



## ADDRESS

**by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office Dr. Dimitrij Rupel  
for the Panel “Acting in Concert in the Balkans and Elsewhere – How Can Institutional  
Co-operation Make the World More Secure”  
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Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to take part in this Panel discussion. Before turning the floor over to the speakers, I would like to give you an overview of how the OSCE co-operates with international partners. Many examples will be taken from the Balkans, as well as other parts of the OSCE area.

Generally speaking, the basic premise of our approach is co-operation with the countries where we work and co-operation with international partners.

This co-operation manifests itself in many ways. The most common are regular contacts between OSCE Institutions, Field Missions and Units of the Secretariat with the Host States. In this way the OSCE offers support through providing recommendations and programmatic support on a range of issues from, for example, amending legislation, to community policing, destroying ammunition stockpiles and combating trafficking in human beings.

The OSCE is only one player in the international security network. We therefore maintain regular contacts with, for example, the United Nations and its agencies, the European Union, the Council of Europe, NATO, as well as sub-regional organizations, and NGOs in order to effectively complement our work. We have to avoid duplication of resources and “forum shopping”.

Inter-institutional co-operation occurs at different stages. There are, of course, regular contacts between Secretariats, working meetings, and regular high-level co-ordination meetings, for example with the UN, EU, NATO and Council of Europe.

## *Sharing Information and Expertise*

At various levels, we share information. Some international partners draw on information from OSCE field mission reports. A good example was through our border monitoring work in Albania and Macedonia in 1998 and 1999 when the OSCE had a presence on Albania's northern border and monitored the flow of refugees and the humanitarian situation during the crisis in Kosovo. The OSCE gave early warning to the international community about the dangers of a spill-over of the conflict. As a result, co-ordinated international action was taken and a crisis was averted.

Until recently, our border monitors in Georgia were also able to provide useful and objective reporting on movements across the border between Georgia and the Russian Federation. Recently we also accommodated the Georgian Government's desire to have international training assistance for strengthening its border management capabilities.

Earlier this year the Co-Chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group sent a Fact-Finding Mission to the occupied territories around Nagorno-Karabakh in order to determine whether Armenian settlements exist in the area. We also look at the situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees in other regions, for example in the Balkans. In this work we co-operate closely with UNHCR.

The OSCE shares its expertise with other partners, and vice versa. This is particularly the case in the human dimension where the OSCE and the Council of Europe are taking steps to make more effective use of each others' strengths to improve practical co-operation and avoid duplication.

In Kosovo, the EU pillar and the European Agency of Reconstruction (EAR) participate in the OSCE-managed Assembly Support Initiative, an inter-agency co-ordination mechanism for democratisation programmes aimed at building capacity in the Assembly of Kosovo.

The OSCE is also increasingly consulted by the EU and NATO in regard to their Action Plans in OSCE participating States as they become more active in the South Caucasus, Moldova and Central Asia.

My impression is that sharing of information and expertise will increase – and become more important – as the area of activities for major organizations like the OSCE, EU, NATO and the Council of Europe overlaps and the challenges to security become more complex and cross-dimensional. We will therefore need to keep each other well informed of developments and of each others activities, share ideas, experiences and best practices to tackle common problems, and talk to each other in the field in order to avoid stepping on each others toes and duplicating resources.

### *Common Tasks*

It may be that there are tasks that we can carry out together. This is already the case in some OSCE activities. In Kosovo, for example, the OSCE, the UN and the EU closely co-operate as partners in the UNMIK pillar structure. The OSCE Pillar is responsible for Institution Building, the two UN Pillars deal with Civil Administration and Police and Justice, and the EU Pillar works on Economic Reconstruction. All three organisations have distinct and separate mandates, but there are naturally areas where they work together. For example, the Standards process is an obvious case where representatives from each organisation have closely cooperated, both in the drafting of the Implementation Plan for certain key Standards, and subsequently in monitoring the Provisional Institution of Self Governance (PISG's) progress in putting that plan into practice.

The OSCE and NATO are planning to conduct joint assessments and joint implementation of projects on environmental security, and on the disposal of ammunition and small arms and light weapons. These projects build on existing good co-operation with NATO, for example in the Balkans where we have a good record in co-operation on security sector reform and governance.

Border management is a good example of a multi-faceted subject that requires multi-institutional co-operation. In the Balkans, the OSCE has been working with NATO, the EU and the Stability Pact to develop integrated border management strategies in the region through the so-called Ohrid process. This type of experience could also be used in other areas, also involving other partners.

## *Crisis Management and Conflict Resolution*

When crises erupt, we have to be ready and to pull together. There is no formal mechanism for pooling resources during a crisis, or for sharing information. It is ad hoc, and usually coordinated on the ground, especially during a fast-breaking crisis.

In Kyrgyzstan, for example, the OSCE has a lead role in seeking a political resolution of the crisis. But the Kyrgyz authorities also seek humanitarian assistance and economic support. Here we defer to others better able to help, for example UNDP and international financial institutions.

When civil unrest swept through Albania in 1998, the OSCE led the international stabilization effort and provided the framework under which a number of organizations and a military ‘coalition of the willing’ helped to restore order and support reconciliation.

In the autumn and winter of 2000, regional tensions threatened to spill over into the Preševo valley in South Serbia. Together with NATO, the OSCE managed to defuse the tensions, facilitated dialogue, promoted local self-government, and assisted with reforms including community policing.

During the crisis in Macedonia between 2001 and 2003, the OSCE, EU and NATO worked closely together and with the parties to stabilize the situation and hammer out the so-called Ohrid Agreement.

Increasingly the European Union is becoming involved in conflict resolution, for example with Special Representatives for the South Caucasus and Moldova. The OSCE, which has a mandate and lead role in working with the parties in resolving the Transdniestrian, Georgian-Ossetian and Nagorno-Karabakh conflicts, frequently consults with the EU and other international partners on developments in these conflicts. There is also concrete co-operation, for example in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict where the OSCE co-operates with the EU particularly on issues of the economic rehabilitation of the zone of conflict, and implements an EU funded project.

### *A Special Relationship with the UN*

The OSCE has a special relationship with the UN. It is a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. Where possible, we try to shoulder the burden for the UN community in the OSCE area. For example, in Kosovo the OSCE Mission – OMiK – is a key pillar of the UN's UNMIK mission. I hope that OMiK can take on an even greater portion of the UN's role in Kosovo in the years ahead.

Recently the OSCE opened a new chapter in its relations with the UN by taking on a greater responsibility for working with the ICTY to monitor war crimes trials in Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The OSCE helps Participating States implement international commitments at a regional level. For example, we work with the UN Counter Terrorism Committee and the UN Office for Drugs and Crime to assist OSCE States to implement UN resolutions on counter terrorism. We also work closely with the UN Economic Commission for Europe to monitor implementation of economic and environmental commitments.

We agree with the recommendations of the UN high-level panel and UN Secretary General Kofi Annan which call for the UN to make more effective use of its relations with regional organizations. In turn, I think that the OSCE could go even farther in developing its links with sub-regional organizations.

### *A Safer World*

By way of conclusion, I would like to underline the need for effective co-ordination and pragmatic co-operation. This does not require countless meetings. It takes common sense, open channels of communication, and a healthy sense of realism about the potential role of contributors. Organizations should act where they have something to offer, and not be afraid to defer to others who are more suitable for the situation at hand. **States should take a more interested role in ensuring that their institutions serve their needs and priorities, and defend the interests and values that they were created for.**

Wherever possible I believe that the OSCE expertise should be offered to other regions of the world. This is the trend in NATO and the EU, and also in the OSCE where in 2004 the Organization sent an Election Support Team to Afghanistan to assist with the Presidential elections. This was an excellent example of co-operation between the OSCE the UN, NATO, and the EU and demonstrated how the OSCE can help other regions promote security and democracy. I believe it could serve as a model for other operations in the future.

Thank you for your attention.