



**Address by the Special Envoy of the Chairman-in-Office
H.E. Alternate Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr. Dimitris P. Droutsas**

Special Session of the Permanent Council
Vienna, November 6 2009

Mr. Secretary General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to address the Permanent Council on behalf of the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE.

Prime Minister George Papandreou, in his address to the Permanent Council last week, outlined the vision and priorities that guide the Greek Chairmanship ahead of the Ministerial Council in Athens. I would like to use this opportunity to draw your attention to and further expand on two aspects of our common endeavour: the strategic perspective and the practical work that lies ahead. Theory should match practice, and words should correspond to deeds.

Since its inception, the OSCE has been a nursery of new ideas and long-term perspectives. As the most comprehensive and inclusive forum for dialogue, the OSCE has provided an irreplaceable venue for promoting understanding, ironing out differences, dispelling concerns and fostering cooperation.

In this light, the Helsinki spirit has served as a driving force for positive transformation in Europe. Deep cleavages and long-standing divisions have given way to a new era of common purpose and cooperation. On this anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, it is time to celebrate the remarkable progress that the OSCE states have achieved together over the past two decades. At the same time, we should intensify our joint efforts in order to fully realize our common vision enshrined in the Paris Charter for a united continent built on indivisible security and fundamental freedoms.

Clearly, we are not fully there yet. Longstanding conflicts remain unresolved, while traces of mistrust among OSCE partners undermine our capacity to successfully confront new transnational threats that have emerged; threats that require firm, collective and unified responses.

In order to successfully address these challenges, it is imperative to renew our commitment to the ambitious vision of comprehensive, cooperative and indivisible security that brought our predecessors together in Paris nearly twenty years ago. To this end, we must demonstrate the continued vitality of the principles and values that underpin the OSCE.

Last June, in Corfu, the OSCE Ministers committed the political will to confront and solve the security challenges that we are facing, guided by the spirit of indivisible, comprehensive and cooperative security. This is the quintessence of the Corfu Process. We see this process as a unique opportunity for renewed, inclusive and wide-ranging strategic dialogue on security *in* Europe and the security *of* Europe, in order to restore confidence and trust among all partners, promote understanding and solve Europe's outstanding problems. This aim will be achieved by *Reconfirming* our acquis, *Reviewing* the State of play of European Security and *Renovating* our mechanisms to deal with traditional and new challenges.

At the heart of this common endeavor lie the notions that security begins with the inherent dignity of the individual, that genuine security can only be comprehensive when it encompasses politico-military cooperation, healthy economic governance and the rule of law and that the security of States is impossible without the well-being of societies and individuals.

The dialogue has been guided thus far by three principles, which should remain a compass for our way ahead. First, respect for the principles of comprehensive, cooperative and indivisible security, as guiding lines for the behavior of States toward each other and within their borders. Second, a reconfirmation that all participating States will work toward the full implementation of commitments across all three OSCE dimensions. Finally, strengthened co-operation between the participating States in confidence-building, in arms control, in crisis management and in tackling new threats.

Without prejudice to the contributions of other international fora, the OSCE is a dialogue multiplier. This is not a fair-weather institution; it was created and it has evolved precisely with the aim of providing a setting where differences can be addressed frankly, where concerns can be expressed equally, and where action is undertaken together and responsibility shared. There is nothing like this in wider Europe.

In Athens, the participating States must work together to take the next step. We must identify themes and priorities that should be the focus of our discussions next year. We must clarify the means by which the dialogue will be taken forward by the OSCE Permanent Representatives in Vienna. We must set clear and achievable objectives. We have to be both ambitious and realistic.

When the Heads of State and Government of the CSCE met in Helsinki in 1975, the participating States had held more than 2400 meetings in Geneva, and deliberated on 4,660 proposals. We have only just started. If, indeed, we are aiming for a "Helsinki Plus," let us recall the long-term commitment and patient work this will require. However, our discussions should not serve as a pretext for endless and aimless deliberation without practical results on the ground.

In this context, I would like to raise the second aspect of our common endeavour: practical work.

Allow me to point out that this dialogue is not about the OSCE as such. We should aim to strengthen the Organization, reinforce its mechanisms and enhance its support to the participating States.

It is time to take stock. We need to review the tools we have built, learn to use them more effectively, and mobilize all reserves of political will. The implementation of existing commitments in good faith by all the participating States of the OSCE is central to our efforts to restore confidence and trust and to work together in confronting the existing challenges. In this sense, the Corfu Process will be successful if at the end of it a more secure and stable Europe will emerge through concrete progress on key security challenges.

The crisis over the CFE Treaty was a warning sign that our achievements in the field of arms control are deteriorating. The ongoing stalemate is deeply worrying, as Europe remains in dire need of the transparency, predictability and cooperative security provided for by this landmark Treaty. Our efforts should aim at the prompt entry into force of the Adapted CFE Treaty along with focused work to restore its viability in the new circumstances of the third decade after the end of the Cold War.

Promoting the peaceful resolution of the protracted conflicts has been at the core of OSCE's mandate from the outset. Clearly each conflict has its own historic background and unique circumstances. Therefore, there are no uniformed solutions. Yet, there are universal principles, enshrined in the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act, which should serve as a compass for forming a tailor-made solution to each conflict.

The protracted conflicts form an integral part of our dialogue on European security. As we enter the second decade of the 21st century, we should be guided by common principles in order to create the foundations for peaceful settlement.

In this respect, the restoration of stability and security in Georgia, following the tragic events of August 2008, was at the very center of our work since the start of the Greek Chairmanship. We sought tirelessly to maintain a meaningful, cross-dimensional OSCE presence in the region. Regrettably, despite these efforts, consensus could not be reached, resulting in the closing of one of the largest field operations of the OSCE. Nonetheless, the Greek Chairmanship stands behind its status-neutral compromise proposal, which, in our view, should remain the basis for any future solution. In the meantime, the Chairmanship continues to work with all sides involved to address security, rehabilitation and human rights concerns in order to rebuild confidence and bridge differences.

Furthermore, the OSCE works hand in hand with the UN and the EU in co-chairing the Geneva International Discussions. The continuation of this unified international effort, which has already produced some concrete results on the ground through the establishment of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms, is vital. However, much hard work remains ahead.

Restoring stability and strengthening security in the South Caucasus remains high on the OSCE agenda. The events in Georgia last year clearly proved that resorting to force is never a solution to conflict. In the same way, the Greek Chairmanship fully supports the efforts of the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Group for a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, based on principles outlined in the Madrid 2007 Document.

Concerning the Transnistrian conflict, you are aware that an informal "5+2" meeting is taking place, as we speak, here in Vienna, in order to look into the prospects of removing all obstacles to serious, formal negotiations on a political settlement of the

conflict. I will have the opportunity to meet with the Principals of the negotiation format later on today. In this respect, allow me to reiterate our support for a lasting, viable and peaceful settlement of the dispute, respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova.

Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the Athens Ministerial Council approaches, we have our work cut out for us across the three Dimensions of security. Let us together rise to this challenge. We should be bold and seek to agree on a political declaration and a meaningful decision. Strong results now will set strong foundations and set the stage for the work of future Chairmanships.

The OSCE is a unique platform for pan-European security. We should continue to make the most of it.

Thank you.