

COUNTER-TERRORISM CONFERENCE:

**«CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS OF THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM AND
OTHER VIOLENT FORMS OF EXTREMISM»**

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

by

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**STATE RESIDENCE ALA-ARCHA
CONGRESS HALL**

Distinguished State Ministers, Distinguished CIS Executive Secretary, Distinguished CSTO Secretary General, dear guests and participants,

Thank you for the opportunity to address this opening session. OSCE much welcomes this conference. OSCE, with its broad geographical base and its comprehensive approach to security, believes it can and does contribute to the prevention of terrorism and the protection of public safety and dignity.

There is strong consensual political will among OSCE's 56 participating States as well as its partner nations, such as Afghanistan, Algeria, Israel and South Korea, to increase and not lessen its efforts to tackle terrorism. We hope the discussion at this Conference will strengthen our regional understanding of why terrorism, radicalization and militancy arise and will identify practical ways in which we can prevent these violent and negative tendencies.

I shall aim to be brief in my introductory remarks. I have 3 key messages which, without apology, repeat yet distill so much of what has been said and written in the world's expansive literature and keynote speeches about terrorism.

Firstly, terrorism is a global problem. We are all in this together. We live in an interdependent world. Experience has shown that no State is immune from terrorism and no one country can resolve the underlying issues on their own. This means working together nationally and internationally and not in a disjointed or mutually suspicious manner. Our failures will be the terrorists' advantage. The terrorist will adroitly exploit any differences, gaps and rivalries among ourselves. It therefore gives me particular pleasure to see OSCE today alongside *other* regional organizations, such as CIS and CSTO, as well as international global organizations such as the UN. This in itself is a powerful public message.

Secondly, terrorism is complex and diverse. It has many forms and causes. While the world lacks a universally agreed definition of terrorism, it increasingly strives for a common action plan against the terrorist threat we face. The OSCE has developed a rounded and comprehensive approach, which entails building strong collaborative relationships between the public and private sectors. This concept, called "public-private partnership", is explicitly called for in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. In late 2008 Kyrgyzstan hosted a regional conference, which sought to consider and apply the PPP concept to regional circumstances. The OSCE Centre in Bishkek is supporting the extension of this concept more widely within national life in Kyrgyzstan, by exploring the most suitable ways to build mutually supportive partnerships among Government bodies and civil society, including business, the media, educational and religious institutions. The PPP concept enables OSCE and UN members to pool and share their expertise and experience in fighting terrorism. PPP recognises that civil society organizations, including religious institutions, often enjoy more credibility and better access at grassroots level, particularly among those most vulnerable to violent extremist messages.

Thirdly, good governance and respect for human rights lessen the threats from terrorism by reducing potential grievances on which terrorism can prey. Public sentiments of social and economic marginalization, disenfranchisement or abuse by Authority play into the hands of terrorist recruiters. Protecting human rights must be an integral part of any State anti-terrorism framework. As the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated in March 2003 at a special meeting of the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee with International, Regional, and Sub-Regional Organisations :

"Our responses to terrorism, as well as our efforts to thwart it and prevent it, should uphold the human rights that terrorists aim to destroy. Respect for human rights, fundamental

freedoms and the rule of law are essential tools in the effort to combat terrorism – not privileges to be sacrificed at a time of tension.”

For our part, the OSCE Centre in Bishkek works closely in support of Kyrgyzstan on counter-terrorism issues alongside the OSCE Secretariat's Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU) and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) - both of whom will also be addressing this conference.

It may be helpful here to **summarise the OSCE Centre’s anti-terrorism work**. I would place it into **three categories**.

Firstly, we seek to support to strengthen the **legislative defences**, for example through Kyrgyzstan’s ratification and implementation of the 16 UN universal anti-terrorist instruments as well as in enhancing national legislation.

Secondly, we seek to strengthen the **physical defences**. Our programmes include strengthening border security; enhancing travel document and container shipment security ; offering bomb-disposal training ; suppressing terrorist financing; increasing the quality of religious education and preventing misguided faith and radicalisation, including inside detention facilities ; providing human-rights training for law-enforcement and security services ; and fostering the participation and respect of national minorities in national life. Most recently, and in line with a recent OSCE Ministerial Decision, the Centre is reinforcing the logistical security of Kyrgyzstan’s critical energy infrastructure from terrorist attack.

Thirdly, we seek to boost **cooperation within society**, at both Governmental and non-Governmental level, by strengthening inter-governmental coordination and by developing ways in which Government and the Public can help each other in safeguarding society from terrorism. The public-private partnership approach I earlier outlined lies at the heart of this line of work. The OSCE Centre in Bishkek itself has a discipline to assess and include youth and women considerations at the project design stage in all its programmes. Cooperative outreach into the provinces and districts is crucial. I have been in dialogue with Ministers and senior officials about the scope for Kyrgyzstan to capitalise on **the 561 nationwide crime prevention or prophylactic centres** as a ready-made, local community platform for debate and local action against issues that can potentially “feed” lawlessness, radicalism and extremism.

In conclusion, the OSCE and its Centre in Bishkek remain ready and willing to work with all partners represented here today in pursuit of our common aim of a world free of terror and injustice. On this note, let me extend my best wishes to all participants for a stimulating and successful event and again thank our excellent hosts for making it happen.

Thank you for your attention.