



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

**Director of the
Conflict Prevention Centre**

Vienna, 20 September 2013

**Opening Statement of the Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre,
Ambassador Adam Kobieracki, at the 2013 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
Warsaw, 23 September 2013**

Dear Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Janez;

As you can imagine – it is always a pleasure for me to come to Warsaw. But I am particularly delighted to be here again for the opening of the 2013 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. And I would like to thank you Janez, for having me here again the second year in a row.

I am addressing you, not only as Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre, but also as Deputy Head of the Secretariat with a message of appreciation and support from the Secretary General, who unfortunately cannot be here with us today as he is in New York for the UN General Assembly Meeting.

We in Vienna enjoy excellent co-operation with ODIHR and as you very well know, Janez, the Secretary General fully supports the work, the mandate and the autonomy of ODIHR – and so do I.

As you might recall, both the CPC and ODIHR are children of the 1990 Paris Charter. At those times, the CPC was an instrument of the first dimension, tasked to "assist the [CSCE] Council in reducing the risk of conflict", mainly of a military nature. However, at subsequent OSCE Summits in Helsinki, Budapest and Istanbul, as well as at various Ministerial Councils, further tasks were assigned to the CPC and I think it is fair to say that the CPC today is very much of a cross-dimensional nature.

While arms control and the support for the Forum for Security Co-operation are still an important element of the CPC's work, our focus has clearly shifted – much of our daily business now relates to aspects of conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict rehabilitation, which are mainly of a *non*-military nature and to a great extent relate to the issues you will discuss here over the next two weeks. The CPC today provides the key link between the Secretariat and the field operations – all of which work on Human Dimension issues and co-operate on many issues with ODIHR as well as with the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Representative on Freedom of the Media. Moreover the CPC has increased its efforts to review our conceptual basis and our toolbox across the conflict cycle in light of Ministerial Council Decision No. 3/11.

If you allow me, I would like to highlight just a few aspects which demonstrate the interlinkage between your agenda and our work on across the conflict cycle.

Just a week ago, we organized in Vienna a Security Days event on conflict resolution. As was repeatedly highlighted during that day, sustainable peace is not achievable without respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Sustainable peacebuilding requires that efforts in that respect focus on meeting the most immediate needs of people, building their confidence in, as well as, their commitment to peace, and helping to restore state legitimacy and effectiveness. Tolerance and non-discrimination, rule of law and protection of human and minority rights and democratic, inclusive political processes – to name just a few – are key ingredients of such a process.

Tomorrow, you will also discuss equality of women and men and prevention of violence against women. Both aspects are highly relevant for conflict resolution and sustainable peacebuilding. It is paramount that peace agreements include measures to ensure that the needs and concerns of women and girls are protected and their human rights are respected. In this regard, the participation of women and/or gender-sensitive mediators provides representation that can advocate for the inclusion of provisions and gender-balanced approaches in these agreements. Over the past months, the Gender Section of the OSCE Secretariat has put tremendous efforts into furthering the work on enhancing the role of women in mediation processes. On 24 October, Ambassador Beham and her team will launch a guidance note on gender responsive mediation processes at a special event in Istanbul. Within the CPC, we have fully integrated gender issues in our mediation-support work – in training and capacity building as well as with respect to the operational support that we offer. But much more could and should be done. It is important to address the impact of conflict on women in all stages of the conflict cycle as called for by UN Security Council resolution 1325. For instance, National Action Plans can assist governments in identifying responses to promote a secure environment for women and strengthen resilience to gender-based violence.

Another topic we discussed both last week and more intensely during a dedicated Security Days event last December – which I’m sure you will recall, Janez, as you were present – is reconciliation.

Reconciliation is key to sustainable peacebuilding. While one would have to look in each particular case to determine whether the time is ripe to engage in a reconciliation process, it seems to me that no one would argue with the fact that one has to engage in such a process at ONE point in time in order to achieve lasting peace. Now, reconciliation is a process which is closely linked to the question of truth and justice. As Janez rightly pointed out at last December “True reconciliation cannot happen by “forgetting” about or “burying” the past, thereby leaving the victims and their families without justice. Recent history within the OSCE area has shown that successful reconciliation was achieved when past crimes were addressed. On the other hand, where this did not happen, conflicts continued or re-emerged.”

Janez, if I might quote you again, you also reminded us that “reconciliation, and, by extension, a genuine security community in the OSCE area, can only be achieved through accountable and functioning democratic institutions. Thus, again, tolerance, rule of law and functioning democratic institutions are needed.

Dear Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

20 years have now passed since the first Human Dimension Implementation Meeting convened in Warsaw. Over the years, this meeting has evolved, developed and become the key event for all of us within and connected to OSCE work on Human Dimension issues. As I have tried to point out today, the issues you will discuss over the next two weeks are not isolated but interconnected. They are important building blocks for the primary scope of the OSCE: fostering security, peace and stability from Vancouver to Vladivostok and moving all residents of the OSCE area toward the building of a security community. While we have embarked in the OSCE on the Helsinki + 40 Process as a stepping stone towards this security community, I think it is worthwhile to remind ourselves that, while these discussions are important and necessary, it is the practical work done by ODIHR as well as by our field operations, the High Commissioner, and the Representative on Freedom of the Media, which matter most. Building a security community needs practical steps and real action, especially in the Human Dimension.

With this in mind and also in this spirit of tolerance, reconciling diverging views and striving towards the common purpose of a genuine security community, I wish you a successful and interesting Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2013.

Thank you for your attention!

Adam Kobieracki
Ambassador
Deputy Head of the OSCE Secretariat