

Canadian Delegation to the
Organization for Security & Cooperation
in Europe



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

**DELEGATION OF CANADA TO THE OSCE
STATEMENT ON AFGHANISTAN
DELIVERED BY FREDERICKA GREGORY, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES
736TH MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
23 OCTOBER 2008**

Canada deeply regrets that delegations were unable to reach an agreement on a draft decision for OSCE assistance to Afghanistan. As we have noted in the past, the situation in Afghanistan demonstrates the challenges of reconstruction – governance reform, economic development and improved security cannot be separated from each other. We were, and remain, pleased that the project proposals for OSCE activities in Afghanistan are focussed on the areas that meet the needs and wishes of the people and Government of Afghanistan.

We continue to hope that the OSCE and its participating States will continue their best efforts to ensure that the Ministerial Council Decision from Madrid concerning the OSCE's engagement with Afghanistan is carried out. We understand that "the door is not closed on this option", and that the CiO (Chairman in Office) will continue to work with all interested parties on implementing this Ministerial Decision.

Canada is strongly supportive of OSCE engagement inside the territory of Afghanistan and we supported all of the project proposals. In particular, we strongly supported proposals 15 and 16, which we know meet the needs and wishes of the Afghan Government for support and training inside of Afghanistan, projects which we note have the support of our Central Asian partners. We support the efforts of the Chair in Office to move ahead with the other projects and look forward to the strengthening of cooperation between our Central Asian partners and Afghanistan. We hope that the OSCE will make efforts to coordinate its activities with the UN and other international governments and organisations that are planning activities in the region.

Given the urgent nature of the situation and need for immediate action, we hope that the OSCE will be able to enter the initial stages of operations with minimal delay. Along these lines, we trust the OSCE will be able to elicit strong engagement and commitments from the many organisations and regional governing bodies involved in the proposed activities.

We believe that it is vital that the OSCE support the Afghan government in its efforts to bring stability and security to the country, so that development and reconstruction can take root in order that Afghanistan never again serves as a haven for terrorists.

Canada's commitment to this goal arises from a concern for the lives of all Afghan citizens, but equally from our recognition that Afghanistan's security is intrinsically linked to our own individual and collective security .

To ensure our success in Afghanistan, the international community needs to remain steadfast in its support for Afghanistan. We need to ensure that requisite resources are in place to respond to ongoing and emerging challenges. This involves support for security, governance and development efforts, as identified by the people and Government of Afghanistan.