



Concluding Remarks Interlaken Conference, 28-29 April 2014

H.E. Ambassador Stephan Husy, on behalf of the Swiss Chairmanship of the OSCE

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear colleagues,

After two days of active discussions it is now time to bring this conference to a close.

I believe this event demonstrated the role the OSCE can play as a point of convergence, and the Swiss Chairmanship is very pleased about the outcome.

I would like to thank the panelists for their thought-provoking presentations, as well as the discussants and moderators for their comprehensive and engaged contributions. I also thank all participants, including our partners in international organisations and civil society, for stimulating and inspiring the debates, asking questions and sharing your views and experiences.

Before sharing with you the Chairmanship recommendations and proposals for follow up of our discussions, I would like to give the floor to the moderators of the three sessions, and ask them for a brief summary of the outcomes.

Thank you so much to the moderators for this comprehensive summary of the presentations and discussions, and for your guidance. Now, I would like to present to you the recommendations of the Swiss Chairmanship, which are intended to serve as a reference for future discussions: I am pleased that you have before you a hard copy of the Chairmanship recommendations. Please let me highlight some important points.

Concerning **kidnapping for ransom**, our recommendations focus on:

- the affirmation of a no-ransom policy, with the implementation of existing legal instruments to prevent terrorist groups' access to funding from ransom payments and to secure the safe release of hostages; in this respect closer co-operation between States by facilitating exchange of experiences and information is required;
- the provision of capacity building for practitioners, and the facilitation of experts' networking, public-private dialogue and co-operation; and
- the creation of a directory of national contact points for cases of kidnapping.

Regarding the respect of the principles of **legality, transparency and accountability**, we recommend:

- that oversight of and accountability for counter-terrorism measures include the national executive and legislative branches, as well as an independent and impartial judiciary;
- ensuring the effective protection of media's independence and freedom to report, including on counter-terrorism issues; and

- the adoption of predictable, precise and accessible counter-terrorism laws, in compliance with international human rights law, refugee and humanitarian law.

Concerning “**foreign fighters**”, the OSCE Chairmanship has noted the increasing challenges we are facing, and the need to foster exchange of information and international cooperation, including at operational level. In order to tackle this phenomenon, we have to understand better the motivations of the foreign fighters and the recruitment mechanisms. We have to adapt our strategies, action plans and legislation with regard to foreign fighters, while respecting human rights and international humanitarian law.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to conclude by reiterating that the fight against terrorism is a long term endeavor and we must all be committed to pursuing it. The key word in this regard is co-operation. Countering terrorism requires an inclusive and coordinated response at all levels; the OSCE shall continue to build on its comparative advantages in close cooperation with other international actors.

Switzerland, as Chairmanship of the OSCE, will follow up the recommendations made during this conference in order to achieve concrete results at the OSCE Ministerial Council in Basel in December 2014.

Also, I would like to take the opportunity to wish Serbia a successful and fruitful Chairmanship in 2015. I am also in a position to announce that Serbia will organize a counter-terrorism conference in the first part of next year in Belgrade, which will allow us to continue to consolidate our open and constructive dialogue.

On behalf of the Swiss Chairmanship, I would like to thank all people having contributed to the success of this Conference: special thanks go to the OSCE Secretariat and ODIHR, and special thanks as well to the Conference management team and the interpreters, who all did a perfect job “back stage”.

Last but not least, our thanks go to all of you for your cooperation and openness during this Conference: I think we achieved the goal of addressing some very challenging current terrorism threats, in line and in the spirit of co-operation highlighted by the President of the Swiss Confederation and CiO, H.E. Didier Burkhalter, who made us the honor to open our Conference.

Thank you again and I wish you all safe journey home.

I announce now the Conference closed.