



United States Mission to the OSCE

Working Session III: Transnational Threats and Challenges

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

With its cross-dimensional approach to security based on a common understanding of threats we all face collectively, the OSCE is a unique and vitally useful platform from which to address the challenges posed by transnational threats (TNTs).

Reducing Risk and Building Confidence in Cybersecurity

Threats to cyber-security have expanded dramatically during the past decade and continue to grow. In response, it is important that we strengthen our international partnerships to address increasingly sophisticated threats to the reliability, integrity, and availability of the information and communications technologies (ICTs) we all rely on. We welcome the establishment of a regional organization's first-ever set of cyber confidence-building measures (CBMs). However, we must now turn our commitments into action to enhance interstate cyberspace cooperation, transparency, predictability, and stability. In this regard, we warmly welcome the initial steps participating States have taken to begin implementing the eleven CBMs we adopted in Kyiv last year. We also look forward to partnering with all to develop additional cybersecurity CBMs and to discuss possible cooperative measures against significant cyber challenges, such as threats to energy infrastructure emanating from cyberspace. In July 2013, the OSCE published the U.S.-sponsored *Good Practices Guide on Non-Nuclear Critical Energy Infrastructure Protection (NNCEIP) from Terrorist Attacks Focusing on Threats Emanating from Cyberspace* developed with the OSCE and public and private stakeholders. The practical information and good practices we collected in this *Guide* regarding protecting critical energy infrastructure from terrorists, particularly focusing on threats emanating from cyberspace, fills a gap in existing resources and provides a practical basis for further partnering within the OSCE and with other international organizations in this area. We also appreciate the Swiss Chair's leadership and vision in planning a public-private partnership cybersecurity event later this year. We hope all can work in a collaborative spirit so that we can achieve progress on cyber issues by our next Ministerial Council meeting.

Addressing Kidnapping for Ransom, Foreign Fighters, and the Rule of Law

We were pleased to take an active role in April's successful OSCE counterterrorism event in Interlaken and thank the Swiss Chair for leading a very productive and interactive meeting on three very important and timely counterterrorism topics. The United States also welcomes political commitments and actions taken against Kidnapping for Ransom (KFR) in other fora such as the Global Counterterrorism Forum's (GCTF) Algiers Memorandum on "Good Practices on Preventing and Denying the Benefits of Kidnapping for Ransom by Terrorists;" the G8 leaders' 2013 communique which committed to "unequivocally reject the payment of ransoms to

terrorists;” and the passing of UN Security Council Resolution 2133 – which is the first of its kind to call on member states, “to prevent terrorists from benefiting directly or indirectly from ransom payments or from political concessions.” Recognizing the impact the growing phenomenon of foreign fighters has on regional and global stability, we believe the OSCE can play a useful role in promulgating good practices that focus on information sharing, border security, and recruitment and promote international law enforcement cooperation. The OSCE remains a key international contributor to the development of effective criminal justice sector technical assistance and the promotion of human rights compliant counterterrorism frameworks.

We note the initial set of recommendations from the May OSCE-GCTF event on women’s empowerment in fighting terrorism, look forward to the next high-level event later this year, and will actively contribute to the compilation of good practices in this important area. We also note the OSCE’s new guidebook on, “Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community Policing Approach.”

Strengthening Border Security

Efforts to promote secure borders remain a principal component of the OSCE’s work, and we strongly support the OSCE’s activities in this area. By strengthening efforts such as the Border Management Staff College (BMSC) in Dushanbe, implementing hands-on “green border” training programs, conducting customs training, and addressing corruption-related issues, the OSCE can combat transnational threats while helping establish conditions that foster regional economic growth and connectivity. The United States has been a generous donor to several of the OSCE’s regional efforts and we will continue to support these and related initiatives. As we continue to support the ongoing transition process and a reduction in the number of international military forces in Afghanistan, we call on our participating State and Partner nation colleagues to redouble their efforts to make concrete resource commitments to vitally important projects earmarked for Afghanistan and regional stability. We also strongly advocate for the BMSC to be funded from the OSCE’s Unified Budget next year.

Promoting Police Reform

We are strong supporters of the OSCE’s efforts to entrench the rule of law and promote police reform. For example, the OSCE’s Community Security Initiative (CSI) demonstrates our abiding commitment to the people of Kyrgyzstan and to the principles of community policing and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Future Annual Police Experts Meetings (APEM) should consider utilizing table-top simulations or scenarios to help raise awareness on specific cross-border and interagency collaboration issues and to develop good international law enforcement practice and trust. We would also welcome participation by representatives of civil society, OSCE institutions, and field missions in the next APEM.

Closing

Evolving transnational threats, including the convergence of crime and terrorism, challenge stability and security within the OSCE region and beyond. Our response requires partnerships that build our collective capacity to deter criminal conduct, support the development of human rights compliant law enforcement capabilities, and enhance society and community-level resilience.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.