

STATEMENT BY MR. KONSTANTIN ZHIGALOV, SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE OSCE CHAIRPERSON-IN-OFFICE AND DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN, AT THE OPENING OF THE FIRST PART OF THE OSCE REVIEW CONFERENCE – THE HUMAN DIMENSION SESSIONS

Warsaw, 30 September 2010

Your Excellencies,
Distinguished colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, allow me on behalf of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office to welcome all the participants in our meeting and wish everyone successful and fruitful work.

It is a great honour for me to open the first OSCE Review Conference in the twenty-first century, the initial part of which is taking place in Warsaw – the hospitable home of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

I thank our Polish friends for their traditional hospitality and remember the great warmth I experienced here as the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Poland.

As you all know, 2010 is a landmark year for our Organization. It marks the 35th anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act and the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Charter of Paris for a New Europe. Over the years, we have developed a set of commitments that cover the politico-military, economic and environmental, and human dimensions and provide a basis for a comprehensive, cross-dimensional and co-operative approach to security.

Implementing these commitments is a common undertaking for all 56 OSCE participating States. It calls for political will, patience and determination and requires the support of all branches of government and segments of society. Our work is supported by the OSCE institutions — the Secretariat, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Representative on Freedom of the Media, the OSCE field presences and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Much has been achieved since the signing of the Helsinki Final Act. People living in the OSCE area enjoy more open political and economic

systems, and politico-military tension no longer dominates our lives as it did at the start of the Helsinki process.

Unfortunately, however, the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and OSCE commitments are not fully respected and implemented today. The use of force has not ceased to be considered as an option for settling disputes and the danger of conflicts between States has not been eliminated. Transnational threats pose a real danger and many conflicts remain unresolved. There is a stalemate in the conventional arms control process. Full implementation of the CFE Treaty regime and a restoration of its viability require concerted action by its States Parties.

In the context of the economic and environmental dimension, the Bonn Document and the OSCE Maastricht Strategy call for effective implementation and flexible adaptation to new realities.

Our common achievements in the fields of the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms need to be safeguarded and further advanced.

The crisis in Kyrgyzstan has highlighted many of the security challenges facing the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area.

Thus, the OSCE participating States face a host of problems that still divide the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area and a range of challenges that they must counter together. All this is going on against the backdrop of the negative consequences of the global financial and economic crisis.

Distinguished Conference participants,

Throughout this year, the Chairperson-in-Office has strictly adhered to a policy of ensuring that equal attention is paid to all three dimensions of the Organization.

In the third basket, the Kazakh Chairmanship did all it could to ensure the timely adoption of a consensus-based decision by the OSCE participating States on the appointment of the new OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Dunja Mijatović.

In addition to the five events that usually take place, a conference to mark the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Copenhagen Document was held with the support of the ODIHR and the Danish Government.

Another important event was the OSCE High-Level Conference on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination held in Astana on 29 and 30 June.

Paying particular attention to the gender problem, the Chairmanship not only organized a supplementary meeting on this question but also established the post of Personal Representative on gender issues, to which Wendy Patten of the United States of America was appointed.

An important event with respect to support for electoral processes was the Chairmanship Seminar held in Vienna on 16 and 17 of September on the theme of the "Present State and Prospects of the Application of Electronic Voting in OSCE Participating States".

A regional United Nations/OSCE conference will be held in Astana on 9 November on refugee protection and mixed migration in Central Asia. This topic is of particular relevance in the field of human rights and freedoms.

We are paying priority attention to co-operation with civil society. This year an Advisory Council on the OSCE Human Dimension was established under the auspices of the Kazakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This Council includes representatives from government agencies and Kazakh non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as well as international experts from the United Kingdom, the United States, the Netherlands, Estonia and Germany. To date the Advisory Council has held two meetings, one of which took place in Vienna.

In addition to the members of official delegations, representatives of 223 NGOs took part in the aforementioned OSCE High-Level Conference on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination.

You are, of course, all aware that a significant portion of the Chairmanship events are being held in Kazakhstan. However, despite the already extremely busy agenda, in the third dimension and elsewhere, and despite the enormous workload in terms of preparations for the OSCE Summit to be held in Astana on 1 and 2 December, the Chairmanship intends to hold a further two major supplementary events for NGOs. Firstly, we have decided to support a recent OSCE/ODIHR initiative to hold a regional round table in Almaty on 16 and 17 of November on co-operation between NGOs and governments.

Secondly, we are willing to hold an NGO forum in Astana on 26 of November on the eve of the Review Conference. I believe that these steps will

provide further clear evidence of our commitment to OSCE obligations in supporting civil society throughout the OSCE area.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The 1992 OSCE Helsinki Summit clarified the role of Review Conferences in a new political setting. The review process was to be co-operative in nature, comprehensive in scope and at the same time able to address specific issues and improve the current state of affairs.

The Kazakh Chairmanship hopes that the discussions in Warsaw, Vienna and Astana will help in the successful preparations for the OSCE Summit. The comprehensive nature of the Review Conference should ensure balanced preparations for the Summit, taking into account the inextricable link between the politico-military, economic and environmental, and human dimensions of security.

With these ideas in mind, we must work towards four basic objectives at the Summit:

1. Renewed commitment by all participating States to the founding principles of the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris for a New Europe and the Charter for European Security. Re-engaging with this body of principles in a new context may require the willingness to consider updating them in specific areas.
2. The participating States should seek to work with greater focus to resolve outstanding security problems that divide the OSCE area. This would entail strengthening the arms control and CSBM regime by securing progress on the CFE Treaty and by updating the Vienna Document 1999. In addition, the participating States should work together to set protracted conflicts in the OSCE area on the path towards peaceful settlement.
3. The participating States should seek to step up collective efforts to counter transnational threats – from illicit drug trafficking, organized crime, cybercrime and trafficking in human beings to international terrorism, including those threats emanating from outside the OSCE area, notably Afghanistan.
4. Building on discussions in the Corfu Process, where we have made tangible progress, the OSCE participating States should work to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the OSCE in providing for comprehensive and indivisible security. This would involve strengthening the legal framework of the Organization and its capacities in conflict prevention, crisis management

and post-conflict rehabilitation, and deepening OSCE interaction with Partners for Co-operation as well as other international organizations.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Over the next few days, our sessions will cover questions related to democratic institutions, fundamental freedoms, the rule of law, freedom of the media, trafficking in human beings, and tolerance and non-discrimination, including the rights of national minorities and the promotion of gender balance.

Unfortunately, it has to be said that human rights continue to be violated in the OSCE area. Migrants and persons belonging to national minorities continue to suffer as a result of intolerance and discrimination. The integration of Roma and Sinti communities is still lagging behind the goals set in the 2003 Action Plan.

Freedom of assembly and association, freedom of religion and conviction and freedom of expression are not fully respected. Gender equality is still more an aspiration than a reality. Thousands of people, including children, fall victim to human trafficking each year.

The Chairmanship hopes that the forthcoming discussions will make it possible to identify existing problems and draw up specific proposals to enable more effective implementation of OSCE commitments in the future. We firmly believe that the Review Conference in Warsaw, Vienna and Astana will contribute to the success of the Summit to be held in the capital of Kazakhstan. This Summit will mark a new historic stage in the building of a community of truly comprehensive and indivisible security in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area.

Thank you for your attention.