



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement to ASRC Session 4: The Way Forward

As delivered by Deputy Representative Douglas Davidson
to the Annual Security Review Conference, Vienna
June 24, 2004

Thank you, Mr. Coordinator.

The OSCE in its relatively short history, the OSCE has made a remarkable contribution to strengthening Euro-Atlantic security. The process begun by the Helsinki Final Act nearly 30 years ago is to a large extent responsible for the flourishing of democracy and the concomitant high level of peace and prosperity in the OSCE region today. The strategic situation in the Euro-Atlantic region has changed dramatically in the last 15 years, and the OSCE has worked hard to keep up with, if not stay ahead of, those changes.

As Ambassador Stoudmann observed earlier, these changes have affected all Euro-Atlantic organizations; each has responded in its own way to the demands placed upon it. The OSCE's response is encapsulated in its Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-first Century, which declares that the OSCE will meet future challenges on the basis of the organization's broad membership and its comprehensive, multidimensional approach to security. I should like now to discuss these two aspects in slightly more detail.

From the very beginning of the OSCE process in the 1970's, participating States recognized the importance of genuine dialogue and interaction with Partner States. The United States supports the ongoing discussion to identify additional fields of cooperation and interaction with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Cooperation. We value the interest in this process that has been shown thus far by many of the Partners. After all, a truly meaningful partnership requires active participation on both sides. We look forward to increased involvement between both member and partner states.

The participating States are aware that many of the issues the OSCE is dealing with every day, such as trafficking in persons and terrorism, are influenced by the situation in adjoining areas, including in those States where the OSCE has hitherto been inactive. The OSCE should continue to explore the potential to cooperate on a more regular basis with other States and organizations in these areas. Such cooperation could be defined either geographically or topically.

The OSCE's work is premised on the belief that no one State can single-handedly address the risks and challenges facing the world today. The same holds true for international organizations, which must cooperate to make the best use of increasingly scarce resources. We therefore support the further intensification of non-hierarchical cooperation and coordination between the OSCE and other international organizations such as the U.N., NATO and the Council of Europe.

OSCE cooperation with NATO and the EU on the 2003 Ohrid Balkan Border Security Conference, and cooperation with the UN on what we hope will be a successful border conference this September are examples of how the prime international organizations working in Europe can and must work together to address new security challenges.

The second aspect I would like to address today is the OSCE's comprehensive, multidimensional approach to security, which is one of its greatest strengths. The multidimensional manner in which the OSCE has addressed the threat of terrorism serves as a shining example of putting that approach to use. The fundamental commitments that OSCE participating States have made in all three dimensions would, if fully implemented, address to a great extent the basis of today's threats to security.

Nevertheless, we must recognize that the OSCE cannot solve every problem, nor should it try. There are certain things this organization does well, such as early warning and conflict prevention, the strengthening of democracy and the rule of law, and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The OSCE must continue to make this work its first priority, since it is here that it can and it does add the most value to the collective work of the international community in tackling the critical issues of our times.

I Thank you, Mr. Coordinator.