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**Chair of the Informal Open-ended Group of Friends of the CiO
on the Implementation of OSCE Commitments and Activities on
Combating Terrorism**

ENGLISH only

Mr. Chairman

Let me begin by thanking the Chair for inviting me to address the ASRC focusing on the work of the Informal Open-ended Group of Friends of the Chair on Assistance on the Implementation of OSCE Commitments and Activities on Combating Terrorism.

On the basis of the fact that combating terrorism is the political priority of the OSCE and with the view to strengthen our work in the fight against terrorism the Chairman in Office decided in February to establish this open ended working group in order to create a focal point for the implementation by the participating states of the commitments this Organisation has taken on itself, in Bucarest, in Bishkek and then in Porto. Commitments that, like no others, span the three dimensions of the OSCE.

In this endeavours the Group has been superbly assisted by the Activity against Terrorism Unit of the Secretariat under the leadership of its director Mr. Brian Woo.

The point of departure has been to promote the full implementation of the UN Security Council resolution 1373, the 12 UN Conventions and Protocols related to terrorism and completion of the Financial Task Force Self assessments on compliance with the eight special Recommendations on Terrorist Financing.

To realize this objective the major emphasis has been on identifying ways to provide practical assistance and support for the implementation of existing commitments. A crucial part of this work is to raise awareness of the problems, identify possible impediments and obstacles and lay the necessary groundwork for ensuring that any necessary assistance is provided through the means that this organizations has.

There are various reasons why participating states are unable to fulfil their commitments. Implementation requires resources, high level of awareness of the complexity of the matter and of developing legal, technological, and enforcement related trends. In my view, the issue of non-implementation does not reflect a lack of political will, or a lack of respect for the commitments.

One of the core issues in the implementation strategy is to keep up transparency and as much coordination as possible between the international organisations contributing to this issue. As you are well aware of the OSCE recognises without qualification the UN as the overall framework for addressing terrorism. It should be a priority to solidify further the direct cooperation with the Counter Terrorism Committee of the Security Council. There is already extensive cooperation and coordination in place, with CTC, with UNODC, CoE, that can be further increased.

The Group of Friends has produced some modest proposals on intensified outreach and cooperative measures that aim to facilitate implementation. But it is important to note that OSCE institutions and bodies are already cooperating and assisting the participating

states.

New ideas on reinforcing the implementation process have been introduced in the Group. In that context I can mention that the Activity against Terrorism Unit is preparing a „Food for Thought“ paper on the possible contents of a Best Practice Guide on OSCE anti-terrorism activities.

Preparations are already under way in the Secretariat to establish a network of national contact points on anti - terrorism. Such a network can either be developed on a voluntary basis through the ATU or put on a more committal basis by a decision of the Permanent Council.

Other suggestions have come up in the work that are belong more to the purview of the FSC and relate to commitments in article 28 of the OSCE Charter on Preventing and Combating Terrorism, in particular as regards fight against proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

There are many commitments in the three OSCE action plans that I hve not touched upon, but might be introduced in the Group of Friends, such as the role of our Missons, policing, borde r security and countering financing of terrorism and trafficking in all its aspects. There is a lot of work being done in assistance on these aspects of counter-terrorism, but more can and needs to be done.

Mr. Chairman, what I have reported to you seems very technical in nature. Of course it is important to be practical, but we must be very clear as not to divorce these practical measures from their political anchor. To the contrary we need to reinforce our political focus on the issues of implementation, accompanied by clarity and effectiveness as to the practical work of our institutions and bodies. Presently, we need a reality check in order to avoid seeking to develop too many new mechanisms and programs, that will, I am afraid, risk the danger of duplication and blur priorities. We need to stand firmly on our two feet and focus on what the participating states have committed themselves to do and implement it. That is were the new thinking should come in, in implementation.