

Delegation of Switzerland

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND AT THE MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL

23 September 2010

Mr. Chairperson,

First of all we should like to thank Ambassador Salber very much for this instructive report. In just a few pages he makes it clear what important work the Conflict Prevention Centre is carrying out in the areas of policy support, mediation, operational planning, the implementation and methodological development of projects, support for the Forum for Security Co-operation and situation monitoring.

The report is, however, much more than just a review of the work that has been accomplished. It is also a source of inspiration for the preparatory conference in the run-up to the summit. The present report confirms explicitly and implicitly a whole series of threads that we have taken up within the framework of the Corfu Process in discussing the role of the OSCE in early warning, conflict prevention and resolution, crisis management and post-war stabilization. These intensive discussions regarding tasks that are fundamental for the OSCE have resulted in quite a number of proposals, which can be divided into four key areas:

1. Strengthening the OSCE Secretariat;
2. Adapting existing procedures and mechanisms;
3. Enabling the Organization to respond to early warning signals in good time;
4. The role of the Permanent Council in strategic decisions.

Allow me, Mr. Chairperson, to go into a little more detail with regard to a particularly important aspect of the conflict cycle, namely conflict mediation. Conflict mediation touches on the first two areas that I have just mentioned, i.e., strengthening the Secretariat and the existing procedures and mechanisms at least selectively. If we expand the OSCE's mediation capacities for inter-State and internal conflicts, then above all we also strengthen the ability of the OSCE to act altogether.

Switzerland is ready in the future to increase its support for the Conflict Prevention Centre of the OSCE Secretariat in its efforts to expand and preserve the OSCE's mediation expertise, namely the expertise of the OSCE Troika, the OSCE Secretariat and possibly selected OSCE field presences as well. The Swiss support may be in the form of personnel or of a conceptual nature. We would also like to invite key persons from the Troika, the

Secretariat and selected field presences to participate in the annual Peace Mediation Course held in Switzerland, which is organized by the Swiss Foreign Ministry, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology and the Swiss Peace Foundation.

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me to briefly touch on a further element that enables the OSCE Secretariat to respond appropriately in crisis or conflict situations. I am referring to the situation monitoring carried out by the Situation/Communications Room, which supplements the often incomplete picture of a situation with important current information. In addition, this incredibly small team is also constantly dealing with information regarding the security of OSCE field personnel in regions where they are at risk. It is precisely in conflict and crisis situations that information is often not available at all, sparse or falsified, and this is the case both in Vienna and in the field. It is therefore important that the Situation/Communications Room continues to work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so that information can be constantly gathered and processed and used when urgent decisions need to be made. The resources employed thus far for this purpose should be expanded rather than simply maintained.

I should like to close by thanking Ambassador Salber and his entire team most sincerely for the work they have done.