



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSCE Centre in Ashgabat**

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SESSION 1

Regional security, fighting against terrorism, trafficking in human beings: the role of the OSCE and regional cooperation

Dear Members of the PA OSCE,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As threats of terrorism and human trafficking and threats to security continue to be high in the Central Asian region, the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat undertakes various activities to support the efforts of the Government of Turkmenistan to counter these threats. The issues specified as the topic of Session 1 are also the issues with direct relevance to the mandate of the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat and our Centre has been dealing with these issues already for years.

In my statement today I will highlight successively the activities of the Centre in all subjects covered in Session 1.

I will start with **border security** for two reasons – *first* because Turkmenistan as a neighbouring state to Afghanistan is experiencing the challenges to its security from the instability in its southern neighbour and *second* – because border security issues have been recognized by both the Government of TKM and the OSCE Centre as an area of cooperation where the OSCE is recognized as a leading organization with expertise in this area. I want to give you some examples:

Building upon 4 specialized trainings performed in 2013, the Centre organized in the fall of 2014 – in the framework of a large Extra budgetary project – a 45-day General Border Patrol Course for the benefit of 20 officers from the State Border Service of Turkmenistan. The course took place at the Imamnazar BCP, which is located at the Turkmen-Afghan border, and provided Patrol Leaders from the State Border Service with knowledge and skills at the instructor-level and at the team leader-level in tactical patrolling.

The Centre continued this project in 2015 by conducting a three-week Border Management and Threat Assessment training course and a two-week Train-the-Trainer course again at the Imamnazar BCP. The courses – attended by graduates of the General Border Patrol Course from the previous fall – were designed to enhance the capacities of personnel from the Border Service in collecting information as well as conducting searches, surveillance, and threat assessments at the border. I would like also to underline the cooperation that the CiAsh had with the OSCE Office in Tajikistan in the framework of this project.

The Border Guard Service of Turkmenistan and the project donors have expressed interest in extending this extra-budgetary project into 2016. Our impression is that the approval and successful implementation of this large project would not have been possible without the trust built during the successive activities of the Centre in the area of border security and management during previous years.

Speaking about the OSCE Centre's activities in **fighting against terrorism** I would like to mention the work in 2012 and 2013 in enhancing the knowledge of the Turkmen officials from the MoS, State migration Service and the Turkmen Airlines directly responsible for airport security. The international expert hired by Centre provided a master plan for the airport security of the two international airports in Turkmenistan – in Ashgabat and Turkmenbashi. In 2014 and 2015 the Centre organized training activities for law enforcement, security and legal officers to address topics such as counter-terrorism hostage negotiations tactics. The Centre's activities in the area of counter-narcotics are also directly related to the fight against terrorism. The Centre organized week-long trainings for officials from the MoI, customs and counter-narcotics Services in controlled delivery in 2014 and 2015. Two international trainers addressed conducting controlled delivery operations, different forms of controlled delivery crossing land borders, methods of technical observation used in investigation of trafficking in illicit narcotics as well as their employment in controlled delivery operations.

In the area of customs, the Centre organized training courses in April and July 2015 on examination and detection at borders for law enforcement officials from the Turkmen Customs, Border and counter-Narcotics Services. The five-day practical courses included and presented the OSCE Border Security Management Concept, common security challenges and modern ways of trafficking drugs and chemical, biological and radiological substances. The April courses were conducted in Lebap province (eastern Turkmenistan), while the July lectures were conducted in Dashoguz province (northern Turkmenistan), and included two days of practical exercises at the Dashoguz Avtoyollary border post.

The Centre's activities in addressing the fight against terrorism are not limited to the politico-military dimension only. The second dimension – the economic and environmental – is also contributing to this fight through providing the Turkmen officials with expertise in countering money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism. Since 2013, the Centre has had several activities in this regard. An international expert assisted the Turkmen authorities to prepare their new law on anti-corruption and anti-money laundering.

The activities described above have all been implemented with the involvement only of Turkmen official representatives despite the fact that many of them – especially in the area of border security – would have presented excellent examples for at least bilateral cooperation with Afghanistan or Uzbekistan. For different reasons **regional cooperation** in Central Asia is not regarded as a preferred option for addressing security challenges. However there are also some positive examples for – in June 2015, the Centre, together with the Secretariat's Strategic Police Matters Unit (SPMU), organized a Workshop on International Cooperation in Criminal Matters, which was aimed at enhancing cooperation between the criminal justice systems of Turkmenistan and Afghanistan on fighting organized crime. Nineteen representatives of various Turkmen law enforcement agencies and five Afghan officials took part. And in March 2015, the Centre, together with the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), and the OSCE Transnational Threats Department/Action against Terrorism

Unit (TNTD/ATU), organized a Regional workshop on “Border Security and Management for Countering Terrorism”. The seminar also included a one-day training for border, customs and immigration officials of Central Asian countries on key issues related to integrated/cooperative border management, risk analysis and methods of preventing cross-border movement of terrorists.

Let me turn now to the problem of **combatting human trafficking** in Turkmenistan. Turkmenistan – as also other countries from Central Asia – is a source country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labour abroad in the textile, agricultural, construction and domestic service sectors as well as to sex trafficking. Residents of rural areas are most at risk of becoming trafficking victims. Turkey and Russia are the destinations of most Turkmen victims.

The involvement of the OSCE Centre in **combatting human trafficking** in Turkmenistan is limited mainly to provision of the technical support to the host country. Let me illustrate:

In 2009 and 2010, the Centre organized two conferences on trafficking in human beings attended by more than 80 representatives from the host country’s institutions and law enforcement agencies, international organizations, embassies and civil society representatives. In October 2009 the Centre facilitated an awareness-raising seminar on trafficking in human beings for 40 law enforcement officials from all regions of Turkmenistan.

Similarly, in 2013 the Centre organized two-day training course on Investigation and Prosecution of Suspected Trafficking Offenses, and Conviction and Punishment of Trafficking Offenders for Law Enforcement Agencies, the Judiciary and Defense Lawyers. A two-day course on “National Referral Mechanisms for Victims of Trafficking” was held in December 2012 in close cooperation with the ODIHR (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights).

In 2014, the Centre organized training for law enforcement and judiciary agencies, judges and defense lawyers on methods to prevent trafficking in human beings and introduced the models used in the UK, Serbia and Turkey.

The Centre also sponsors the regular participations of Turkmen officials (from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Office of Prosecutor General and State Migration Service) at the proceedings of the Alliance against Trafficking Conference, which is held on an annual basis.

Ladies and gentlemen,

These are some of the various activities that the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat is performing in implementation of its mandate. In the 16 years since the opening of the Centre, the OSCE staff has assisted the local authorities and the civil society to understand better the provisions of the OSCE, to implement the OSCE commitments and to use the knowledge accumulated in the OSCE institutions over the years. I think we had a beneficial cooperation and achieved good results.

Thank you