

Canadian Delegation to the  
Organization for Security & Cooperation  
in Europe



Délégation du Canada auprès de  
l'Organisation pour la sécurité et la coopération  
en Europe

**DELEGATION OF CANADA TO THE OSCE  
STATEMENT BY FREDERICKA GREGORY, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES  
IN RESPONSE TO THE ADDRESS BY H.E. MS. DORA BAKOYANNIS  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF GREECE  
AND OSCE CHAIRPERSON-IN-OFFICE  
746TH MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL  
15 JANUARY 2009**

Madame Chair,

Canada joins others in warmly welcoming Her Excellency Ms. Dora Bakoyannis to the Permanent Council and wishes to thank her for her address highlighting the Greek Chairmanship's road map for 2009. My delegation is pleased to offer its full support, and we look forward to collaborating closely with the entire Greek Chairmanship team. I would like to congratulate my colleague, Ambassador Mara Marinaki, and her team in Vienna for the fine work they are doing at the start of the New Year.

We are pleased that the Greek priorities complement areas in which the OSCE currently works, rather than spreading resources too thinly by undertaking new programmes where the OSCE's expertise and value added is more limited. We share the Chairmanship's conviction that we are on the threshold of a time of decisions on the conduct of relations between all OSCE participating states in today's world and that we need to ensure synergy, strategy and symmetry in our approaches. We are looking forward to working with colleagues to translate this "trptych" into concrete reality and to reflect them faithfully in the evolution of our Organization.

We agree with you on the need for a bona fide dialogue on cooperative security in the Euro-Atlantic area. In thinking about new ideas, we must not lose sight of our current commitments. Existing institutions and arrangements underpinning Euro-Atlantic security - NATO, the OSCE and the European Union - are sound and efficient.

Canada has long called for consolidation of activities and increased focus in implementing existing commitments. The OSCE will maintain its effectiveness through applying these values and commitments to which all participating States have agreed. Comprehensive change to this *acquis* will undermine the Organization's capacity to promote stability and security.

It is our view that continued efforts to strengthen the OSCE are needed, and particularly ODIHR's capacity to observe elections and promote democratization, as well as freedom of association, assembly and expression, and notably by supporting human rights. This

emphasis on the Human Dimension will result in tangible benefits to security and stability in our region.

Minister Bakoyannis highlighted the concept of Rule of Law - The Canadian delegation attaches particular importance to this important theme. We also believe that the decision adopted last December in Helsinki may well provide a useful platform for further discussion on this important issue.

Madame Chair,

Allow me to highlight a number of top priorities for the Government of Canada at the OSCE. Supporting freedom and democracy heads our list because healthy democracies are essential for long-term stability, prosperity and security of our countries.

The OSCE has developed an ambitious set of action plans, norms and decisions to address with respect to new challenges and threats, such challenges as terrorism and human trafficking. Let us strive to continue the implementation of these plans.

Last year provided another sombre reminder of how unresolved conflicts continue to pose a serious threat to security and stability in the OSCE area. The OSCE continues to play a critical role in maintaining peace and security, including through confidence-building measures such as the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE).

I wish to also underscore the pivotal role of the OSCE in assisting the resolution of the protracted conflicts. In this connection, Canada looks forward to Greek-led initiatives in this area, particularly in Georgia, where a continued OSCE presence and engagement is needed more than ever.

In addition, the Canadian Delegation has long spoken strongly for enhancing the implementation of the OSCE's Gender Action Plan and looks forward to Greek efforts in this area.

Like Greece, Canada recognizes the importance of keeping the OSCE dynamic and utilizing our strengths in addressing new challenges in our region. To this end, we are pleased with the continued efforts made by our Organization at strengthening border management, particularly in Central Asia, and in seeking the OSCE's deeper engagement with Afghanistan, notably on capacity-building.

In closing, Madame Chair, Canada would like to express its gratitude to the outgoing Finnish Chairmanship for an outstanding job in 2008. We also wish to convey our best wishes to Minister Bakoyannis and her team in realizing their goals for a successful Greek Chairmanship in 2009.

Thank you – Merci – “Efharisto”