

ENGLISH only

**Intervention by  
H.E. Mr. Virasakdi Futrakul,  
Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs,  
at the meeting between the OSCE Troika and Asian Partners for Cooperation,  
4 December 2015, at 09.00 – 10.00 hours.**

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Mr. Chairman,

Your Excellency Ambassador Vuk Žugić, Chair of the Permanent Council

Mr. Secretary-General of the OSCE, H.E. Lamberto Zannier

Excellencies,

1. First of all, I would like to express our thanks to the Government of Serbia for the warm hospitality extended to our delegation and the excellent arrangements of this meeting.
2. Let me also thank Switzerland for the active role as the Chair of the Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

3. This year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the OSCE Asian Partnership for Cooperation. This partnership has been instrumental for us in sharing and exchanging knowledge and experience on the issues of regional and global security.
4. Looking ahead, the *Declaration on Co-operation with the Asian Partners* adopted in Basel last year is a good basis for further strengthening cooperation between the OSCE and its Asian Partners in the future.
5. This year also marks 15 years since Thailand joined the OSCE as an Asian Partner. We are pleased to have played a part in sharing our experiences in various security challenges such as trafficking in persons and anti-narcotic drugs. In this connection, we look forward to renewing the anti-narcotic cooperation with Afghanistan
6. We also see the benefits of promoting greater dialogue between the OSCE and other multilateral forums in Asia.
7. As the only member state of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN in the OSCE, we are willing to be the bridge between ASEAN and the OSCE.

8. On this note, I would like to focus on a few areas where the OSCE and its Asian Partners can work together.
9. First, promoting tolerance and interfaith dialogue. The Southeast Asia region is home where three Great religions co-exist namely Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity. We should seek to promote mutual understanding and respect among the adherents of these three religions leading to moderation as an antidote to extremism.
10. In this connection, the OSCE and ASEAN should work together and share best practices on interfaith dialogue and religious tolerance and tackle the roots of extremism.
11. Second area for our cooperation is disaster management.
12. We welcome the fact that disaster risk reduction continues to be one of the OSCE's key agenda under the chairmanship of Serbia.
13. This is consistent with what we are doing in Asia. We have several centres in Asia that deal with disaster management, such as the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center in Bangkok, the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management in Jakarta and the Asian Disaster Reduction Center in Kobe.
14. In Thailand's case, in 2011 when we experienced a severe flood, we see disaster reduction and preventive measures and preparedness plan essential to minimize economic and social losses. An effective early warning system and international cooperation are also needed.
15. I see the benefits in exploring the possibility of sharing of experiences and best practices between OSCE missions and programmes dealing with disasters and relevant centres in Asia.
16. Third is human trafficking, which poses a threat to human security and is related to other trans-boundary challenges facing us, such as irregular migration.
17. For Thailand, we are taking a comprehensive approach to combatting human trafficking. We are also stepping up cooperation with other countries to address the issue of irregular migration in the Indian Ocean. As a matter of fact, Thailand is now hosting the second special regional meeting on this issue in Bangkok.
18. Thailand joined the other ASEAN Member States in signing the ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children last month. Therefore, human trafficking is certainly another area where we can have an exchange of best practices and lessons learnt.

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,

19. The annual OSCE-Asian Conference is the key forum for OSCE Participating States and the Asian Partners to exchange views on how to enhance cooperation between the OSCE and its Asian Partners, as well as relevant security arrangements in Asia. Effective follow-up is needed to translate our discussion into concrete cooperation.
20. We congratulate the Republic of Korea on the success of the 2015 OSCE-Asian Conference in Seoul last June which provided us with valuable concrete recommendations for further action.
21. In this regard, we commend Switzerland for coming up with the perception paper to highlight the key outcomes of the Conference that require follow-up. This approach should be continued for future OSCE-Asian Conferences, so that we have a reference document to guide us in our future cooperation activities.
22. As Thailand will host the OSCE-Asian Conference on 6-7 June next year, we will coordinate closely with Serbia, the incoming Chair of the OSCE Asian Contact Group, and the OSCE Secretariat on the arrangements and substantive preparations.
23. Thailand plans to propose three topics focusing on the human dimension as for the agenda of the conference namely 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Human Trafficking and Migration, Gender Equality and Empowerment. We welcome any suggestions and look forward to your kind support, especially in nominating speakers. Details about the programme and agenda will be conveyed at the earliest opportunity.
24. Thailand will work closely with all colleagues to ensure that next year's Conference will give us fruitful outcomes
25. Thank you and we look forward to welcoming all of you to Thailand the land of smile.

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