



## **Special PC**

### **OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier Remarks in response to the “welcome” by Delegations**

**4 July 2011**

Dear Renatas,  
Excellencies,  
Dear Colleagues,

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all of you for your warm words of welcome. I am happy to be back in the OSCE family, and I am both humbled and inspired by the trust you have placed in me. I will do my best to live up to the high expectations you have set forth for my work as Secretary General.

I have taken careful note of the suggestions, comments, and questions you have raised today. I am reassured by your concrete vision, and by your ambitions for the OSCE. This tells me that by working together, we can achieve success on many fronts.

Your interventions today, along with all the input and feedback I am sure I will receive as I meet you all in the coming days and weeks, will provide me with a comprehensive picture as I begin my mandate as Secretary General.

From my vantage point in Kosovo, I have followed your discussions over the past months as you deliberated over the selection of your Secretary General. From the beginning of this process, much of the debate centered around the appropriate profile the position should have. Many – perhaps most – participating States expressed a wish to enhance the political role of the Secretary General.

I agree with this point, as I made clear during my presentation in the Ratsaal last March. And I intend to interpret my role accordingly: I will not hesitate to speak out on issues that impact upon the Organization's ability to achieve the goals you have set for it. Obviously, the Chairmanship remains the driving force behind the Organization's political agenda, and I intend to respect its role at all times. But participating States willing to take on the heavy burden of the OSCE Chairmanship have a right to expect strong support from the executive structures, and I will do my best to ensure that they continue to receive it.

Last March, I shared with you several ideas for how we might make the executive structures of the Organization more responsive to your needs. As I take up my duties as Secretary General, I look forward to working with the Chairmanship, the Troika and all of you, the participating States, to follow up on their implementation. Allow me to recall just three of these ideas, which I believe merit your serious consideration:

First, I want to explore the possibilities of maximizing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Secretariat. I would do this in a way that is sensitive to the current economic climate and therefore without major budget implications. I reiterate what I said last March; I believe the creation of the position of a Deputy in the Secretariat merits serious consideration. There are several

ways in which this might be done: I would take a practical approach, looking first of all to the needs of the Secretariat – an Officer in Charge when I am not in Vienna, and a safe pair of hands with whom to share some of the day-to-day management tasks, in order to allow me to focus more on strategic issues. Depending upon progress in the discussions currently under way in preparation of the Vilnius Ministerial Council, this post might also take a leading role in coordinating the work on transnational threats throughout the Organization, something I understand many delegations have been calling for. I am also fully aware of the budget constraints of the Organization. I intend therefore to move to some restructuring of the Secretariat – in particular, the Office of the Secretary General – so as to be able to create this position based on some small upgrading of existing positions, almost in a budget-neutral way. And I intend to proceed transparently, using the Unified Budget process, so that the new position can be established, with your agreement, by the beginning of next year. Recruitment would then follow, and as promised I would take into account, as for all key management and other positions in the Secretariat, professional skills as well as geographical and gender considerations.

Let me also inform you that I have already taken steps to increase coordination within the Secretariat by creating a small internal policy-coordination group, where the role of the Director of the CPC is key. This group will meet regularly from now on, and I plan to attend its meetings as often as I can. Having served in the CPC myself, I am convinced that an efficient interaction between the Secretary General and the Directors, in particular the Director of the CPC, who is at the same time a Director for operations and a Director for pol-mil issues, is a crucial factor in enhancing the overall efficiency of the Secretariat.

Second, an enhanced profile for the OSCE is crucial if our Organization is to remain relevant to the needs of the participating States.

The OSCE plays a unique and indispensable role in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area. Its comprehensive security concept, its inclusive membership, its early warning and conflict prevention tools, the expertise and networks of its institutions, the concrete assistance delivered by its field operations – these are invaluable assets that cannot simply be replaced by others. The people in this room understand this. Too often, however, the people outside this room do not.

If we are to succeed in achieving the ambitious vision set forth in Helsinki and Paris, in Istanbul and Astana, then we need to do a much better job of explaining this organization to our leaders and to our societies. We must continuously assert and distinguish its unique role in an increasingly crowded field of international actors. As I said at the beginning of my remarks, I believe very strongly in this organization, and am deeply honoured to be selected as its Secretary General. But I am also humbled by a press clipping from my home town newspaper, which my mother showed me just a few weeks ago. The headline read, *Fellow Citizen Lamberto Zannier – candidate for Secretary General of the O E C D !* Clearly, we need to do more to get across the message of what the OSCE is, and more importantly, what it *does*.

I believe we should explore the creation of a network of academic institutions – centres of excellence with an emphasis on researching issues on the OSCE agenda. There are excellent examples, such as the Centre for OSCE Research (CORE) at the University of Hamburg University. Each participating State would designate a focal point for this network, thereby

providing geographical balance. The aim would be to increase the visibility of the OSCE in each of the participating States, to stimulate debate and generate ideas and initiatives on Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian Security for the OSCE to consider and, very importantly, to help us reconnect with the civil society.

Third, and following from this, I intend to consider steps to increase the coherence of action among the executive structures, and to enhance the cooperation of executive structures with the Chairmanship and with the Parliamentary Assembly. I believe this would also help us in our efforts to enhance the visibility of our Organization, and our ability to deliver a clear message to the broader public. In doing this, I will keep in mind the need to balance the political leadership and priorities of individual Chairmanships, the autonomy of the Institutions and the mandate of each member of the OSCE family. I plan to visit ODIHR and the Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities at an early stage and to discuss with them ways to further improve a cooperation that, I know, is already excellent.

This week, I will join many of you at the Parliamentary Assembly's Annual Meeting in Belgrade. I am delighted that this is my first official trip in my new capacity. A strong, operational and mutually respectful relationship between the Secretariat and the PA can be a powerful tool in addressing our common concerns and challenges. This is a message I will deliver directly to President Efthymiou and the members of the Assembly later this week in Belgrade.

The theme of this year's session: *Strengthening the OSCE's Effectiveness and Efficiency – A new start after the Astana Summit*, strikes at the core of

the mandate of the Secretariat. Our goal is to support the Chairmanship and the participating States, in the most effective and efficient way, in the implementation of their commitments and in fulfilling the goals they have set for the Organization. As I mentioned a moment ago, tackling this very issue is a top priority for me.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am certain the question on all of your minds today is:

“What are the Secretary General’s immediate priorities?”

The short answer is that *your* priorities are now *my* priorities.

Building upon the solid foundation laid by Kazakhstan leadership in 2010, in particular the success of the Astana Summit in December, the Lithuanian Chairmanship has put forward a pragmatic agenda that has all the potential to make concrete progress toward that vision.

I join you at a crucial juncture, just past the mid-point on the road to the Vilnius Ministerial Council. I have been briefed that at the Ambassadors retreat in Baden, last week, a general consensus seemed to be emerging in a substantive number of areas, in all three dimensions. The Secretariat, and I personally, will be actively supporting you in finding that consensus. Our aim is to help you to reach Vilnius with a meaningful agenda.

Dear colleagues,

Again, I want to thank you for your warm welcome and the confidence you have placed in me. As for me, I am ready and enthusiastic to get to work, and I count on your input and support.

Thank you for your attention.