

Check Against Delivery

Opening Remarks
As delivered by the Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council
H.E. Ambassador Vuk Žugić
2015 OSCE Asian Conference on the Changing Global Security Environment
and Visions of Multilateral Security Co-operation in Asia
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Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to address the distinguished participants of the 2015 OSCE Asian Conference. On behalf of the Serbian 2015 OSCE Chairmanship and of the Chairperson-in-Office the Foreign Minister Dačić, I would like to thank the Government of the Republic of Korea for kindly this important annual event. This is the fourth time that the OSCE community convenes here, and we are always happy to enjoy Korean hospitality. Allow me to express my special gratitude to Ambassador Song and his team in Vienna, and also to the OSCE Secretariat for the excellent organisation of this event.

The Serbian Chairmanship highly appreciates Korea's continued commitment to advance the enduring partnership between the OSCE and the Asian Partners for Co-operation. For many years now the Government of the Republic of Korea has been providing generous support to a number of OSCE activities.

Today's conference comes at a critical juncture for international security. The nature and the scale of the security challenges confronting the international community are rapidly evolving and increasingly complex. As the crisis in and around Ukraine demonstrates, traditional security

challenges remain. However, new transnational threats have emerged that also demand our attention:

- Radicalization and violent extremism are on the rise, as shown by the growing phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters. Although concentrated in certain regions, the security consequences of these threats are truly global.
- We are increasingly recognizing that information and communication technologies have the potential to damage inter-state relations, and that they could become a major international and regional security concern.
- And we may see an increase in natural disasters due to the far-reaching consequences of climate change.

I look forward to our discussions on these important topics today and tomorrow.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The OSCE participating States have adopted new tools and commitments to enable them – and the Organization itself – to address these new security threats proactively and effectively.

For example, as a follow-up to the 2014 Basel Ministerial Council Declaration on countering the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, the Serbian Chairmanship will hold an OSCE-wide Counter Terrorism Conference aimed at exploring ways to address this phenomenon and to respond to violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism.

The Basel Ministerial Council also adopted a Decision on Enhancing Disaster Risk Reduction that reinforces the OSCE commitments and strives to consolidate a policy framework for the Organization's further contribution in this area.

And as you might know, the OSCE was the first international organization to adopt confidence-building measures (CBMs) to reduce the risks of interstate conflicts that could stem from the use of information and communication technologies. We hope that these pioneering initial measures adopted at the 2013 Kiev Ministerial Council will be further expanded with the adoption of a new set of cyber CBMs.

Excellencies,

Let me turn now to the OSCE's model of co-operative security and whether it is relevant to other regions of the world, including the Asia-Pacific region. The OSCE as we know it today was not built overnight. It is the result of a long process which brought together countries that were politically and ideologically far apart. This year we are commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, a historic triumph of co-operation over conflict that set out the concept of comprehensive security that remains the hallmark of the OSCE. The ten principles of international security enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act formed the foundation of the European security architecture for decades. Although these principles have been violated, that does not take away their validity. We are working to restore universal and genuine respect for them and also to find ways to strengthen them.

It is true that the OSCE was not able to prevent the crisis in and around Ukraine, even though signals of growing mistrust and divisions had been visible for some time. It will take serious effort to reconsolidate co-operative security as a shared responsibility and common project. But thanks to its inclusive nature and its flexible set of conflict prevention and conflict management tools, the OSCE has proved to be the organization best suited to facilitate dialogue and joint action among countries with significantly divergent security perspectives and threat perceptions. In its response to the crisis in and around Ukraine, the OSCE has demonstrated its added value and reconfirmed its irreplaceable role with the European security architecture.

The transformation of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe – which produced the Helsinki Final Act and in the view of many helped to end the Cold War – into a permanent regional security organization shows that political will can enhance co-operation and foster security. Such a platform could serve as a prime venue for discussing critical regional security concerns and facilitating the peaceful resolution of disputes, based on agreed principles. Let me add here that the Helsinki Final Act paved the way for the adoption of a broad set of confidence- and security-building measures in the politico-military sphere. These CSBMs were intended to increase transparency and predictability and prevent unintentional conflicts in one of the most militarized regions of the world. It might be useful to explore their applicability to this part of the world.

In the face of increasing transnational threats, an ad hoc security structure could also facilitate co-operative solutions on issues that states cannot tackle alone, including organized crime; terrorism; trafficking in drugs, weapons and human beings; environmental challenges and cyber threats.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The OSCE has accumulated impressive experience on the issues we will discuss today and tomorrow. We are ready to share our experience with our Asian Partners, be it in Vienna or through the development of further contacts with regional institutions.

In this connection, I believe that the OSCE Asian Conference provides a timely opportunity to discuss the issues at hand in an open and pragmatic fashion. By sharing experiences and enhancing our co-operation we can certainly do more to successfully tackle the threats of our time.

Finally, I would like to reiterate my gratitude to our host, the Republic of Korea, for hosting today's conference. Let me wish you all fruitful discussions and a successful outcome of this event.

Thank you.