



Presentation to the OSCE PA General Committee on Political Affairs and Security by the
Chairperson of the Security Committee,

Ambassador Victoria González Román

Vienna, 23 February 2018

Mr Chairperson,

Thank you very much for inviting me to address Members of this General Committee on Political Affairs and Security of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, in my capacity as Chair of the Security Committee of the OSCE Permanent Council. It is an honour and a privilege. This is an excellent opportunity, I think, to look at ways to strengthen the already existing good cooperation between the Parliamentary Assembly and the governmental structures of the Organisation, to identify common ground in which we can work together and create synergies.

Parliamentarians and national parliaments play a key role in the efforts success, in security field. As Chairpersons of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security of the Parliamentary Assembly and the Security Committee of the Permanent Council, we are in a privilege position to impulse our common goal of a reinforced cooperation between the intergovernmental and the parliamentarian dimensions of the OSCE. You can count of Spain`s support and my personal commitment on that endeavour.

Let me state from the outset that Women in the security sector and how the participation of women contributes to enhance the integral concept of security is going to be a priority of the works of the Security Committee throughout the year. The fact that the Italian Chairmanship-in-office has chosen a woman to chair the Security Committee for the first time in the history of this Organisation, speaks by itself of the high priority that the CiO gives to enhancing the role of women in the security sector. This will be a cross-cutting issue that we will introduce in all the discussions of the Committee and that will permeate the debates all along the year.

Mr. Chairman,

To prepare the Work Programme of the Security Committee, my starting point has obviously been the priorities and objectives of the Chair in Office. My main aim is to

support the Italian Chairmanship in this field to strengthen the OSCE Security Dimension. At the same time, I have also relied on the substantial work done by the Austrian Chairmanship last year, and I have held extensive consultations with the Secretariat, previous chairs of the Security Committee, and with many delegations. I want to thank them all for their valuable insights and views. I will continue this practise of holding consultations with all interested delegations during the year. I look forward to receiving their valuable feedback to incorporate it to the Work Programme of the Security Committee, also in view of the possible deliverables for the Ministerial Council in December. I want our discussions in the Committee to be as inclusive and constructive as possible. I intend to make the motto of the Italian OSCE Chairmanship in 2018 “Dialogue, Ownership and Responsibility” the guide of our work in the Security Committee.

In the extensive consultations that I have held, a general perception seems to have emerged that illicit trafficking is among the most serious threats to security and stability in our region. Weapons, drugs, double use materials, cultural heritage or even human beings, are all subject to the risk of trafficking. These are cross-border phenomena with close linkages with transnational organised crime and terrorism. It is of paramount importance to identify and weaken these links and to enhance our efforts in this field in the OSCE region.

For this reason, the overarching topic in the agenda of the Security Committee this year will be the combat of trafficking and its links with terrorism and organised crime, thus contributing to further develop our ongoing cooperation in this area. We will also address the issue of money laundering, as a cross-cutting phenomenon that impacts the practical totality of all the other criminal activities. The real challenge today in the fight against organised crime is the recovery of the assets that feed criminal organisations and their reintegration and devolution to society. That’s why we have also included it in our agenda for this year.

Within this framework, our three main areas of work will be:

- Trafficking, notably of human beings, weapons, drugs and cultural heritage, as cross border phenomena that link with transnational organized crime groups, international money laundering and corruption networks, and terrorist organisations

- secondly terrorism, especially to address border security and information sharing to counter the threats posed by the return of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) and the financing of terrorist activities. We hope to have a thorough discussion on this, also in view of the UNSC resolution 2396 on “Border Security and Information Sharing” that was adopted on 21 December 2017, as a contribution of the OSCE to the implementation of this

important resolution. In the field of terrorism, we also want to focus on the risk of weapons of mass destruction falling in the hands of terrorist and criminal groups, as a new topic to be discussed in the Security Committee, not from the angle of Non-proliferation and Disarmament, which belongs more to the FSC, but from the one of terrorist groups, organised crime and illicit trafficking;

- and thirdly Cybersecurity, where we plan to have a meeting devoted to *Confidence-building in the cyber arena: the role of private-public partnerships to counter cyber security threats*, to explore ways to better involve the private sector when addressing these challenges. We will also have the usual reporting by the Chair of the IWG on Cybersecurity, to update us on the work of the group.

The opening session of the Security Committee took place on February 12th. We had a very interesting presentation by the Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, H.E. Mr. Rakhimzoda Ramazon Hamro on SSG/R and Police-Reform in Tajikistan and more broadly on the security situation in Central Asia. There was also a very insightful presentation by the Slovak Ambassador, H.E. Radomir Bohac, in his capacity as Chair of the OSCE Group of Friends on SSG/R, and a very opportune intervention of the Special Representative of the Parliamentary Assembly in Vienna on the importance of democratic control of the security sector. Apart from raising awareness on the security challenges that the OSCE raises in the Central Asian region, the discussion highlighted how SSG/R is enshrined in the concept of comprehensive security, making it a core element of the OSCE's work and how the OSCE can be a good platform to drive forward a better understanding of this concept.

After this opening session, the committee will have eight working sessions. Seven of them will be thematic sessions, focused on a specific topic in line with the main priorities identified by the CiO in its Programme. We will also continue with the practise of previous chairs to hold joint meetings with the other two committees, the Human Dimension Committee and the Economic and Environmental Committee, to address security issues through a comprehensive approach. We plan to have a joint meeting of the three committees in July and a meeting of the Security Committee and the Human Dimension Committee in May. The specific topics still need to be defined but I can advance you that for the meeting of the three committees we are considering with the other Chairs to combine the ideas of combatting illicit trafficking, human trafficking and migratory roads, as well as the protection of women victims of such trafficking. The one with the Human Dimension Committee, as the Ambassador of the United Kingdom advanced yesterday in her speech at the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, will touch upon women and security, and how the persistence of violence

against women is one of the most grave and persistent violations against human rights that needs to be prevented and combatted with stronger measures. Lastly, the meeting in November will focus on the preparations and the deliverables for the Ministerial Council in December.

Mr Chairman,

In the implementation of this Work Program we will aim at having well prepared, focused and substantive discussions. To maximise the benefit of the meetings, we look forward to an active participation from delegations, the Secretariat and the OSCE executive structures, as well as the autonomous institutions. To the extent possible, we will incorporate to the discussions representatives from Field Missions with relevant programs or experience in that particular topic, to get the more practical and operational perspective from the field. Our work will be practical oriented towards forging a common understanding on how to improve the role of the OSCE as a platform for the exchange of experiences and best practises and force multiplier in terms of training and capacity building to address these challenges. We also want it to be results oriented, to identify the issues and topics of common interests that can serve us for the results that we would like to achieve at the end of the year.

We also want to incorporate more the Partners for Cooperation to the discussions of the Security Committee, both with experts and voluntary reporting, when relevant to the topic. We feel that the Security Committee can benefit from their views on regional security and national best practises. Finally, we will continue with the practise of the Committee of voluntary reports on counter-terrorism related commitments, and we will also have the presentation of quarterly reports by the TNTD. Together with the TNTD we will ensure that all relevant parts of the organisation are invited to participate.

On top of the committee meetings, I will support the Italian chairmanship whenever relevant for the Security dimension. Participating in the winter session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has already been an important step. I am also looking forward to the ASRC, the chairmanship's Counter-Terrorism Conference, and the Cybersecurity Conference. Other important hallmarks will be the Annual Police Experts Meeting and the Annual Meeting of the OSCE Border Security and Management National Focal Points Network. All these events will be discussed in the Security Committee. We will also organise a side event later in the year on "Youth, Peace and Security", building on the valuable work done by the Austrian Chairmanship on VERLT and giving the voice to youth representatives on how to develop positive narratives to counter violent extremism and radicalisation on-line.

Mr. Chairman,

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has different committees and bodies that are relevant to the work of the Security Committee: this General Committee on Political Affairs and Security; the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions; the ad hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism; as well as the ad hoc Committee on Migration. It also has a wealth of tools in terms of expertise and democratic control of the security sector that can benefit and enrich the work of the Security Committee. I wish to identify areas in which we can join our efforts and work together in order to further strengthen the fruitful cooperation that already exists between our respective organisms.

Your personal commitment to cooperation with the OSCE and your interest in current issues of special importance such as migration is a great asset for that purpose.

Thank you again for inviting me to address the Committee and I'm now at your disposal for the debate, or any question you would like to raise.