

STATEMENT BY HEAD OF UK DELEGATION, AMBASSADOR IAN CLIFF OBE

- I would first like to congratulate the Chairman-in-Office and the Greek Delegation for running a tight ship over the past year and navigating us safely to Athens. If I can change modes of transport for a moment I should also like to thank the Chairmanship for giving us such a warm welcome in this magnificent former Olympic Airways aircraft hangar with its excellent extensive facilities. My Foreign Secretary, David Miliband, very much regrets his absence due to unavoidable commitments arising from urgent Parliamentary business. But what I say represents the thrust of what he would have said had he been here today.
- In recent years the OSCE has been increasingly hobbled by differences in perception about our common commitments and how they should be implemented. Undoubtedly, a range of developments, whether in relation to the CFE, the murder of journalists, restrictions on the internet in OSCE countries, or the Russo-Georgia war of last year, have reinforced those differences. In these circumstances we believe that the Corfu Process can help promote a wider renewal and revitalisation of cooperative relations among our Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian participating States.
- David Miliband said at the Helsinki Ministerial last year that in terms of the threat of a military attack, we in the UK had probably never felt safer. That remains the case. But at the same time we face serious new transnational threats to security. We also recognise that in launching his proposals for a new European Security Architecture, President Medvedev was responding to a genuine perception in Russia – rightly or wrongly – that the current European structures do not fulfil Russia's needs. And of course there are many OSCE countries, for example in Central and South-East Europe and in the Caucasus, that feel a degree of uncertainty about their stability and security.
- So we see the Corfu Process as helping to rebuild trust and cooperation. As others have said, this Process should be anchored in the OSCE which is the most comprehensive organisation in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian space. Whether or not we are also members of NATO, the EU, the Council of Europe, the CIS or the CSTO, we are all participating States in the OSCE. Moreover the Corfu Process has to cover all three OSCE Dimensions, reflecting the interdependencies that require a cross-dimensional and comprehensive approach to European security.
- Therefore it must be right that this dialogue takes place *in* the OSCE: there is no alternative track. But at the same time it is important to recognise that the Corfu

Process is not primarily a dialogue *about* the OSCE; it is a wider dialogue about security in and the security of our famous Vancouver to Vladivostok space. For such a dialogue about European security to be really effective, it needs to encompass all relevant issues, including crucial questions such as nuclear non-proliferation. That is one reason why we will sometimes need to bring in other international organisations on the basis of the 1999 Platform for Cooperative Security.

- One area where the Corfu Process can add practical value is in streamlining and updating the OSCE mechanisms for early warning and crisis prevention across all dimensions and in ensuring that such mechanisms are deployed effectively. It really ought to be possible for the Chairman-in-Office to despatch a small team of, for example, conflict prevention or human rights specialists to investigate a problem without the state where the problem is taking place automatically having a veto.
- In the meantime, we need to redouble our efforts to resolve the Protracted Conflicts which have bedevilled the OSCE space for the last two decades. We of course remain committed to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders. We support the continuation of the Geneva Talks, of which the OSCE is a co-Chair, but we believe that the case for a durable OSCE presence, in particular to support the Georgian authorities on strengthening democracy and human rights and to provide an international window for dealings with the de facto authorities in South Ossetia, remains strong. We hope that with the necessary political will, a suitable formula can be found.
- On Nagorno-Karabakh, we welcome the intensified negotiations this year, including the meeting between the Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan together with the Minsk Group Co-Chairs in the margins of this Athens Ministerial. On Moldova, the arrival of a new government offers a fresh opportunity and again we welcome the discussions taking place in the margins of this Ministerial meeting. We look forward to the resumption of formal negotiations in the 5+2 format.
- If there is to be a revitalisation of the OSCE, we need a resolution of the crisis of the CFE on the basis of the Parallel Actions Package. The CFE is a legally binding treaty where we believe Russia is in breach of its obligations. Last Friday we received in London the Russian proposal for a legally-binding European Security Treaty, and we have heard the further elaboration provided today by Foreign Minister Lavrov at this meeting. This proposal is an interesting contribution to the debate on the future of European Security. We believe that it should be looked at in the OSCE in the context of the Corfu Process. Indeed, let's be clear: without the Corfu Process there can be no place to discuss this draft treaty. Our initial impression is that the Russian proposal encompasses some existing OSCE commitments. As the French Foreign Minister acutely observed, it makes

no mention of arms control, human rights or new threats – all vital elements to the security of Europe. We are studying the Russian document carefully but continue to think that the focus should be on practical action to deal with conflict and on strengthening our existing institutions and commitments.

- We continue to believe that the OSCE underpins our international efforts across the three dimensions, especially on arms control and on democracy and human rights. We also assess that the work of the Field Missions, ODIHR, and the High Commissioner on National Minorities make unique and important contributions.

- We are pleased at the establishment of the Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe but believe that OSCE's work on countering terrorism, drugs and radicalisation emanating from Afghanistan – key threats to the security of the OSCE space – would be much enhanced by the establishment of projects inside Afghanistan, which is one of the OSCE's Partners for Cooperation. In the economic dimension the OSCE can add value in complementing the work of other organisations on energy security. We also believe the Organisation can make a contribution to the security aspects of Climate Change. At the Commonwealth Meeting in Trinidad over the weekend David Miliband said "the climate change issue is the defining challenge for this century, and every organisation in the world should be saying: what are we going to do about that?".

- Finally, let me welcome Kanat Saudabaev as the new Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE. The Organisation can be singled out as an important link in Europe's relations with Central Asia. We look forward to working with Kazakhstan to make an outstanding success of its 2010 Chairmanship in the knowledge that Kazakhstan is committed to upholding the principles and commitments upon which the OSCE was founded. Beyond that, we look forward to cooperating with Lithuania in 2011 and thank Ireland for its offer to Chair the Organisation in 2012. This offer has our full support.