



**OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
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Mr. Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure and an honour to address the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly on the subject matter of countering terrorism. Last time you invited me to speak about the OSCE's role in countering terrorism was in **Budva, Montenegro, on 13-15 October 2013**. Since then, transnational threats to security, in particular terrorism, have continued to evolve, presenting new challenges in the OSCE region and beyond.

The recent terrorist attacks in Paris and Copenhagen, the barbaric executions of hostages by ISIL in Libya and Western Iraq, other horrific acts of terrorism around the world, unfortunately too numerous to mention all – are constant reminders that the only way to effectively confront terrorism is to strengthen counter-terrorism co-operation at all levels.

Within the OSCE context, we need to tackle terrorist threats together, as a security community.

What is our current mandate to counter terrorism?

As the largest regional organization, under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, the OSCE plays an important role in addressing terrorism. Participating States have stressed that counter-terrorism must build upon a comprehensive approach to security in the three OSCE dimensions of security: the politico-military, economic and environmental, and human dimensions. They have unanimously reaffirmed in the **OSCE Consolidated Framework for the Fight against Terrorism** (December 2012) and on a number of other occasions their

firm rejection of the identification of terrorism with any race, ethnicity, nationality or religion.

This comprehensive approach makes our Organization **particularly well suited to address the evolving tactics, trends and manifestations of terrorism, such as kidnapping for ransom committed by terrorist groups (KfR) and the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters (FTF)**. Two Declarations were adopted at the Ministerial in Basel last year in this regard.

What are the OSCE activities to counter terrorism?

OSCE provides a unique platform for dialogue among counter-terrorism policy experts and practitioners, which is essential to foster co-operation.

Since 2012, our Organization convenes annual OSCE-wide counter-terrorism conferences:

- In 2012 on **Strengthening Regional Co-operation**, Criminal Justice Institutions and Rule of Law Capacities to Prevent and Combat Terrorism and Radicalization that Leads to Terrorism ;
- In 2013 on **Priority Issues for International Co-operation in the Fight against Terrorism** ;
- In 2014 on the **Role of the OSCE in Addressing Current Terrorist Challenges**.

The OSCE also organizes sub-regional and national activities to promote good practices and networking among experts, to raise awareness and to build capacity among governments, civil society and businesses.

Let me give you some brief examples.

To **counter Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism (VERLT)**, OSCE promotes a multi-dimensional and multi-stakeholder approach, including inter-agency collaboration and public-private partnerships. Over the past three years, we have organized ten national seminars together with OSCE field operations.

Last year, we published a guidebook on “Preventing Terrorism and Countering VERLT: A Community Policing Approach”. It provides policy and practical guidance on how to leverage police-public partnerships in support of terrorism prevention.

Travel Document Security programme sets a framework to assist participating States in the issuance of machine readable travel documents in line with international standards. We also offer concrete training and technical assistance to enhance the control of travel documents at the borders, including detection of forged and fraudulent passports, maintain contacts with the INTERPOL on lost and stolen travel documents.

Suppressing Terrorism Financing is a cross-dimensional Programme. Prevention of Abuse of Non-Profit Organizations for the purposes of terrorist financing is addressed under it from politico-military and economic dimensions.

Countering the use of the Internet for Terrorist Purposes Together with the Representative on Freedom of the Media an e-learning platform is being developed.

Public Private Partnerships. A Guidebook on Good Practices in the Protection of Non-nuclear Critical Energy Infrastructure, has been published. Based on this publication trainings on lessons learned from Non-nuclear Critical Energy Infrastructure Protection are being developed.

What are the plans for this year?

Next week, we will hold a workshop for Central Asia on *Regional Co-operation and Effective Responses to the Phenomenon of Foreign Terrorist Fighters* in Dushanbe (24-26 February). This would be the first exchange of views and experiences in the region on the phenomenon of FTFs.

In May, the Secretary General will be hosting a **Security Days** event in Vienna to address how the OSCE could *promote tolerance and non-discrimination as a way to help prevent the growing challenge of violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism.*

This year OSCE-wide counter-terrorism conference will take place on 30 June - 1 July 2015 in Vienna, with a focus on *Countering the Incitement of Foreign Terrorist Fighters and Preventing their Recruitment and Departure.* This conference could serve as OSCE contribution to the international summit against violent extremism, to be held in the margins of the UN General Assembly in September. We look forward to continue our important co-operation with the Special Representative of the President of the Parliamentary Assembly on counter-terrorism in preparations for the Conference.

In addition to these activities, we will continue to support and work with our field operations in the design and implementation of awareness-raising and capacity-building activities at the national level.

What role can the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly play?

Parliamentary Assembly and its members are well placed to support and actively promote the implementation of OSCE counter-terrorism commitments, to encourage co-operation and co-ordination both within States and between States to prevent and combat terrorism.

Parliamentarians have a particularly crucial role to play in promoting the **international legal framework against terrorism**. Participating States have committed to become parties to the universal anti-terrorist conventions and to implement obligations contained therein.

As of 31 October 2014, the average ratification of the 18 Universal Anti-terrorism Instruments across the OSCE area was 13,4 instruments per participating State; this is slightly over a world average of 11,7. Counter-terrorism capacity across the OSCE would be considerably strengthened if the Parliamentary Assembly and its Members leveraged their influence to advocate participating States becoming parties to ALL these instruments.¹

Conclusion

To conclude my remarks, let me stress that OSCE has a solid mandate to counter terrorism. Based on this mandate concrete activities are taken and planned. PA has an important role to play to strengthen overall capacity of the OSCE to respond to the terrorist threats and challenges.

As law-makers, parliamentarians can support national counter-terrorism frameworks based on the rule of law and compliant with international law. As political leaders, you may advocate national consensus and solidarity against terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations.

¹ There are only 8 participating States parties to all UATIs: Austria, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, and Switzerland. The three UATIs out of 18 are not in force yet: the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material; the 2010 Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Relating to International Civil Aviation (Beijing Convention); and the 2010 Protocol Supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft.

I look forward to working closely with all of you, and I thank you for providing me this opportunity to address the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security today.

Thank you for your attention.