



**Annual Security Review Conference 2014**

**Closing Remarks by Ambassador Greminger**

**Chairperson of the Permanent Council**

**26 June 2014**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear colleagues

Good afternoon and welcome to the closing session of the 2014 Annual Security Review Conference.

Before presenting some of the key findings and recommendations from the different sessions, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the OSCE Secretariat for the excellent cooperation in the preparation of the conference as well as those who played a key role in organising and planning this conference over the last months. As always, our colleagues from Conference Services and the interpreters ensured that the day to day running of the event worked flawlessly.

I would also like to warmly thank the moderators, rapporteurs and of course the keynote speakers for their contributions to making this a successful and interactive event.

As President Burkhalter laid out in his opening address, the challenges we are facing are formidable. The Annual Security Review Conference took place at a time marked by the Ukraine crisis and a wider crisis of European security. The agenda of the conference reflected this with the special session on Ukraine. The crisis has revealed a deep rift within the OSCE region, which is also reflected in our Organisation. Yet the OSCE is the only regional organisation that includes Ukraine, its neighbours and all the key stakeholders. Although the Organisation's unity of purpose is being tested, its role as an inclusive platform for constructive dialogue and joint action is now more critical than ever. Indeed, the discussions in the other working sessions showed that the ongoing developments in Ukraine increased the pertinence for the OSCE to enhance its effectiveness across the conflict cycle, in debates on arms control in Europe, in addressing transnational threats, and when enhancing stability in post 2014 Afghanistan. There are numerous challenges in all these fields but the discussions held in the past three days have been a clear indication that with the political will of its participating States, the OSCE has the capacities to meet them. "Never waste a crisis" is what has been said by many of you during the last three days, and we will work to ensure that this call to action does not go unheard.

The Swiss Chairmanship had suggested that discussions at the ASRC could act as a bridge between the now widening positions regarding Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security. In this regard, I think the Conference has achieved that purpose. Delegations have taken advantage of the different sessions to set out their views on where we are now, how the recent crisis has affected these issues and made some recommendations on how we can move forward together.

The following are some of the key findings and recommendations from our discussions over the last three days. This does not of course aim to be an exhaustive list and the Chairmanship will issue a full report of the proceedings before the summer recess.

The **high-level opening session** focussed on the recent developments in the Ukraine crisis, its negative impact on overall peace and security in Europe, and how the OSCE can be enhanced as a platform for cooperative security.

- A large number of participating States questioned whether the consensus on European security, established with the Paris Charter of 1990 on the basis of the Helsinki Final Act, is still valid, and how it can be reconsolidated.
- Many delegations suggested that the re-affirmation of OSCE norms, principles and commitments is necessary, in particular through concrete actions, before trust and confidence can begin to be restored. Implementation in good faith by all and the willingness to engage in constructive dialogue is first and foremost required in that regard.
- Due to the links between security, development, and economics, the existing Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian institutional architecture has contributed to zero-sum choices, which have contributed to weakening cooperative security in the OSCE region.
- Despite the considerable differences over Ukraine and other major issues of European security, it was pointed out there are still areas of common interest. It was stressed that reconsolidating European security as a common project should continue even in the absence of consensus on some of the strategic questions.
- The discussions during the opening session made clear that the common goal of an OSCE security community is some distance away, however, participating States were largely in agreement that the OSCE as an organisation should not abandon its efforts to advance towards this goal.
- In this regard, the 'Helsinki+40' process should become the starting point for reconsolidating European security as a common project and the OSCE as a hub for an inclusive discussion of all security related issues.

The **Special Session on 'Ensuring Security and Stability in the OSCE region in light of recent developments with respect to Ukraine'** showed the relevance of the Organization's concept of indivisible security since the insecurity of one participating States has rapidly become an issue for all.

- Many participating States severely criticised the undermining of the principles of the Helsinki Final Act, such as the respect for territorial integrity, the inviolability of borders, respect for human rights, and the peaceful settlement of disputes.
- However, it was universally acknowledged that the OSCE is in a good position and has sufficient tools to assist Ukraine in overcoming the crisis. It is an inclusive platform that brings together all major stakeholders of the crisis to define and implement cooperative solutions. The OSCE is seen as an impartial actor for stability in Ukraine, making it an organisation that can deliver on the ground.
- Therefore, the ongoing work of the OSCE to de-escalate the situation was widely commended. The Special Monitoring Mission was singled out as unique, for its gathering of facts, regular reporting, facilitation of dialogue, and overall efforts at reducing tensions. Many delegations called for a timely decision on its further extension by another 6 months.

Additionally, there were loud and consistent calls for the immediate and unconditional release of those monitors being held hostage.

- The work the OSCE has been undertaking in supporting a national dialogue process was also highlighted as significant, and there were calls for its continuation and expansion.
- We are thankful to Minister Klimkin for his detailed presentation of the fifteen points of President Poroshenko's peace plan, both his participation and the peace plan was widely welcomed. In addition, there was support for President Poroshenko's intention to continue to draw on OSCE expertise and assistance in solving the crisis.
- Concerning the trilateral contact group, there was support for its de-escalation potential. Following President Poroshenko's unilateral declaration of a ceasefire, and the subsequent announcement of a ceasefire by some representatives of the separatists, there was a strong emphasis on the need for discussion of concrete de-escalation measures as soon as possible, in view of turning the ceasefire into a more sustainable cessation of the use of force and the launch of a peaceful settlement process.
- It is crucial to continue the agreed consultations, and there were consistent calls on all those who have an influence to help de-escalate the situation and help create the necessary conditions for a constructive political process.
- It was also pointed out that the OSCE is well-placed to support Ukraine in longer-term challenges such as good governance, the rule of law, reform of the security sector, and in working towards a secure and prosperous Ukraine.

Turning now to the **session on 'early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation'**.

- The resolution of the protracted conflicts was extensively highlighted by a large number of delegations. In that context, many delegations further stated that these conflicts remain one of the main sources of tension and threats to security and stability in the OSCE area, and undermine efforts to build trust. It was pointed out that until states have a common understanding of what the problems are, it is difficult to find a solution. It is also important to address the issue of narratives, in particular to focus on a more positive future common narrative.
- The speakers during the session drew attention to the regional and international impact of a state's internal instability. It was pointed out that weak social and political cohesion can foster a mutually reinforcing cycle of conflict and instability. This in turn breeds an environment for transnational organised crime, which it was suggested, is one of the biggest threats to instability in the OSCE region. The OSCE should therefore increase its role as a platform for cooperation on fighting organised crime, and should seek to incorporate or mainstream it into the work of its executive structures.
- An OSCE role in track two and even track three level diplomacy was encouraged to increase contacts between communities separated by conflict, and to develop a bottom-up approach to conflict resolution. Building functioning state institutions and greater involvement of civil society are key elements in which the OSCE can provide support and assistance in post-conflict rehabilitation.

- There was widespread praise for the OSCE's crisis management capability during the Ukraine crisis. This included recognition that the implementation of Ministerial Council Decision 3/11 on 'Elements of the Conflict Cycle' allowed the organisation to act promptly and effectively.
- One lesson learned by the Ukraine crisis is the need to ensure the OSCE has the capacity and capability to respond rapidly when conflict situations occur. This expertise and the operational capacities in conflict resolution should be further strengthened and extended. OSCE mediation-support capacities should be further enhanced, and now that they have been built up, it is time for the participating States to use them.
- Although the OSCE was originally envisaged to have a role in peacekeeping, and in theory has the mandate to do so, it has not fully developed the related capacities yet. It was suggested to further discuss the potential of the OSCE as a peacekeeper within the Helsinki +40 process.

The **session on 'Arms control and Confidence- and Security-Building Measures: Challenges and Opportunities'** showed that arms control and CSBMs are needed now more than ever in order to begin to re-establish trust, and that political will is now instrumental.

- Many participants sought to draw lessons from the Ukrainian crisis which are relevant to conventional arms control and CSBMs. The OSCE was recognised as an important dialogue platform in times of crisis. Consequently, participants made concrete proposals on ways to revitalize arms control and CSBMs as a major element of strengthening European security.
- Many delegations stated that the current system of conventional arms control, based on the Vienna Document, an updated CFE Treaty and the Open Skies Treaty, would provide for a good security architecture if all participating States adhered to the relevant rules and obligations. There were calls to value and respect the current OSCE CSBM mechanisms and to implement them in good faith, in particular those in the Vienna Document, in order to reduce risk and the threat of misperception in the current crisis of trust.
- In this regard many participants also raised the need to update and modernise these mechanisms to correspond to changes in military capabilities and operational practices, as well as based on their use during the Ukraine crisis.
- In general there was concern over the persistent impasse in conventional arms control. The impasse itself has contributed to the erosion of trust and confidence we see today and has undermined military stability, transparency and predictability.
- There was broad recognition that States need to renew and broaden the arms control discussion. There was also an acknowledgement that the OSCE, as an inclusive and comprehensive security organisation based on politically binding commitments, could and should play a role.

During the **session on Transnational Threats and Challenges**, there was a convergence regarding many of the perceptions of transnational threats and a clear recognition that contemporary challenges to security such as terrorism, organised crime and trafficking in illicit drugs and human beings pose a growing threat to the OSCE region.

- The strengthened capacity of the OSCE to combat these transnational threats was welcomed, while some called for further enhancing efforts to turn the framework TNT Decisions into more effective and sustainable programmatic action.

- The evolving threat of terrorism is seen as a significant concern and there were calls for closer involvement and cooperation with the private sector and civil societies, while respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. The OSCE has made some good progress in cooperating on counterterrorism, but there is still much untapped potential. In particular further work should be done to address the growing challenge of 'foreign fighters', and there were calls for enhanced cooperation on kidnapping for ransom. Participating States welcomed recent discussions on these topics and suggested further debate.
- Many participating States commended the progress that has been achieved in agreeing confidence building measures in the field of cyber security. Delegations agreed that the priority for the organisation is now to follow a dual track of implementing the current set of CBMs and to strive for further measures.
- Effective border management and security plays a critical role in combating TNTs and there were calls for the OSCE to further develop its significant expertise.
- Organised crime was also highlighted during this session as particularly damaging to security. It was recommended that where greater regional cooperation is needed, the OSCE should become more active as a platform for cooperation on issues related to organized crime.
- There was considerable support for the OSCE's efforts to deepen strategic partnerships with other relevant international organisations as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, regional organisations, academic institutions, civil society and the private sector, as well as its efforts to strengthen cooperation with OSCE Partners for Cooperation.

Moving finally to the session on '**Supporting Stability in the OSCE area during the ongoing transitions in Afghanistan**', which showed that peace, security and stability in that country has a direct impact on security and stability in the wider OSCE area, and in neighbouring Central Asia participating States in particular.

- Afghanistan has made substantial progress since 2001 thanks to the determination of its own people and the support of the international community but ultimately success will be judged on its sustainability. 2014 is a key year in this regard with transitions to full Afghan ownership in the security, political and economic spheres.
- With production increasing, countering narcotics remains the other major challenge for Afghanistan. This should be tackled in a holistic fashion, with an emphasis placed on providing alternative livelihoods and at tackling the issue in transit and destination, as well as in source countries.
- Speakers confirmed that bilateral and multilateral international support would continue to be needed by Afghanistan, and would continue to be provided. Such support should evolve into partnerships with Afghanistan. Regional relationships should also be strengthened on a new basis and it was noted that the Heart of Asia process was key in this regard. One speaker suggested that the OSCE should become more involved in its Working Groups. Trading links also offered good opportunities for increased regional cooperation.
- There were calls for increased co-operation between international organisations and regrets were expressed that NATO/Russia Council co-operation had been suspended until political trust could be restored. The OSCE should continue to complement international and regional efforts.

- The value placed by Afghanistan on its Partnership with the OSCE was reaffirmed, with particular mention made of the OSCE field offices in Central Asia, the Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe and the Academy in Bishkek. A number of speakers called for this support to be continued and for the OSCE to develop meaningful projects for extra-budgetary funding. A plea was also made for the Border College to be included in the Unified Budget.

**In conclusion,** the discussions at the ASRC revealed extensive challenges to European security, but also increasing opportunities for the OSCE. There are plenty of issues where constructive work can be done at both the strategic and operational levels, including with regard to the Conflict Cycle, on Transnational Threats and on improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation.

I am convinced that if we manage to deal with these challenges in a spirit of cooperative security, we can emerge with enhanced security for all of us. In this regard, the 'Helsinki+40' process should play a role in restoring trust and could become the starting point for reconsolidating European security as a common project and the OSCE as a hub for an inclusive discussion of all security related issues.

The next few weeks and months might be decisive for the future of Ukraine, the future course of European security, and also the future role of the OSCE.

This brings me to the end of this session, but before I close this year's Annual Security Review Conference, I would like to thank all delegations for their engagement and high-level involvement over the past three days. To those of you who are travelling back to your capitals after this meeting, I wish you a safe journey.