** as well as (2) a **basis for future relations**.
- Reminder: **40 years ago** leaders of countries with deep **ideological differences engaged** in a **dialogue** and prevented new large-scale war.
Today: **There are NO such deep differences** but the same **leadership is needed**.
- We need to **overcome the growing chasm of differing interpretations** which are particularly dangerous. A **discussion needs to start without any delay**:
 - In order to **steer the course of events together** and **not to be steered by future circumstances** (independent of our will).
 - We also need to **seek ways** how to **re-engage** in a **strategic dialogue on Eur/security**.
 - And finally we have to realize that the work **towards a reliable security system is more like a marathon** than a **sprint**, but **we shouldn't wait** until better 'weather conditions'.

- The most important PRECONDITIONS to succeed are:
 - (1) **Thinking** in **terms** of **COOPERATION** and joint efforts as opposite to **alliances** and counter-alliances. It might be bitter but utterly needed.
 - (2) **Seeking SYNERGIES** between **existing structures** and int'l **players**. There is no need to create new ones. It would be a waste of energy and resources.

