

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

--

**MESSAGE TO THE 15TH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE
Madrid, 29 November 2007**

I send warm greetings to all participants in the 15th Ministerial Council of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Ties between United Nations and the OSCE have always been strong, but today, they are stronger than ever. Whether in the security sector or in the human rights and economic fields, cooperation between our two institutions continues to set the standard that others aspire towards.

Over this past year, some of our most important collaborations centered once again on Kosovo. But we also joined hands to address many other security challenges in Central Asia, the Balkans and beyond.

Our combined resources and expertise supported the needs of tens of thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons. We promoted human rights, good governance and the rule of law. We sought to improve the lives of minority populations within their countries of citizenship. And we recently initiated discussions to establish closer links between the UN Alliance of Civilizations and the OSCE to promote better understanding between different ethnic and religious groupings.

Similarly, our economic and environmental cooperation has gone from strength to strength. The partnership between the OSCE and UN Economic Commission for Europe, in particular, has become a model for linking conflict prevention to the underlying socio-economic drivers of unrest. And your growing ties with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime have helped us advance on such crucial fronts as terrorism, drugs and human trafficking.

Of course, the synergy between our Organizations extends well beyond individual ties, or specific field activities. Instead, our cooperation is grounded in the bedrock of shared values and a common vision. That is why we can, and must, identify better and more efficient ways to work together, to address existing as well as emerging needs, and to build better lives for people everywhere. In that spirit, I send you my best wishes for a most productive meeting.