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Statement by the Delegation of Montenegro at the 2008 Annual Security Review
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As delivered by Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs
Ms. Dragana Radulovic

Mr. Chairman,

It is an honour to address 6th Annual Security Conference. Montenegro is fully committed to fight against all challenges to security at national, regional and international level. We believe the OSCE, with its instruments and decisions has an important role as a basis to step up national efforts and produce tangible results. By implementing decisions we all agreed on and making use of international mechanisms and respecting international commitments, especially within UN, we work to prevent these problems, not merely react on them.

Allow me to take this opportunity and shed a light on some activities Montenegro has undertaken in the field of border management, fight trafficking in human beings and terrorism. Although carried out in cooperation with various international actors, our engagement in this field has been particularly driven by the core OSCE commitments in this field.

Organized crime in all forms is a major threat to stability, rule of law and development of our countries, since it crosses borders. We have reinforced efforts in fight against trafficking in human beings, drugs and weapons, in line with the OSCE decisions and international standards. Montenegro is implementing Strategy for the fight against trafficking in human beings which entails comprehensive legal, administrative and practical measures to the fight this type of crime.

Terrorism is the most dangerous modern threat we all face, especially due to its connection to organized crime. Regardless of our size, we should take active part and contribute to the global fight against this menace. Montenegro has undertaken activities in this primarily through the reform of its legislation in line with UN and CoE resolutions. We have signed numerous bilateral agreements on the fight against terrorism. The Action Plan for strengthening the police capacity for combating terrorism envisages forming of special police units. In the upcoming period, Montenegro will pass a law and adopt national strategy on fight against terrorism, and improve interoperability between the armed forces and the special units. Our Law on the prevention of money laundering, which is in line with UN and EU standards and enables international cooperation and monitoring terrorists and financiers of terror.

We want to have free and open, but at the same time safe and controlled borders. In this sense, we can make use of international mechanisms and instruments, including the OSCE ones.

Since 2003, Montenegro has been developing unified system of border security. Strategy and Action Plan on Integrated Border Management was adopted in 2006, as well as Law on surveillance of borders that details border control mechanisms in line with EU standards. Government also formed Commission for delimitation of state borders. Our activities have primarily been aimed at improving cooperation and coordination of border services and prompt exchange of information; establishing electronic surveillance of borders – a mobile electronic surveillance was established at Skadar Lake and eight border crossings were networked into single Police system; also, reconstruction of nine border crossing was conducted. We have introduced biometric passports and optical passport readers were installed at two airports and most frequent border crossings.

International and regional cooperation plays an important role in border security. Montenegro signed agreements on cooperation in this area with all neighboring countries, ratified Convention on Police Cooperation in SEE, established cooperation with Europol and became member of SECI. With OSCE Mission facilitation we signed Agreement on cross-border cooperation with Albania. Montenegrin Police and the OSCE Mission signed MoU in May this year which enables the continuation of the OSCE support in capacity building in border management.

Cooperation with the EU is of particular importance for Montenegro. We have signed and are implementing Agreements with the EU on visa facilitation and on readmission. We have launched negotiations on visa liberalization, and we are now working on fulfilling necessary requirements–security of documents, integrated border management, cooperation with neighbors in justice and home affairs, fight against organized crime and corruption, especially illegal migration. To this aim, we have adopted legislation in line with the EU standards.

Our future efforts will be aimed at continuing activities in mentioned areas, networking border crossings with Interpol system, furthering electronic surveillance, training, construction of Centre for Aliens and Asylum seekers, applying standards of Schengen.

All our activities in fighting security threats are key for our integration in the EU and NATO, which is our strategic security and foreign policy priority. In all these areas, Montenegro had the support of the OSCE and Mission in Podgorica. We believe that today's discussion will further contribute to more efficient fight against security challenges in the OSCE area and improve our mutual cooperation. Montenegro will continue to be a reliable partner in this so that we could contribute to stability and security in the OSCE area.