

**SECRETARY GENERAL'S SPEECH AT THE OSCE COUNCIL  
VIENNA, 3 NOVEMBER 2005**

Mr. Secretary General,  
Ministers,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to speak to this distinguished gathering, and particularly in a year in which we celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act. This document has been labelled the “Magna Carta” of détente – a charter for relations not only between states, but also between states and individuals.

Few would have guessed that what started in 1975 as the “Helsinki process” would eventually turn into a fully-fledged organisation. That, in itself, is a major achievement. What is even more important, however, is the fact that the principles championed by this organisation have become central to building European security today: promoting democracy and human rights, conflict prevention, early warning and early response to emerging crises. That broad understanding of security has become the standard definition of security today. And that is a success that the OSCE has every reason to be proud of.

Success, of course, is something that one should never take for granted. The challenges put before us by a rapidly changing international environment require all our institutions to adapt, and to demonstrate their continuing relevance. Today, our institutions are being judged less by what they represent but rather by what they can achieve. Effectiveness is a challenging yardstick – for all our major organisations. But it is a yardstick that we should welcome – as a strong impetus for far-reaching reform.

Just before I took up my current post at NATO almost two years ago, The Netherlands held the Chairmanship-in-Office of the OSCE. Our Chairmanship culminated with the adoption of the OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-First Century. And I am particularly pleased that strategy has formed the basis for the comprehensive review of the OSCE's policies, strategies and

working methods that has been carried forward under Bulgaria's and Slovenia's Chairmanship these last few years. The Report of Eminent Persons is the most visible recent result of this process. And I am convinced that the OSCE Ministerial in Ljubljana next month will be another important step on the road to reform.

A more effective OSCE is in itself a major gain for the security and long-term stability of this continent. But there is more. A more effective OSCE will also be a stronger partner for the Atlantic Alliance in tackling security challenges in Europe and even beyond.

Like the OSCE, NATO has had to respond to an entirely new set of challenges and demands. And like the OSCE, the Alliance could not rest on past successes, but had to embrace change and transformation. At NATO, we see this transformation as a continuing process, not a single event. However, the direction of the Alliance's transformation is clear, and it has already yielded significant results.

NATO has moved from a rather static approach to security that was suitable in the past to a much more active and functional approach. This includes a preparedness to take action well away from our traditional area of operations; a determination to develop the necessary military means to be able to take such action; a strong effort to develop our partnerships with other nations and organisations; and the enhancement of NATO's crucial role as a forum for political dialogue.

As you know, the Alliance's engagement to bring peace and stability to the Balkans was our first and very successful "out-of-area" operation. More and quite different, operational engagements have followed. We have launched a maritime counter-terrorist operation in the Mediterranean. NATO has taken command of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. We have launched a mission to train and equip Iraqi security forces. We are assisting the African Union with its peacekeeping mission in Darfur. But Allies have also taken action in response to a

number of natural disasters, including Hurricane Katrina and the recent earthquake in Pakistan, which has led to the largest relief operation that NATO has ever undertaken.

Within NATO, we have also made good progress in modernising our forces, making them more agile and usable for the different types of operations that I have just described. We have, for example, streamlined the Alliance's military command structure. We have established a NATO Response Force to be able to react quickly to any emerging crisis. And we are looking into ways to better plan and resource future operational engagements. All in all, the modernisation of our structures and capabilities is well on track. But the NATO Allies all realise that there is still important work to do in this area, and we have planned a NATO Summit meeting late next year to serve as a focal point for those efforts.

Another key element of NATO's transformation is to build stronger relations with other international institutions. The reason is clear. It is because today's security challenges far exceed the ability of any individual nation or institution. And because we can only hope to get a grip on these challenges by working together. This is why NATO is seeking to build strong and pragmatic relationships with the United Nations and the European Union. And it is why we are very interested in extending our cooperation with the OSCE as well.

Over the past ten, fifteen years, Europe has made great strides, but it still remains unfinished business. The OSCE will have to continue to play a major role if our common goal of a continent that is whole, free and secure is to be realised.

As a standard-bearer of human rights, the OSCE is the conscience of the Euro-Atlantic area. But at the same time, the role of the OSCE has become increasingly operational. This organisation is doing important work in the fight against terrorism. As a framework for arms control, the OSCE remains indispensable. And its inclusive nature also puts the OSCE at the forefront of addressing Europe's frozen conflicts. The OSCE's field missions have created a new kind of accountability for governments. They

are an important contribution to the resolution of conflicts, and a major step towards establishing accepted norms of behaviour.

NATO's policies complement those of the OSCE in several ways. The Alliance's partnership and enlargement policies have made a significant contribution to our common goal of consolidating Europe as a common security space. NATO's cooperation programmes with countries throughout Europe, into Central Asia and across the Mediterranean have become a transmission belt for promoting our ideas and values. Our special relationships with Russia and Ukraine are instrumental in engaging these two important countries into European security. And the Alliance's strong and continuing involvement in the Balkans has created the safe environment for the OSCE to play its part in the democratic consolidation of this region.

Indeed, more than anywhere else, the potential of our cooperation has been demonstrated in the Balkans – for example when we prevented civil strife in Southern Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\* at the beginning of this century, or when we brought together all interested parties in Ohrid in 2003 to work towards greater border security in South-East Europe. And I believe these concrete examples bode well for the future of NATO-OSCE cooperation in Europe.

Having said this, the similarities in our security approaches, and the scope for our cooperation, are not confined to the European continent. Afghanistan, for example, is a country where both our institutions also have complementary roles to play. Afghanistan became one of the OSCE's Partners for Cooperation almost at the same time as NATO took command of the International Security Assistance Force in the country. NATO has supported the OSCE with its monitoring of the Afghan Presidential elections last year, as well as the recent parliamentary and regional elections, and that has gone very well. And we should continue to work closely together in helping the Afghan people and their political leaders to create a better future for their country.

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\* Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

Apart from post-conflict stabilisation and reconstruction such as in Afghanistan, I believe that there is scope for NATO and the OSCE to cooperate more effectively in engaging the countries of Northern Africa and the Broader Middle East. With its Mediterranean Dialogue and outreach to the Gulf, the so called Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, the Alliance has developed very promising links to many countries in that vast region. And our cooperation in, for example, security sector reform and disaster preparedness forms a useful complement to what the OSCE and also the European Union are offering to that region.

I have set out how NATO is changing, explained the logic of closer NATO-OSCE cooperation, and argued that we should work together not just within but also beyond this continent. But what, you will ask, would that closer cooperation amount to in practice? To my mind, there are several opportunities, so let me give you an idea of what I think we should focus on.

I believe that it is vital, first of all, to continue to develop our institutional contacts, and to do so in a pragmatic, transparent fashion. High level exchanges, such as my presence here today and that of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office at our Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in Brussels in two weeks, are one thing. And let me by the way stress the excellent job Minister Rupel is doing in bringing the OSCE agenda forward. But we also need our staffs to work much more closely together, and on all issues where we have a common interest. Staff contacts have developed over the last few years, but I really think that we can, and must, do a lot better.

In addition to building stronger institutional ties, we should seek to work more closely together on specific issues and projects. We are already doing this to some extent. This summer, for example, hosted in Ukraine, we held the first joint OSCE-NATO workshop on the disposal of rocket fuel component. Together with the US State Department, our two organisations are organising a conference on combating terrorist financing here in Vienna next week. And we have established a first NATO/OSCE

project in Moldova. This approach, which draws on the Partnership for Peace and the OSCE Environment and Security Initiative, offers significant potential for making progress in areas where we have common interests. Those are all excellent examples of practical cooperation between our two organisations that I hope will be followed by many more joint initiatives.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In its Platform for Cooperative Security the OSCE has declared its intention to work with other institutions. And in NATO, the OSCE will find a strong and cooperative Partner. Because NATO, too, has broadened its agenda – and it has done so in line with the objectives shared by the OSCE.

The evolution of the OSCE and of NATO is therefore proceeding very much along the same lines. Both our organisations have adapted to a changing environment by broadening their agenda. Both have reached out to the wider Europe and even beyond. Both have diversified the tools at their disposal to cope with new challenges. And both organisations have adopted policies of conflict prevention and crisis management.

So the task before us is clear. It is to translate the convergence in our security approaches into ever-closer relations and practical cooperation between our two organisations. The security challenges before us demand nothing less.

Thank you.