

STATEMENT
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS
ALEKSANDR LUKASHENKO
AT THE PLENARY MEETING OF THE OSCE SUMMIT
Astana, 2 December 2010

Dear Mr. President,
Dear Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to express my sincere gratitude to the OSCE Kazakh Chairmanship and to the President of Kazakhstan for the courage to have initiated and organized this forum. I know how hard it was to withstand the voices of skepticism and mistrust sounding from all the quarters.

Over the eleven years after the Istanbul Summit, **sweeping changes** have taken place, in our region and globally. The world confronted a whole array of **new challenges and threats**; a fundamentally **new geopolitical configuration emerged** in Europe.

You know, I am participating in my third Summit. We took good decisions at previous summits, and I think we will do the same at this one. But no matter what we talk about the significance of our work, today there is nothing to get credit for.

I doubt we should talk at this stage about who is to blame. **We should talk about what is to be done.**

In our **common** interests is a powerful pan-European architecture of **stability and security** based upon broad **consensus**, true solidarity, partnership, and mutual respect.

The OSCE can and must play a **key role in building such a community** of security and stability. To cope with this task, the Organization itself needs **radical modernization**.

We are convinced of the need **to adopt a Charter** and turn the OSCE **into a full-fledged international organization**. Otherwise, most of the proposals about new tasks of the Organization voiced yesterday and today will, like the previous ones, continue to remain a dead letter.

We deem important further steps **to rectify functional and geographic disbalances** in the activities of our Organization.

We should step up the efforts **to enhance the existing instruments of the OSCE** in the area of strengthening confidence and security.

We regard as one of our priorities **updating the Vienna Document 1999**. Belarus has submitted a comprehensive set of proposals on this matter and looks forward to garner support of those.

We have been consistently advocating the creation of a **common security system** in the area of responsibility of our Organization.

This would help to grant all stakeholders **clear and equal guarantees** in this area. In particular, we believe that nuclear-weapons states, from among the OSCE States, could today provide non-nuclear participating States with **unconditional and unambiguous guarantees of their security, sovereignty and territorial integrity**. Yesterday here, in Astana, Belarus and the United States of America adopted a joint statement on common measures to prevent nuclear proliferation, confirming, inter alia, already existing elements of assurances. This is an important and concrete contribution to the common cause of creating a **safe** Europe and to the cause of peace.

Most of the strategic challenges that face our countries today concern the **economic and environmental security, and the energy security**.

We propose to identify and adopt the **key principles of cooperation on energy security**, which would bring to a common denominator the interests of producers, transit countries and consumers.

We also advocate strengthening the OSCE's role in protecting energy infrastructure, using alternative and renewable energy sources, ensuring access of all countries to advanced technologies in this area.

A great deal has been said about human rights. And if we talk about it, we must talk seriously. **Election** issues are always in the forefront of OSCE's activities. Actually, the OSCE is sometimes like a stick in someone's hands in the run-up to the elections of this or that state. **Electoral standards** that representatives and officials of the OSCE refer to are unfortunately non-existent. But they always recall these standards. Therefore, today we must work out **electoral standards**, and they **must be universal**. It would therefore be logical to work in the OSCE on adopting the **common for all principles of observation of application of electoral standards**. A number of countries have already tabled a proposal on the subject.

One of the priorities in the sphere of human rights is the **issue of the freedom of movement**. Just to remind you, this is exactly where our Organization actually started.

Previously, in Helsinki and Madrid, we altogether voluntarily undertook unequivocal commitments to facilitate interpersonal contacts and the freedom of movement.

Today, however, the **situation is much worse** than eleven years back. Overly bureaucratic visa procedures, sometimes openly humiliating human dignity, their disproportionate cost significantly hamper free movement and contacts among citizens of our countries. The contacts, which, like nothing else, contribute to better mutual understanding and trust.

Our Organization, by the way, is called "for security and cooperation". But how can states cooperate in such conditions if many people are deprived of contacts due to visa barriers?

Countering trafficking in human beings, being one of the crucial aspects of real human rights protection, should remain among the utmost priorities of the Organization in human dimension.

The initiatives of Belarus on this issue in the framework of the United Nations Organization are well-known.

We believe that the OSCE with its considerable expertise and organizational capacity could make a more substantial contribution to the implementation of the **UN Global Plan of Action in this field**. I am convinced: with joint effort we will succeed in bringing the fight against this slavery of the XXI century to a qualitatively new level.

I would like to reiterate that for Belarus **the OSCE remains one of the key organizations in the field of security** in the Euro-Atlantic area and in creating a zone of stability and sustainable development in the region of responsibility.

Belarus, in deed and not in name, **aspires** to strengthen the practical acquis of our security and observance of the interests of citizens of our states – from nuclear disarmament to protecting human rights. We are ready to further step up our efforts across these lines with all OSCE partners.

So let us assist our future chair – Lithuania – to make a breakthrough on the avenues that we have discussed today. On behalf of the Belarusian people, I would like to thank Kazakhstan, the President, the people of Kazakhstan for the warm welcome we receive here. And I want to wish our close partner, our neighbour – Lithuania – every success and substantial achievements in the course of its Chairmanship in the OSCE in 2011. I want to assure you that we will do everything possible, not just as neighbours but as OSCE member states, so that your chairmanship would be successful.

Thank you for your attention.