

**STATEMENT BY THE OSCE CHAIRMAN IN OFFICE,  
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF SPAIN,  
MR. MIGUEL ANGEL MORATINOS CUYABÉ**

**Commission on Security and Co-operation in Europe United  
States Helsinki Commission Washington DC**

Mr Chairman,  
Distinguished Commissioners,

I thank you for this opportunity to speak before the United States Helsinki Commission. The Helsinki Commission plays a unique role as a forum for debate on the burning issues of the day facing the OSCE and the region. In so doing, this Commission pays unique tribute to the longstanding and

continued engagement by the United States with the OSCE and the values that underpin it.

The OSCE can only work with the full engagement of the participating States, their government, their parliaments and their societies. The United States, of course, has a special role to play.

This is an excellent moment to share with you some of the priorities and activities of the OSCE and the Spanish Chairmanship as we approach the Ministerial Council in Madrid at the end of November.

## **KOSOVO**

The Spanish Chairmanship and the OSCE have been supporting efforts to find a just and lasting formula that will contribute to the stability of the region. We have managed over the years to maintain a neutral and an unbiased position in what regards the status and all Kosovo communities recognise this.

While the OSCE is not directly involved in status negotiations, we are contributing to the process of creating the necessary conditions on the ground for the implementation the status settlement. We are ready to stay in Kosovo in order to focus on monitoring protection of rights of communities, particularly

regarding decentralisation and the protection of cultural and religious sites.

## **AFGHANISTAN**

The situation in Afghanistan continues to have a substantial impact on security in Central Asia. In this respect, the OSCE is considering a series of border management projects, particularly in Tajikistan. We hope to engage counterparts in Afghanistan in these border related activities.

## **KAZAKHSTAN**

As you know well, Kazakhstan has announced its aim to chair the OSCE. This bid has been welcomed by all members of the Organization. This is an excellent opportunity for Kazakhstan, Central Asia and the OSCE as a whole.

For now, there is no consensus regarding the date of the Chairmanship by Kazakhstan. As Chairman in Office, Spain is actively seeking to build a consensus amongst all OSCE States on this important decision for the organization.

## **GEORGIA**

In Georgia, in recent months, we have witnessed serious incidents both in Abkhazia, and in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict. These incidents are a cause for concern and stress the need to further efforts in promoting trust and cooperation.

In relation to the missile incident of the 6<sup>th</sup> of August, the Spanish Chairmanship has adopted a forward-looking approach and put forward proposals for concrete preventive measures to avoid similar incidents in the future which constitute a priority for the Spanish Chairmanship.

## **MOLDOVA**

The OSCE continues its work to facilitate a settlement of the Transnistrian issue in Moldova, through participation in the 5+2 format of negotiations. Along with the mediators from the Russian Federation and Ukraine, and the observers from the United States and the European Union, we have tried throughout our Chairmanship to convince the sides to return to negotiations as we share the conviction with other OSCE States that negotiations

in this format are the appropriate means to achieve a sustainable and lasting settlement, one that will give Moldova an excellent chance to develop and prosper.

### **NAGORNO-KARABAKH**

Regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the continued mediation efforts throughout the year by the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, with the active support of my Personal Representative, have not resulted in a breakthrough in the settlement process. Nevertheless the parties remain committed to continuing the negotiations.

### **CFE (TREATY ON CONVENTIONAL ARMED FORCES IN EUROPE)**

The Spanish OSCE Chairmanship notes with deep concern the uncertainties concerning the continued implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). We cannot afford to put at risk the hard-won gains in this field.

The OSCE Chairmanship calls on all States Parties to renew their efforts to display the necessary flexibility toward resolving outstanding Treaty-related issues in a spirit of openness, transparency, and mutual co-operation. The Ministerial Council in Madrid will be an opportunity to move the process forward.

### **TERRORISM**

The Spanish Chairmanship has placed anti-terrorism as a top priority on the OSCE agenda and has therefore organized four major conferences and a set of decisions are to be adopted at Madrid Ministerial.

### **ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION**

On economic and environmental security we have promoted a full fledged discussion, with a particular focus on the problems of land degradation and water management. The OSCE can act as a platform for dialogue and a network for co-operation on environmental security. Given the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security, it is only natural that the OSCE develop a profile on a question of such vital importance to us all.

### **HUMAN DIMENSION**

Spain has also placed the challenge of integrating diversity in pluralistic societies high on the OSCE agenda. This issue is one that goes to the heart of our pledge to build democratic states and societies. Diversity is today a fact for all of our societies – the challenge we face is to ensure strong participation by all individuals in our societies and within our democracies. In this respect the UN Alliance of Civilisations is a useful instrument to address diversity in different areas such as youth, education, media or migration.

The *OSCE Chairmanship Conference on intolerance and discrimination against Muslims* held in Cordoba on 9-10 October was a major initiative for our Chairmanship, and reflected our conviction that tolerance and non-discrimination should stand at the top of national and international priorities. I would add this conference follows from the *OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism and on Other Forms of Intolerance* held in 2005 also in Cordoba, as well as the *Bucharest Ministerial Meeting on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination* held earlier this year.

Promotion of gender equality and freedom of the media and fight against trafficking in human beings have been among our priorities. A long list of activities and seminars testify of it.

## **ODIHR - ELECTION OBSERVATION**

Over the years, the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has earned an international reputation for its leadership, professionalism and excellence in the critical area of election observation. The ODIHR's mission is much broader, encompassing a wide range of democratisation activities aimed at closing the gap between the commitments on paper and the reality on the ground in the participating States. ODIHR role is fundamental in OSCE. We have consistently supported its activities throughout our Chairmanship.

All OSCE countries have made commitments to democratic elections, and supporting a process that leads to democratic governance, including those related to international observation of elections. We have paid close attention to electoral observation during the Spanish Chairmanship. In this respect as the elections to the Duma are approaching we are still waiting for a Russian invitation to ODIHR to observe them in a way which will allow us to maintain our common high standards on election observation. If there is a danger in the debate on election observation, it is that

some participating States would like to shift the discourse away from commitments and their fulfilment, or lack of fulfilment. We find it unhelpful to call into question the well established OSCE practice on election observation which so far has proved most fruitful. In this respect it is of concern the announcement made by the Russian Representative in Vienna indicating that the invitation to observe Duma elections will be "à la carte".

## **PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY – ODIHR**

In this respect, I am very pleased that President Lennmarker testified before the Helsinki Commission on 18 October 2007

As a Member of Parliament myself, I can only stress that the political expertise of parliamentarians, along with the responsibilities incumbent on elected officials for ensuring transparency, accountability and public confidence, provides a rich experience to complement the broad range of electoral expertise represented in election observation activities such as that undertaken by the ODIHR.

I am pleased to say that the OSCE Chairmanship, together with the leadership of the Parliamentary Assembly, has ensured the constructive nature of the debate on electoral issues, without trying to change the fundamental nature of the OSCE as an intergovernmental organization, or that of the ODIHR as a key institution mandated with election observation.

The OSCE Chairmanship has invested efforts to establish a cooperation which has produced a solid record in the OSCE region. We should seek to maintain this at all cost. It is vital for the values to which we have subscribed. It is vital also as the flagship activity of the Organization.

The relationship between the ODIHR and the PA must necessarily be of a special nature: it is a relationship of partnership, and respect for each other's contribution --not of competition.

## **MINISTERIAL COUNCIL AND CONCLUSION**

The OSCE to-do list is expanding. It is only natural that our agenda for the OSCE Ministerial Council in Madrid at the end of this month is ambitious. Over the remaining time, the Spanish Chairmanship will be seeking actively to garner consensus on

vital decisions, including future Chairmanships, the role of OSCE in environmental security, Convention on legal personality of the OSCE, strengthening pluralistic societies, deepening co-operation in counter-terrorism and the fight against trafficking in human beings. Protracted conflicts will be on the Ministerial agenda as well as OSCE Missions on the field.

(It is clear that the ambitious goals that the participating States have set collectively for the OSCE must be matched by

adequate resources. I must be frank here: Insisting on reducing resources, while increasing mandates, does not do service to the values that rightly underpin the OSCE).

There is nothing quite like the OSCE. Neither a military alliance nor an economic union, this Organization brings together on a permanent basis fifty-six countries, from Vancouver to Vladivostok, around the shared vision. This vision was born in Helsinki, it was strengthened in Paris and Istanbul. Certainly, the work of the United States Helsinki Commission is a vital part of the pursuit of this vision. I thank you for your support and dedication.