

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY!

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Statement by H.E. Lene Espersen

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Mr Chairman,

First of all, as many speakers before me, I would like to express my gratitude to our Kazakh hosts for their hospitality.

Mr. Chairman,

I am extremely pleased to note that we at today's summit focus on recommitting us to the important commitments of the Helsinki Final Act. The core values and principles of the OSCE are under pressure, and it is therefore crucial at this point in time that we, the participating states, do our utmost to protect and strengthen those values and principles.

Where do we want to go from here? How do we see the OSCE of the future? We are living in a changing security environment, and like other international organizations the OSCE needs to change and adapt accordingly. To accomplish this, we need to improve the "tool box" and the mechanisms of the OSCE in order to make the organization more efficient, up-to-date and relevant. The OSCE must be given the sufficient mandate, means and mechanisms to act in times of crisis. We must prevent further conflicts from emerging.

Mr. Chairman,

The human dimension is an invaluable part of the OSCE's comprehensive security concept. True security entails not only peaceful relations between states, but also security for the individual through the strengthening of human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law. This lies at the heart of the Copenhagen Document from 1990 and was also at the centre of discussion at the Copenhagen Conference earlier this year. A conference organized jointly with the Kazakh Chairmanship. Our discussions in Copenhagen stressed that while progress has been made, much more must be done to strengthen the implementation of our commitments and to prevent backslides. Special attention should be given to the rule of law – including the fight against torture and the death penalty as well as media freedom, which unfortunately is under increasing pressure.

Let me stress that the activities of the Parliamentary Assembly remain of key importance in many fields not least with regard to election observation missions. Likewise, the close cooperation between the PA and ODIHR is crucial.

I would also like to stress the importance of including civil society in our further discussions. The NGOs have a unique perspective, working "on the ground" in our countries, and they give valuable and much appreciated inputs to our discussions. I trust that these organizations will be able to

participate freely and on an equal footing in the future in our discussions within the human dimension.

Mr. Chairman,

Right from the outset, the OSCE has played an important part when it comes to ensuring security, stability and peace in Europe and the rest of the OSCE area. This has not least been done through conventional arms control and by confidence and security building measures. I have high hopes that we will be able to agree on giving political guidance for a substantial update of the Vienna Document, which will enable us to further reduce the risks of mistrust, miscalculations and misperceptions.

Mr. Chairman,

While we focus on future challenges, we should not forget that unresolved conflicts still haunt the continent of Europe. I hope this summit will lead to new momentum and a renewed effort to solve these protracted conflicts. I am, of course, talking about Georgia, Moldova/Transnistria and Nagorno-Karabakh. We must never grow so accustomed to these conflicts being part of our agenda that we end up regarding them as some kind natural state of affairs in Europe.

Mr. Chairman,

An area, in which the OSCE should play a complementary role, is energy and the security implications of climate changes. We need to realize that the question of energy is part of OSCE's comprehensive approach to security. Energy – and a failing supply of it – does have an impact on overall peace, security and stability in the OSCE area. We need to discuss and further develop rules and principles for international cooperation on energy security.

Deepened cooperation on energy holds great economic and environmental benefits for all of us. The aim must be to ensure safe, sustainable and affordable energy for all. One way of doing this could be to promote renewable energy solutions by building and sharing information on renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency.

Mr. Chairman,

The 21st century not only brings new opportunities for cooperation, communication and interaction. Unfortunately, it also brings new challenges and new threats. Threats which pay no respect to national borders. Threats like trafficking, terrorism and extremism. If we want to enhance the protection of our citizens and improve their daily lives, it is not sufficient only to focus on the OSCE area. We also need to focus and do more in countries outside the OSCE area. In particular, I am thinking about our Partner for Cooperation, Afghanistan.

Last night I arrived here, coming from a visit to Afghanistan, and I would like to use this opportunity to stress the need for continued international support. The OSCE must give complementary support to the efforts of other relevant actors, like the EU, NATO and the UN, or NGOs.

OSCE assistance is not only of value to Afghanistan. It is also in our own interests, since an unstable Afghanistan will have security implications for its neighbors as well as for the rest of the OSCE area. In short: A secure, stable and prosperous Afghanistan is one of the best guarantees for further security, stability and peace in the OSCE area.

Mr. Chairman,

The OSCE needs to do more to further enhance the capacity of Afghanistan's immediate neighbors to handle the security challenges posed by their proximity to Afghanistan. One way of doing this is through the Border Management Staff College, which was opened last year in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. It is with pleasure that today I can announce the Danish government's decision to pledge 1 million Euro for strengthening the border management in Tajikistan, including support to the College.

Also in Kyrgyzstan, the OSCE has offered its assistance to the authorities in order to reduce inter-ethnic tensions and improve the rule of law in the Southern part of the country. I am therefore pleased that a solution has been found that will enable advisors to be deployed as part of the new Community Security Initiative in order to assist the Kyrgyz police.

Mr. Chairman,

We have come a long way since the signing of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975. But further important work lies ahead. I have full trust in that this summit will adopt an Action Plan in order to take all our commitments, new ideas and initiatives of this summit into the future. Furthermore I am confident that the upcoming Lithuanian chairmanship will make sure that the Action Plan gets off to a good start on implementation, and that we will have substantial progress in all three dimensions, when we review the Action Plan at the ministerial meeting in Vilnius next year.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.