



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

**Secretary General Jan Kubis' Remarks to the 2nd UNCTC Special Meeting
with International, Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations**

7 October 2003, Washington, D.C.

The OSCE, as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, conducts its action against terrorism in close co-ordination with the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee (UNCTC). The Organization supports and complements the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1373 and other pertinent resolutions within its region by employing its comparative advantages in close co-operation with other international, regional and sub-regional organizations and initiatives as provided for in the OSCE Platform for Co-operative Security. In particular, I would highlight our joint efforts with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to strengthen regional standards of anti-terrorism legislation.

Recommendations and guidance from the UNCTC are communicated through an active exchange of information between the OSCE and the Committee through formal reporting, staff meetings and other contacts. They are vital to maintaining complementarity of the global counter-terrorism efforts and the relevance of the OSCE measures against the global background of evolving threats and responses. Since the last UNCTC Special Meeting on 6 March, the OSCE has engaged in cross-dimensional activities to implement its anti-terrorism goals. In addition to the regional implementation of the UNSCR 1373, the OSCE is engaging in specific efforts to address issues such as travel document security, man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) and small arms and light weapons (SALW). In doing so, we seek to address issues with practical security implications for the participating States. Indeed, the pertinence of the OSCE anti-terrorism effort to the real security needs of the participating States is crucial. The political guidance for the OSCE action against terrorism is derived from the Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism, the Bishkek Programme of Action, and the OSCE Charter on Preventing and Combating Terrorism. These documents set for the OSCE a comprehensive agenda that also includes a strict requirement that counter-terrorism

activities must not be conducted at the expense and to the detriment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The political attention and support is further maintained through new measures such as the Annual Security Review Conference, the development of an OSCE Strategy to Address Threats to Security and Stability in the 21st Century, and an informal group of delegations dealing with anti-terrorism issues.

Central to the success of these efforts is overcoming the common challenge all of us here face, namely, sharing information and best practices among our respective participating States, particularly in the area of counter-terrorism where the threat is ever-evolving. However, before telling you about our information sharing methods within the OSCE, I would like to recognise the importance of best practice sharing between organizations such as those represented here today.

On this point, I would like to express special appreciation to the Organisation of American States, not just for hosting this conference, but for sharing its best practices with us, particularly its successful creation of the OAS National Points of Contact Network. We observed the inaugural convening of OAS national points of contact here in Washington three months ago. Learning from the OAS experience, the OSCE now is in the process of setting up its own counter-terrorism network that will speed information exchange within the OSCE on anti-terrorism capacity building needs, programmes and best practices among our 55 participating States.

OSCE Counter-Terrorism Network

Clearly, establishing such a network of counter-terrorism officials in OSCE capitals is an important initiative for us. It also is a delicate endeavour, as many are in an organization based on consensus. For that reason, much consideration was put into designing a network that would be as inclusive as possible, including not just counter-terrorism officials in capitals but also OSCE delegations represented in Vienna. We did not want delegations to see their role on counter-terrorism in any way diminished. Indeed, we need to strengthen their engagement. Equally important was holding one-on-one meetings with delegations as we crafted the proposal to obtain their input as well as to explain what the network will do – as well as what it will not do. For example, delegation members were assured that our network would not be for the exchange of sensitive or intelligence-related information but rather for disseminating information on training programmes, funding and other forms of support.

Because this network is internet based, start up and operating costs will be low. We will piggy-back the network on existing OSCE internet and intranet technologies using in-house technicians. To provide content and oversight of the system, there will be one additional staff person added to the staff of the OSCE Action against Terrorism Unit. This is a modest investment for the benefits that will come, as we see is already happening in the OAS experience, where such a network has had the effect in many countries of improving inter-ministerial communications and co-ordination on anti-terrorism matters.

New Anti-Terrorism Website

Complementing this development, the OSCE has just opened a web page on its existing public website devoted to anti-terrorism related news. It is linked to other key websites such as the UNCTC and ODC websites. Together with the interactive capabilities planned for the forthcoming counter-terrorism network, we will have the basic tools to promote quicker and more direct information exchange with officials in capitals who have anti-terrorism responsibilities.

Working with Delegations and the Field

In the meantime, the OSCE is working through participating State delegations in Vienna to co-ordinate and implement our anti-terrorism agenda. While I apprise the OSCE Permanent Council regularly of key issues including those related to counter-terrorism, the Head of the Action against Terrorism Unit also works directly with delegations through an informal anti-terrorism working group comprised of all 55 participating States and led by Ambassador Oskarsson of Iceland. This arrangement has worked very well in maintaining a strong consensus on the need to strengthen our counter-terrorism efforts.

While our activities in Vienna are important, I must point out that many if not most of the activities of the OSCE take place in the field. Currently, over 70 percent of our budget goes to support our 17 missions in the field. Since the adoption of the Bucharest, Bishkek and Porto OSCE guiding documents that complement and support the work of UNCTC, particularly the implementation of UNSCR 1373 and the 12 international conventions and protocols, we are working to better co-ordinate our counter-terrorism efforts with our field offices to fulfil this mandate.

Our field offices are playing an increasingly important role on anti-terrorism. They have facilitated the establishment of police training centers and help to organise workshops directly linked to our anti-terrorism objectives. The Head of the Action against Terrorism Unit participates in annual meetings with OSCE Heads of Mission, both to inform them of what we are doing in Vienna as well as to be updated on what the priorities are in the field. We have provided all field offices with a reference guide on OSCE anti-terrorism mandates, programmes and resources. It is a succinct, easily read document that is designed to facilitate our field missions on this issue. Copies of this reference guide are being distributed to you for your information. By building and maintaining such collaborative relationships, we are working to avoid duplication, overlap and waste of effort.

Next week the OSCE anti-terrorism unit, in conjunction with the OSCE Center in Kyrgyzstan, is conducting a Central Asia regional workshop in Bishkek aimed at fostering regional co-operation to address the problem of false or altered travel documents. This is the second such regional workshop we have organized with the participation of international experts and relevant government officials (the last one being in Ohrid). Such workshops not only provide expert guidance and support but also allow for the exchange of best practices, shared problems and other concerns. We are finding that by providing such an opportunity for officials to meet and have substantive discussions on operational issues, real progress is achieved.

Direct Approaches to Capitals

We have begun direct approaches to individual participating States on the ratification and implementation of the key UN counter-terrorism conventions and protocols. In doing so, we are seeking to facilitate requests for assistance through awareness raising. We are finding that there is a willingness to invite UNODC and OSCE assistance once country officials are informed that such expertise is available, free and not coercive. We also are finding that such bilateral meetings dispel misconceptions, for example, in landlocked capitals regarding the relevance of the maritime anti-terrorism conventions. Once these misconceptions are cleared up, the way for these countries to ratify and implement these agreements are opened. On this point, I would like to express our appreciation to UNCTC and ODC for their help and collaboration.

Bilateral approaches also are helping us to address new and evolving potential threats. Our recent meetings with counter-terrorism officials in Caucasus countries, for example, confirmed an ongoing problem of the trafficking of radiological materials that can be used in the making of radiological dispersion devices (RDD) or, as more commonly called, “dirty bombs” that can render large parts of a city unusable for years if not decades. Alerted to the need for greater forensic analyses assistance needed in these countries where smuggling of such materials is occurring, the Action against Terrorism Unit initiated contacts with the IAEA to utilise the Agency’s considerable capabilities and expertise in this area.

These collaborative contacts with the IAEA are deepening. Just last week, IAEA experts held a second session with OSCE officials to discuss areas of possible co-operation regarding radiological stockpiles and trafficking. Furthermore, to raise awareness among all OSCE delegations in Vienna on this issue, the Head of the OSCE anti-terrorism unit and an IAEA radiological materials expert jointly briefed the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation on this potential threat. We will similarly brief the Forum on the threat that MANPADS – or Man Portable Air Defense Systems – pose to our aviation industry.

CTC’s Continuing, Critical Role

I have mentioned these examples to illustrate how information dissemination within the OSCE must take place at many levels, in Vienna, with our field missions, and directly with relevant officials in capitals. There is no magic formula for making it work except for hard work and persistence. But we must also be smart about our approaches, avoiding overlap and duplication, utilising the strengths of other organizations when it makes sense. CTC has good information on anti-terrorism assistance programs that are ongoing around the globe. This is useful information as we decide on how to deploy our limited resources. In such ways, we must learn from each other and communicate our respective experiences. This conference is an excellent forum for such sharing and my hope is that we will continue to regularly do so. In this regard, the UNODC and the OSCE hereby jointly extend an invitation to the UNCTC to hold the third Special Meeting in Vienna on 12 March 2004. UNODC and OSCE jointly hosting the event in Vienna will exemplify the effective co-operation between a regional and an international organization, as well as provide an opportunity to enhance the complementarity and effectiveness of global action against terrorism under the aegis of the UNCTC.

Thank you.
