



KEYNOTE SPEECH BY AMBASSADOR BÜLENT MERİÇ

**DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS,
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY**

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Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

Today's Review Conference provides an ideal platform for a brainstorming on the "security community", which we are supposed to build up by 2015. We witness that the building blocks are gradually put in place and I would like to commend the relentless efforts of the Chairmanship-in-Office as well as the Secretary General. I would also like to express my heartfelt thanks to you, Mr. Chairman, for your invitation. It is an honour and a great pleasure for me to be here.

The Astana Summit has outlined the vision of a Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community and tasked the Participating States to work towards realizing this vision. Our efforts in this direction must continue in a consistent and structured manner, while taking into account the complex and difficult nature of the task at hand. Indeed, what better way to crown the Helsinki + 40 rendezvous in 2015 with a visionary landmark document? A document charting the future course of our Organization while reconfirming our steadfast adherence to past principles and commitments.

The current Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security system and its basic components are built upon the principles of "indivisibility of security", "comprehensive security" and "co-operative security". Looking back on the last 20 years, nothing suggests that these principles which form the backbone of the European security order have lost their validity or significance today. A departure from these principles risks the emergence of a fragmented and multi-tiered security space which cannot serve the interests of any Participating State. In such a case, it is impossible to constitute a "security community" facing common challenges, risks and threats. A selective approach in addressing the security concerns of a few, will, in the first place, fail to convince all stakeholders to remain engaged in the process of redefining our security environment, its tools and mechanisms.

The strategic landscape over the course of the last two decades has dramatically changed, not least as a result of the NATO and EU enlargement processes. Hence, the stability and security of certain countries and geographies have been consolidated, while the dynamics of instability and insecurity in others have persisted and in some cases even compounded. Therefore, our

efforts, in a mutually supportive fashion, both here at the OSCE and in other fora, must primarily focus on closing the security deficit that has emerged in the geographies excluded from the benefits of NATO and EU enlargement.

In this regard, resolution of the protracted conflicts must top our security agenda. These conflicts not only continue to hamper cooperation in the OSCE, but also discredit the Organization in the eyes of the international community. Therefore, the success of the OSCE in resolving the protracted conflicts will have a direct bearing on not only how the OSCE is perceived outside, but also the ongoing work on the “conflict cycle”. The OSCE and its executive structures can only assume new and reinforced mandates in addressing the conflict cycle if they prove effective in fulfilling the demands of the current ones.

In the OSCE, so far, too little innovative thinking has gone into devising instruments which would help bridge a broad spectrum of regional cooperative action with a view to building mutual confidence and trust in areas where protracted conflicts exist. It is with this understanding that Turkey has proposed the establishment of a Regional Development Agency for the Caucasus with the aim of facilitating the implementation of multi-tiered regional projects, including the reconstruction and development of the energy, transportation and telecommunication infrastructures. The main objective is to create a full-fledged, inclusive, regional cooperation mechanism which would tap into the economic potential of the region and foster economic integration. By doing so, we aim at consolidating the idea of regional ownership.

Dear colleagues,

Immobility can be contagious. Conflicts that are frozen may in turn freeze the mechanisms that were designed to resolve them. Containment of the protracted conflicts was never meant to be the *raison d’etre* of such mechanisms. Therefore, we must continue to ponder on the efficacy of these instruments and mechanisms and explore ideas on how to render them more active and more inclusive. Let us not forget that it is not the mechanisms themselves that are at the heart of this debate, but rather the dynamics of the protracted conflicts and how to break the vicious circle of immobility.

Being in the immediate vicinity of one and a direct neighbor to two of the so called “triangle of protracted conflicts”, no one can question Turkey’s desire to be at the vanguard of efforts to explore all venues in resolving them and thereby overcoming their negative security consequences for our region. A region which long suffers from divided security.

Nevertheless, it is not only the participating States suffering the agony of protracted conflicts who perceive a security deficit. We need to ask ourselves the question of whether we are responsive enough to the security needs of all participating States equally. Are we using the OSCE as effectively as possible as a tool for dialogue in order to bridge the different perceptions which exist and the deficit of trust which has emerged over the last decade? The OSCE is the major international framework that links the countries of the Caucasus, Central Asia and Eastern Europe with the Euro-Atlantic area as equal members around common principles and commitments. Therefore, it should not be in our interest to allow this linkage to weaken. However, the growing polarization in our organization demonstrates that the exact opposite is happening. For the countries of these regions, without increasing the sense of ownership of the OSCE; without paying more attention to their concerns and needs; it will not be possible to overcome the “us” and “them” syndrome which is currently eroding the very

base on which our security concepts stand. In other words, we must balance the activities of the OSCE in three dimensions in such a way as to render our organization relevant to all participating States with different security concerns and needs.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

While over the course of the last decade trans-national threats have emerged as an additional dimension of the OSCE's comprehensive security agenda, inter-state security concerns, however, have not diminished for some. These concerns cannot be wished away. For this reason, a sound conventional arms control and CSBM architecture is still required in order to reach the desired goal of a "security community". Notwithstanding the limited role of the OSCE with regard to the instruments negotiated outside its immediate purview, however, it would not be incorrect to say that the present mutually supportive security architecture is unraveling because its main components are not fulfilling their core tasks. Unfortunately, we have not yet found a solution on how to reverse this process.

Should this architecture collapse entirely, we will all have to live in an environment without mutual security guarantees and without measures that prevent an arms race at regional and sub-regional levels.

Several ideas have been put forward on how to address the future of conventional security in Europe. Some have argued to relegate regional and sub-regional security to regional and bilateral formats. This approach aimed at consolidating the security and stability of "core Europe" at the expense of its "fringes" through a fragmented security architecture negates the very principle of the indivisibility of security. Moreover, such efforts, whether knowingly or unknowingly, of shedding the protracted conflicts from our security agenda runs directly counter to our stated policy of helping resolve them.

Others have chosen to put increased emphasis on "transparency" while treating the "numerical limitations" of a future arms control mechanism as a secondary issue. Proponents of this idea conveniently seem to forget that every military capability is quantifiable, and the numerical limitations on armaments and equipments are an essential and integral part of any arms control regime. The term "transparency", which includes both information exchange and verification loses its significance where there is no baseline against which to verify. Any credible security architecture must therefore have a system of numerical limitations, including at regional and sub-regional levels. Otherwise, this architecture becomes a CSBM regime without a "hard security" component.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The OSCE as one player among a multitude of others will have to confine its unique role in this regard with what is politically and legally feasible. A good starting point no doubt would be to ensure the full implementation of OSCE negotiated instruments, first and foremost the Vienna Document, by all its signatories in the whole area of application. Opening up instruments negotiated outside the OSCE to all OSCE Participating States, who themselves, however, are incapable of reaching a common understanding on modernizing their own OSCE negotiated instruments cannot be a panacea to the ills of the European security architecture. It is time for the OSCE to first put its own house in order, which not only entails finding solutions to the impact of military reform and changes of military doctrine in some countries on OSCE CSBMs, but also again to the protracted conflicts. These conflicts have resulted in

the creation of the so called “grey zones” in which all military activities, including concentration of forces and armaments remain obscure.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before I conclude, permit me to briefly dwell upon the concerted fight against transnational threats. One of the important success stories of the OSCE over the course of the last decade has no doubt been the recognition of transnational risks and challenges as immediate and direct threats to our common security and stability. That all of us in the OSCE community are equally vulnerable to these phenomena has increased our sense of purpose and resolve to tackle them in solidarity. The institutional capacity of the Organization is rapidly developing with the establishment of the TNT Department and the appointment of its Director recently. However, this is still a work in progress and will require our continued interest and guidance to help develop into a more efficient tool.

The value added of the OSCE in addressing transnational threats, again lies in its comprehensive understanding of security, as these threats become ever more complex, requiring the cross cutting approach across all three dimensions, which constitutes the hallmark of our Organization. Indeed, globalization has enhanced the capacity of non-state actors to put their criminal designs into practice, among others through the use of new technologies including communication technologies. Recent terrorist attacks, some by elements of radicalization, xenophobia and racism require the multi dimensional approach which no organization other than the OSCE is capable of devising.

And finally, I would like to briefly touch upon the importance of our interaction with our Partners for Cooperation. Our partners are heterogenous, not only in terms of their geographies, but also their security needs. Some of our Partners are net contributors to the work of the OSCE, while some others require our assistance. Hence the OSCE means different things to different Partners and this, in turn, requires a careful tailor-made approach on our part. This relationship with its inherent sensitivities no doubt requires a demand driven approach. However, if there is one universal significance which the OSCE holds for the rest of the international community, that is the culture of cooperative security it has succeeded in building for years. Therefore, it is essential that this experience is conveyed to other geographies in order that they too, in time, may move away from an environment of mistrust and confrontation to that of trust and cooperation.

Thank you.