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ORGANIZATION, TO THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF THE  
OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Athens, 1 and 2 December 2009

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to thank the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and Mr. George Papandreou, Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE and Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece, for the invitation to participate in the work of the OSCE Ministerial Council and for their hospitality and the outstanding organization of our meeting. I am glad to have an opportunity to hear different opinions on pressing politico-military issues and to express some thoughts in this regard.

The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), which celebrated the seventh anniversary of its establishment in May 2009, is one of the world's youngest collective security structures for multilateral politico-military co-operation. However, already at this stage of its development the CSTO is of great importance in ensuring the security of its member States.

I should like to mention just a few aspects of the CSTO's efforts to counter modern threats and challenges to security.

Virtually since the moment of its inception, the Collective Security Treaty Organization has always considered collaboration by its member States in combating drug trafficking as one of its tasks.

As you are aware, the CSTO has a comprehensive preventive operation called "Kanal", which is aimed at identifying and blocking routes for the illegal transportation of narcotic drugs and precursors.

We have succeeded in achieving a high level of confidence among the competent State agencies, as is testified by the nature and content of the shared information, which includes data on leaders of and active participants in organized criminal groups and communities involved in drug smuggling.

In view of the effectiveness of the annual co-ordinated measures by the CSTO member States, other countries have begun to join these operations: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iran, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Mongolia, Pakistan, Poland,

Romania, Spain, Syria, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and the United States of America, as well as Interpol, the OSCE Strategic Police Matters Unit and the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism.

The most recent international two-stage anti-drugs operation “Kanal-2009” was carried out from 22 to 28 September and from 9 to 16 November 2009 with a view to closing down the channels for the smuggling of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors into the Eurasian region and the countries of the European Union (EU), creating *cordons sanitaires* around Afghanistan to combat drug trafficking and illicit financial transactions and, in particular, preventing the illegal movement of drugs along the “northern” and parts of the “Balkan” routes and stopping the illicit supply of precursors to Central Asian countries and Afghanistan.

Representatives of the law enforcement authorities of Bulgaria, Turkey and Venezuela were also involved as observers in these stages of the operation.

Thanks to the joint efforts of those involved in the operation, more than 115 tons of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances were seized, including 3.9 tons of heroin, 18.5 tons of hashish, 3.5 tons of synthetic drugs and 2 tons of cocaine. Iran and Venezuela reported the largest hauls during the operation. More than 20,000 crimes in connection with illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs were uncovered, which indicates that operations appear to be expanding.

We believe it would be useful to adopt the draft Ministerial Council decision on further OSCE action in combating the threat of illicit drugs and precursors co-authored by the CSTO member States.

In recent years, there has been a considerable increase in work within the CSTO to counter illegal migration and trafficking in human beings.

The Co-ordination Council of the leaders of the competent agencies of the CSTO member States for combating illegal migration, which was established in 2007, has successfully carried out co-ordinated preventive measures and special operations code-named “Illegal” to counter illegal migration. This is also of great importance for other OSCE participating States.

During the active phase of the operation this year alone, the migration services and law enforcement authorities of the CSTO member States identified 106,923 violations of migration laws, including 90,982 instances in which entry, exit and residency regulations were violated, and 15,941 cases involving the violation of established procedures for employment. Some 8,106 persons guilty of such violations were deported from CSTO member States.

A system is currently being established for exchanging information on countering illegal migration in the CSTO member States.

The CSTO Parliamentary Assembly is working energetically to harmonize and unify laws to counter illegal migration and trafficking in human beings. In this area, we are calling on the expertise of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in accordance with the Protocol on Co-operation concluded with the IOM.

Mr. Chairman,

Given the current situation, our organization believes it necessary to pay greater attention to the problem of information security.

Information technology is not only helpful in the formation of modern civilized societies and the strengthening of their security, but, unfortunately, it also creates a favourable environment for the emergence of new threats and challenges to security.

In this context, joint efforts to counter threats in the information sphere, the need for co-operation to protect the information space and information resources, and the provision of mutual assistance to prevent destructive information-related influences are becoming matters of vital importance for all the CSTO member States.

In September 2009, for the first time a joint operation code-named "Proxy" to counter information-related crimes was carried out with the participation of security agencies and internal affairs bodies (the police) from all the CSTO member States.

We believe that joint activities like the "Proxy" operation help to improve national information areas, enabling us to draw up proposals at the national level to improve interaction in this area of co-operation.

An important step towards strengthening the CSTO's system of collective security are the decisions adopted in early 2009 enabling us to begin to establish the CSTO Collective Rapid Reaction Forces (CRRF). In addition to preventing and repelling armed attacks and localizing armed conflicts, the main task of these forces is to participate in operations to combat international terrorism, illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors as well as weapons and ammunition, and to counter other forms of transnational crime. They will also be involved in measures to protect the population against dangers occurring during or as a result of military activities and will also deal with emergencies and provide emergency humanitarian aid. The first CRRF exercises took place in autumn, with maximum transparency as regards the forces and resources involved in the exercises and their tasks and outcome.

A further area for joint efforts could be the strengthening of the arms control system and the expansion of confidence-and security-building measures, including their application to new areas.

The problem of small arms and light weapons (SALW) is a particular focus of our organization. In November of this year, consultations were held by experts from the foreign ministries and other concerned departments of the CSTO member States on SALW and man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS). The CSTO is ready to support the efforts of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation concerned with SALW and welcomes the Ministerial Council decisions on this subject.

At the same time, we believe it is necessary to adopt new decisions in the OSCE which would help to prevent arms shipments to unstable regions. The corresponding OSCE principles set out in the documents of 1994 and 2000 could serve as a basis for new decisions of this kind.

The CSTO member States are most interested in preserving the regime envisaged in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty). Specific aspects of that Treaty directly affect their interests, as was stated as long ago as 2005 in a declaration by the CSTO Council of Foreign Ministers. Our organization is still fully committed to helping to rectify the state of affairs in this area. If we are to be able overall to find a way together out of the deadlock surrounding arms control issues, this will create a climate favourable to the promotion of security in the entire OSCE area, serving as an example for other parts of the world.

The way the international situation is developing encourages us to seek ways of expanding co-operation among regional organizations and to further consolidate our active collaboration, in particular between the CSTO and the OSCE.

I firmly believe that this co-operation would supplement the activities of the regional structures involved in strengthening pan-European security, including NATO, the EU and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

In recent years we have formed business-like and constructive relations with the OSCE. We intend to develop our co-operation on a wide range of security-related problems. We have succeeded in carrying out joint counter-terrorism and anti-drugs operations, but implementation of practical measures in the security field is still to come.

As regards the substance of such co-operation, we believe that particular attention should be given to Afghanistan. Mr. Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, Secretary General of the OSCE, raised this problem during his statement at a meeting of the CSTO Permanent Council in March 2009.

One very important objective of the pooling of the efforts of the five regional organizations working to ensure European security, namely the CSTO, NATO, the EU, the CIS and the OSCE, could be the joint drafting and implementation of the Russian President's initiative for a Treaty on European Security. This initiative has received the unanimous support of all seven member States of our organization. On the eve of our meeting, the CSTO member States presented a joint declaration to the Forum for Security Co-operation in support of the proposal to conclude a Treaty on European Security and outlining our intention to help to promote it in various international forums, including the OSCE.

Only through the pooling of the efforts of all the regional organizations will it be possible to draw up common criteria, methodology and mechanisms for their participation so as to rule out the possible emergence of friction between these organizations and their participating States in the future when resolving crises or responding to other security challenges.

There is one further question that our organization feels obliged to mention.

In 2010 we shall mark the 65th anniversary of the end of the Great Patriotic War and the Second World War. This war was a great tragedy that cost the lives of tens of millions of people. Humanity's victory over Fascism was achieved thanks to the unprecedented efforts of many countries and peoples. Knowledge of the true history helps to prevent such tragedies from being repeated in the future, and we emphatically reject any attempts to rewrite history,

for example denial of the Holocaust and the rulings of the Nuremburg Tribunal. In this connection, the CSTO member States condemn the steps taken by a number of countries to glorify Fascism and distort the history of the Great Patriotic War, and we fully support the draft Ministerial Declaration on the 65th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

Mr. Chairman,

In 2010, the Chairmanship of the OSCE will pass to a member State of our organization – the Republic of Kazakhstan. The CSTO wholeheartedly supports its Kazakh colleagues and firmly believes that they will be able to do much to implement the priorities of their Chairmanship in the various areas of the OSCE's work.