



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Opening Statement

by the Secretary General of the OSCE, H.E. Ambassador Ján Kubiš,
at the
OSCE-Korea Conference 2005: New Security Threats and a new Security Paradigm
Seoul, 25-26 April 2005

Your Excellency, Dr. Dimitrij Rupel, OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia,

Your Excellency, Mr. Chun Yung-Woo, Deputy Minister for Policy Planning and International Organizations, MOFAT, Korea,

Mr. Co-Chairmen, Ambassador Boris Frlec, Head of OSCE Task Force, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Slovenia, and Mr. Kim Won-Soo, Director-General for Policy Planning, MOFAT, Korea,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to participate here today at the inauguration of the second OSCE-Korea Conference. I would like to convey my most sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Korea for welcoming us and hosting this joint Conference in Seoul. Special thanks to representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Embassy in Vienna, who have provided excellent co-operation, professional backing and assistance for the successful launching of this event.

I would like to limit my statement to a few remarks.

First of all, I would like to praise the relevance of today's event. This conference was organized at the request of the Republic of Korea, in co-ordination with Asian Partners for Co-operation,

and on a topic which is of particular importance to our host Country. It is a timely event, in particular when taking into account the context – the stalled six-party talks and nuclear threat emanating from DPRK. It is, however, a topic of great importance to the OSCE, as well, because of the relevance and prominence of new security threats on the OSCE agenda and interdependence of security in the globalised world.

Secondly, it is necessary to note the regularity of conferences with our Asian Partners for Cooperation and in particular focused agenda of the meetings organized in Seoul. Here I would like to recollect the first OSCE-Korea Conference in 2001 and a high-level workshop in 2003 when we discussed the applicability of OSCE CSBMs in Northeast Asia, and possibilities of initiating a multilateral, regional dialogue on security and confidence and trust-building in Northeast Asia. The OSCE on its side was pleased to share its rich expertise and experience in the politico-military area of its work, notably on CSBMs. This OSCE-Korea Conference provides an excellent opportunity to debate a broader range of issues. I only hope that in practice we will increasingly build on our previous meetings and their recommendations and will not treat every meeting as a stand-alone event, without a follow-up.

Thirdly, I welcome that today's event is highly representative. I am glad to see that so many OSCE participating States have responded positively to the invitation by our Host Country today and are here in great number. I welcome the presence of so many OSCE Partner States – Asian and Mediterranean – including Mongolia, our most recent Partner for Cooperation. I attach particular importance to the fact that so many ARF Countries have decided to join us in our discussion today. I welcome every opportunity to our contacts with ARF and hope that they will steadily expand. Finally, I am glad to see here representatives of international organizations.

Fourthly, this event also bears witness to the fact that the OSCE's experience gained through the comprehensive and co-operative approach to security which encompasses politico-military, economic and environmental and human dimensions, is considered to be increasingly relevant to other regions, also to Asia. On the other hand, we at the OSCE pay close attention to the security situation and approaches in Northeast Asia. This conference should therefore be seen in the context of previous OSCE events in Japan and Thailand, notably last year's OSCE-Japan conference on "The search for conflict prevention in the new security circumstances — European security mechanisms and security in Asia," as well as in the context of a forthcoming

expert meeting on trafficking in human being that will be hosted by Thailand in June this year. This way, we give, as appropriate, equal attention to all three dimensions of security and apply lessons learnt from our work in the context of Asia and our work with Asian Partners for Co-operation.

Lastly, this event testifies of the steady expansion of co-operation between the OSCE and its Partners for Co-operation. Over the years, the OSCE has highly valued its relations with the Asian Partners for Co-operation, and I am glad to note that our relations, especially in the past several years, continue to become strengthened. This was the wish expressed by our Ministers in Sofia last December, when they further recognized the increasing importance of the well-established co-operation and dialogue between the OSCE and its Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation with the adoption of its decision MC.DEC/17/04 on the OSCE and its Partners for Co-operation.

To give one example of a recent important initiative, in October 2004, the OSCE had deployed for the first time an Election Support Team (EST) to assist a Partner State -- Afghanistan that had become a Partner for Co-operation of the OSCE in 2003. The EST deployment paid tribute to the importance of democratic elections for furthering stability and ensuring sustainable development of Afghanistan. This OSCE's engagement was widely welcomed as an important contribution to the overall international effort in Afghanistan and I hope that the OSCE will take a similar pro-active stance concerning the forthcoming parliamentary elections in Afghanistan in September 2005.

Experience to-date has revealed that our partnership and co-operation is a worthwhile investment and an important factor in strengthening mutual security and stability. Rest assured that for the OSCE this partnership is as important and crucial as it is for the Partner States. By bearing in mind the specificity of each region, the OSCE and the Asian Partners for Co-operation must continue to build on our relations and move forward to new achievements. It is through continued dialogue and closer partnership that we can and will achieve success in dealing with new security threats. Together, we need to ensure that a new security paradigm is one of further co-operation and partnership.

Thank you for your attention.