



United States Mission to the OSCE

OSCE Annual Security Review Conference 14-16 June 2010, Vienna, Austria

**Opening Speech as delivered by
Nancy McEldowney
14 June 2010**

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

We convene today in a time of difficult transition for Eurasia and a time of pressing challenge for the OSCE.

Our capacity to work together – in a generally productive and collaborative manner – to shape that transition will also determine our success – or failure – in meeting the challenges that are facing this organization.

The OSCE is unique and uniquely valuable. Of all the organizations that exist in and for Europe, only OSCE has the broad scope of membership and the breadth of perspective. Only OSCE brings all three dimensions of security together into a coherent whole. And only OSCE brings Europe and Eurasia together into a single shared security space.

This Annual Security Review Conference comes at a pivotal moment. Events in Kyrgyzstan over the past days have highlighted the frailty of our current capacities and the urgent need for us to improve and expand upon existing tools.

I would like to take this opportunity to express the condolences of the United States for the victims of the violence in Kyrgyzstan and to express our concern for the deteriorating situation there. This tragedy is a powerful reminder of the fact that we, the participating States of the OSCE have a responsibility to take all possible action to prevent these types of conflict, and to help resolve them once they occur.

I hope we will use this conference and the Ministerial meeting that will take place just four weeks from now to do just that, to discuss, debate and decide upon practical ways to improve and expand the capacity of the OSCE to solve problems and enhance the lives of those who live throughout the OSCE space.

The United States is committed to this institution and to its mandate of strengthening security from Vancouver to Vladivostok. We are determined to use the opportunity presented by today's circumstances to make the progress that we all recognize to be long overdue. And we are ready to begin the hard work and constructive dialogue necessary to help reach that goal.

As we do so, we believe our common focus should be more on steps to deal with real problems and less on modalities and institutions. The United States does not believe new

treaties or institutions are required, but we are convinced that many of the ideas that have recently circulated in Vienna in the context of the Corfu process for enhancing European security merit careful consideration and further action.

Kazakhstan's Chairmanship, the first ever by a Central Asian state, is emblematic of the new directions we must take in the OSCE. It has presented us with a unique opportunity to highlight the importance of Central Asia to the OSCE's collective security and the importance of the OSCE to the security and development of Central Asia.

To contemplate how best to respond to the varied security challenges we now face, we must start by rebuilding trust and confidence among participating States, and reaffirming OSCE's comprehensive approach to security. We should consider our existing framework by looking at all three dimensions to find the gaps between commitments and their implementation; we should then focus the onward work of the OSCE in core areas where the gaps are greatest. Such an assessment is also important to determine how to improve and use more effectively the instruments the OSCE has already painstakingly developed. These include:

- **existing commitments**, particularly those established under the Helsinki Final Act in 1975, the Charter of Paris Charter in 1990, and the Charter for European Security in 1999;
- **existing agreements** such as the Vienna Document 1999 and the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE), as adapted and signed in 1999;
- **existing institutions** such as ODIHR, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Representative for Freedom of the Media, and the Conflict Prevention Center;
- **OSCE field operations**, notably the importance of reestablishing a presence in Georgia.

We need also to take a hard look at how we can develop new mechanisms and commitments. We should use the ideas generated through the Corfu process to enhance the OSCE's ability to address issues across all three dimensions through additional measures in three areas – on transparency, consultation, and crisis response. The events of August 2008 reminded all of us that we cannot take security in Europe for granted or become complacent. To prevent such events from recurring, we support the creation of a conflict prevention and crisis management mechanism that, in situations of escalating tensions or conflict within or between OSCE states, would enable the OSCE to respond more efficiently and effectively to help re-establish security. The mechanism we have proposed would empower the Chairmanship for a pre-determined period to offer rapid humanitarian relief, transparency, and impartial monitoring. We believe such a mechanism or capability could also be used to deal with crises in all three dimensions, such as in the case of a serious energy or environmental disruption or egregious human rights violations.

As recent events and our discussions here in Vienna have shown, security *in* Europe is intertwined with the security *of* Europe. Nowhere is this more evident than in Afghanistan, where a multitude of security challenges can and do spill over into the

OSCE area. The OSCE is well qualified to take on a broader role in promoting stability and economic and democratic development in Afghanistan. The outcome of OSCE efforts to support the Government of Afghanistan as it strives to provide security, development, and rule of law to the people of Afghanistan will positively impact all OSCE participating States – and not just those that are Afghanistan’s contiguous neighbors. As the world’s largest security-oriented regional organization, the OSCE has a unique toolkit of capacities and expertise of direct relevance to the challenges in Afghanistan. Since the 2007 Madrid Ministerial, the OSCE also has a mandate to intensify its engagement with Afghanistan. While we recognize that some OSCE participating States remain opposed to OSCE engagement in Afghanistan, we are committed to working with all our partners to fashion programs and initiatives that will help improve security in the OSCE area by addressing Afghanistan’s urgent needs and building better links to their OSCE neighbors in Central Asia.

OSCE’s first dimension remains a key element of OSCE’s comprehensive approach to security. The United States is prepared to work with others to update its tools and instruments and adapt its field missions to the new security environment in ways that bind Europe with Eurasia and contribute to the stability of OSCE participating States as well as their neighbors.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.