



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

**Address by the OSCE Secretary General,
Ambassador Marc Perrin de Brichambaut,
at the opening of the 2010 OSCE Summit in Astana on 1 December 2010**

Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

35 years ago, your predecessors gathered in Helsinki to bridge the Cold War divide and set forth a long-term vision of an undivided security space stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok. 20 years ago, in Paris, a new generation of leaders proclaimed a new era of “democracy, peace and unity” throughout this space. The goal of a “free, democratic and more integrated OSCE area” has yet to be realised. Today in Astana, you have the chance to write the next chapter in the story of our region and of our Organization.

The OSCE is a mirror of the state of security within a greater Europe. Over the past decade, the image in that mirror has often been troubling. Many of the founding principles of the OSCE have been neglected, states have struggled to live up to their commitments. Mistrust has hampered the Organization’s ability to respond to crises and adapt to emerging threats. The lack of common purpose among the OSCE’s participating States was reflected in the fact that there was no OSCE Summit in the past 11 years.

Fortunately, the image in the mirror today is much closer to the one envisioned by our leaders in Helsinki and Paris. In response to calls for a renewed dialogue on pan-European security, the Greek Chairmanship launched the Corfu Process. This set the stage for the ambitious and dynamic 2010 chairmanship under the leadership of the President of Kazakhstan.

The decision to hold an OSCE Summit here in Astana focuses high-level attention on the OSCE. This is vital for the Organization itself and for the goals it seeks to achieve. You can give impetus to a Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community based on common values, standards and commitments and on a unique concept of cross-dimensional security. Today, you can help strengthen the capacity of the Organization to prevent and resolve conflicts. The

OSCE is an inclusive forum for dialogue among 56 and a bridge with 12 Mediterranean and Asian partners. Its Institutions – the High Commissioner on National Minorities, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and Representative on Freedom of the Media have no equivalent in other parts of the world. Its 18 field operations are unrivalled in bringing together host countries and the whole OSCE community.

But the OSCE can only be as effective as you choose to make it. An Astana document is therefore an opportunity to re-energize this Organization, to send a clear and unambiguous message about your commitment to its basic principles, and to agree on a clear strategic direction for the future.

The draft Framework for Action, which is in front of you, will be our road map. It will ensure that the OSCE is equipped with the tools and the political will to do its job. I therefore urge you to use this historic opportunity to give a fresh start to arms control discussions, improve early warning and confidence-building measures, bolster efforts to resolve protracted conflicts, work together to tackle transnational threats, and enhance co-operation in addressing economic and environmental challenges. All of these efforts will benefit from your unwavering adherence to our agreed commitments in the human dimension.

The OSCE is not alone in advancing these priorities. Ten days ago, many of you addressed similar concerns in Lisbon. All multilateral organizations present here today in Astana, also have their role to play. Let us therefore strengthen this network of co-operation to enhance common and indivisible security.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

While the OSCE is an inter-governmental process, it has always called upon civil society and appealed to people. The ability to do this in an open and flexible manner is an advantage of the OSCE. I applaud the efforts of the Kazakh Chairmanship to open the doors of the OSCE ever wider, and to bring fresh impulses to our work. In conclusion, on behalf of the Secretariat of the OSCE and of its three Institutions, let me express our gratitude for new life that you are breathing into your Organization. We look forward to receiving your guidance over the coming days, and to assisting you in living up to the aspirations you set here in Astana.