

Address by H.E. Radosław Sikorski

ENGLISH only

Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland

VII OSCE Summit

(Astana, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2010)

Madam President,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the last few months, concerns have been raised that this year's OSCE Summit is being held prematurely, as significant progress in the debate on the future of European security is yet to be made. Despite some initial doubts, Poland has remained convinced of the urgent need to launch the process of adjusting the Organisation to its rapidly changing security environment.

Indeed, 35 years after the conclusion of the Helsinki Final Act, some OSCE mechanisms and instruments have become outdated and are no longer sufficient for resolving the region's security issues. Designed as a flexible framework that ensures early warning and timely action, in the last few years the Organisation has consistently failed to deliver. The August 2008 war in Georgia and the recent crisis in Kyrgyzstan were painful reminders of this inability to react effectively, and provided yet more evidence of the urgent need for change. (Although it should be noted that the OSCE was not the only international actor responsible for the lack of action)

Holding the Summit now is not a risk-free venture. Its failure would be detrimental to the regional security dialogue. We took this risk knowingly, in order to finally overcome the deadlock and overhaul security in our region. There is no need to reinvent the wheel; we just have to reinvent the OSCE.

How do we do this? We must kick-start the process of redesigning state-to-state relations and creating a modern security community from Vancouver to Vladivostok, where the use of force is unthinkable. The lynchpin of this community would be the full implementation of existing OSCE *acquis*. Our **first step**, then, will be to find effective ways of addressing cases of non-compliance and assisting those unable to improve their implementation record unaided.

A litmus test of our dedication to changing our security relations will be our response to existing and emerging conflicts and crises. The OSCE must have the political will and tools

necessary to address every stage of the conflict cycle. Our **second step** will be to determine which measures contribute to settling protracted conflicts. For instance, we must promote effective confidence building measures, in particular in Moldova. In the case of Georgia, we must all agree to restore the OSCE presence there without delay.

**Third**, we must ensure the success of the current dialogue on the modernisation of arms control regimes and confidence building measures. The outcome of these negotiations will have a vital impact on the character of our future security relations. We must capitalise on the progress that has been made in the last couple of months. We can't afford not to.

We will be unable to improve the way we handle our common security unless we develop and modernise our ability to combat transnational threats. As these threats often originate outside the OSCE area (for example in Afghanistan), we must have the courage and determination to extend the geographical scope of the OSCE's engagement and we must establish effective cooperative ties with our key international partners. This will be our **fourth step**.

**Finally**, it is imperative all participating States fully adhere to democratic values and human rights standards throughout the process of re-inventing the OSCE.

This agenda is not optional. The failure to execute it will result in the increase of antagonism, the regression of democracy and the erosion of the European security system. This is why it is imperative that we adopt action-oriented decisions today and proceed with their implementation without delay. If we achieve this, the Astana Summit will be remembered for launching the long but necessary journey towards creating a modern security community and a reinvigorated OSCE.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Kazakhstan for its outstanding hospitality; and to wish Lithuania every success in assuming the OSCE Chairmanship.

Thank you for your attention.