



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

**THE CHANGING GLOBAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT AND VISIONS OF
MULTILATERAL SECURITY CO-OPERATION IN ASIA**

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**Remarks by Thomas Wuchte, Head on Anti-terrorism Issues
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Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to be among you today and honoured to participate in such a high-level conference and for the warm welcome by our Republic of Korea hosts. I would also like to thank Switzerland as the Chair of the OSCE Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Co-operation for inviting me to present in this panel that addresses evolving threats and their implications for security in Europe and Asia, following the distinguished presentation by Professor Takako Ueta and Ms. Kate Byrnes.

From Vancouver to Vladivostok and from Melbourne to Tokyo - we all are aware that terrorism continues to evolve rapidly. Growing tactics trends, notably kidnapping and hostage-taking and the recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs), are a constant reminder for the 57 OSCE participating States and the five OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation that terrorism remains a serious cause for concern for all of us. Thwarting terrorist attacks is a complex and challenging task for the International Community, including the different regional security structures in Europe and Asia.

With these challenges in mind, I would like to focus the next ten minutes on the evolving threat of FTFs and the challenge of countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT). I will then consider the already existing involvement of our Partners in the OSCE anti-terrorism activities, as well as the potential to deepen that co-operation.

I. The Phenomenon of FTFs bears a risk for both OSCE participating States and Asian Partners for Co-operation requiring cross-country co-operative efforts in Europe and Asia built on political will

a. The Phenomenon of FTF represents a common risk for all

Although not a new phenomenon, the topic of FTFs became more prominent during the past

months in the OSCE region and in the area of our Asian Partners for Co-operation. In January of this year, the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence (ICSR) in co-operation with the Munich Security Conference estimated a bit less than 21,000¹ the number of FTFs who have joined groups in Syria and Iraq. According to the same research centre, nearly 4,000 of them come from Western Europe, while over 300 are estimated among some of our Asian Partners. It is clear that the phenomenon in itself is not limited to conflicts in Syria and Iraq, and can affect any State in the world.

In May, a new United Nations Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee Report on foreign terrorist fighters was published, estimating “that there are today more than 25,000 foreign terrorist fighters from more than 100 Member States involved with groups associated with Al-Qaida (including ISIL)”, while noting a “sharp increase (from 70 to 733 per cent) in fighters from a number of European and Asian Member States.”² While these counts remain estimates, a significant increase in the overall number of FTFs persists, with an estimated number of 21,000 FTFs in January 2015 that has risen to 25,000 in May.

In addition, there are still extensive difficulties for States to bring to justice individuals suspected of involvement in terrorist acts located outside their jurisdiction. Full investigation and prosecution of a terrorist offence requires co-operation across borders using tools such as effective law enforcement and judicial co-operation including exchange of information, extradition and mutual legal assistance. Regarding violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism, among other things, we can clearly see a challenge of early prevention and intervention to prevent departures.

While this phenomenon bears risks for the safety and security of all our States if not adequately dealt with, it is also a good example of the OSCE’s concrete and forward-looking co-operation efforts and the potential it bears for collaboration among our regional security-related mechanisms and the Asian Partners for Co-operation.

b. Political Will as the Basis for Existing Co-Operation in the Field of FTF

Only two months after the United Nations adopted resolution 2178 (2014), the OSCE followed up with a Declaration on FTFs adopted during the annual Ministerial Council Meeting: the Basel Declaration on the OSCE Role in Countering the Phenomenon of Foreign Terrorist Fighters in the Context of the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014) that complements the OSCE framework in combating terrorism - namely the OSCE Consolidated Framework for the Fight against Terrorism.

In brief: this Ministerial Council Declaration consolidated the OSCE commitments related to capacity-building, information sharing and co-operation among participating States in order to effectively counter FTFs, while fully complying with the rule of law and all human rights

¹ Article on ICSR website: <http://icsr.info/2015/01/foreign-fighter-total-syriairaq-now-exceeds-20000-surpasses-afghanistan-conflict-1980s/>
The same figures are quoted in the 2015 Munich Security Report: <http://www.eventanizer.com/MSC2015/MunichSecurityReport2015.pdf>

² Report on foreign terrorist fighters prepared by the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team established pursuant to resolution 1526 (2004), which was submitted to the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities in accordance with paragraph 23 of resolution 2178 (2014).

obligations. The OSCE and the Asian Partners for Co-operation could further build upon this declaration. Indeed, in Basel we agreed to such co-operation by the Ministers in a statement with the Asian Partners for Co-operation, where we “welcome dialogue on the efforts to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism, to suppress the flow of foreign terrorist fighters and develop and implement prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration strategies, in full implementation of UNSCR 2170 and 2178, and in particular foreign terrorist fighters...” We are actively pursuing many ideas at the moment while actively bringing in experts from Asia to broaden this dialogue.

Having said that, there is still much room for strengthening our partnership and co-operation. We stand ready to do so further at the 2015 OSCE-wide Counter-Terrorism Conference that at the expert level will address topics pertaining to countering the incitement and recruitment of FTFs, including strategic messaging to counter incitement and recruitment of FTFs, empowering young people to counter violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism, and identifying and engaging with individuals at risk of radicalization and recruitment as FTFs.

II. The Potential for further co-operation between the OSCE and the Asian Partners for Co-operation

Collaboration in security matters is the only way for the global community to find a timely response to the increasing number of challenges in terrorism prevention. But in this context, co-operation can only be more effective when it reorients and upgrades from dialogue to actual tangible actions. Having at our hand the commitment by the Ministers, here are some concrete activities that will involve our Asian Partners.

a. Continued Commitment by the OSCE to Promote Implementation of UNSCR 2178 (2014)

First of all, the OSCE will continue to promote the implementation of UNSCR 2178 in the OSCE area. To see how States comply with commitments contained in the Declarations and in order to identify new opportunities aiming to enhance the Organization's capability to counter terrorism, the current Chair of the Security Committee, a forum that discusses the non-military and political security aspects, requested voluntary reporting on implementations of commitments contained in the Declaration - Asian Partners could join this exercise in the framework of the Asian Contact Group. This kind of action increases information sharing across countries. While there is a long list of commitments in UNSCR 2178, it is important to remember that States already have at their disposal a range of international instruments and are of course not left on their own. International and regional organizations are at your service to address these issues; they offer important platforms to promote common perceptions, concerted action and capacity-building, including at both the political and practical levels.

b. Call for Action following the White House Summit – OSCE United

The OSCE Secretariat and several OSCE participating States have participated at the White

House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism hosted by President Obama in February this year and will support the call to action with a number of activities at the regional and national levels. In the presence of our Asian Partners, such as Afghanistan, Australia, Japan, the OSCE has announced the following activities while committing ourselves to continue supporting the dialogue and exchange of experiences. It goes without saying that this kind of action also embraces our Asian Partners.

Therefore, the OSCE will continue to facilitate with Asian Partners such ideas:

- The 2015 Serbian OSCE Chairmanship will convene a Counter-Terrorism Expert Conference on 30 June - 1 July and will focus on Countering the Incitement and Recruitment of FTFs, and we have invited our Asian Partners to participate. This Conference aims to contribute to further high-level discussions on Countering Violent Extremism at the UN General Assembly in September 2015.

We also plan to hold:

- An OSCE-wide regional expert workshop on Media Freedom and Responsibilities in the Context of Counter Terrorist Policies that will introduce an e-learning platform on countering the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes;
- Two regional workshops for experts in Central Asia and South East Europe on Regional Co-operation and Effective Responses to the Phenomenon of FTFs;
- We will support, on a regional basis, efforts to establish a network of women united against violent extremism, based on our previous work in this field;
- Because many of our follow-up actions involve Ministers of Interior, the Secretary General is considering holding a special meeting in 2016 to focus high-level attention on their work within the OSCE.

This year the OSCE will also initiate new capacity-building activities to counter violent extremism:

- We will develop training modules for community police officers based on the OSCE guidebook on community policing approaches to countering violent extremism and preventing terrorism;
- We will work, through OSCE Field Operations, to assist in the development of national CVE action plans by interested participating States;
- We will develop pilot training courses to build the capacity of civil society leaders, especially youth, women and religious leaders, to undertake further national awareness raising and counter-narrative efforts against violent extremism in their countries.

Raising awareness and promoting effective counter-narratives is indeed critical to the prevention of violent extremism. In this spirit, we announced an OSCE-wide "United in Countering Violent Extremism" communication campaign to underscore the commitment of our entire Organization, across OSCE executive structures and participating States and Partners for Co-operation, to preventing violent extremism. The campaign was announced by

the OSCE Secretary General during an OSCE Security Days conference held on 21-22 May in Vienna on "Building Bridges: Promoting Dialogue to Prevent Radicalization and Violent Extremism". The campaign will highlight the OSCE multi-dimensional approach and reinforce our unified message against violent extremism.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that the OSCE is already playing the role of a bridge between Europe and Asia, due to its special relationship with its Asian Partners for Co-operation. And we are particularly well-placed to serve as a platform to launch region-specific initiatives with Asia that complement the global objectives outlined in UNSCR 2178 and the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) The Hague-Marrakech Memorandum on FTFs. The OSCE framework allows sufficient flexibility to address new and emerging trends, and to engage with its Asian Partners.

The OSCE has a long history of close co-operation with the Asian Partners and we can strengthen these efforts in counter-terrorism issues regarding FTFs. We remain available to the guidance of our Asian Partners and continue being a substantive contributor in generating political will, raising awareness and building capacity in both the OSCE area and with our Asian Partners.

Thank you.