

ENGLISH only

Canadian Delegation to the  
Organization for Security & Cooperation  
in Europe



Délégation du Canada auprès de  
l'Organisation pour la sécurité et la coopération  
en Europe

**DELEGATION OF CANADA TO THE OSCE  
STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE REPORT BY  
HEAD OF THE OSCE OFFICE IN BAKU  
AMBASSADOR JOSE-LUIS HERRERO  
716<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL  
12 JUNE 2008**

Canada joins others in welcoming Ambassador Herrero back to the Permanent Council. We thank him for his comprehensive presentation today, and his report.

Our delegation highly appreciates the political, economic and social context provided by his report. We believe this reporting greatly assists Participating states in developing appropriate OSCE programming.

We would take this opportunity to note the excellent work undertaken by the Office in all three dimensions. We commend the special focus Ambassador Herrero and his team are placing on the Human Dimension. It is our view this shows effective management and prioritisation.

Canada has always strongly supported the police reform programme in Azerbaijan and, in particular, the aspects implementing community policing. We note with satisfaction this programme continues to be successful. We would also add our support to increased efforts to ensure public assembly management is conducted in a democratic fashion.

Our delegation has long called for prioritisation in the programming of the second dimension and we note that there is a particular emphasis on good governance. We believe this is the right focus and benefits the most people, as long as it addresses the needs of Azerbaijan at an institutional level.

We note with satisfaction increased programming in judicial reform and civil society development. We would further highlight the Office's efforts at combating trafficking and promoting gender equality. These are areas where OSCE programming has significant added value.

Mr. Chairman, Canada would like to express its concern on the state of the freedom of media in Azerbaijan. Throughout the past months we have heard of a number of cases where free speech has been undermined. We commend the efforts of the Office and encourage it to redouble both its efforts and its cooperation with the Representative on Freedom of the Media; similarly we encourage the Government to avail itself of the office's support and assistance in this field.

Finally, our delegation takes a strong interest in upcoming elections in Azerbaijan, and we will follow events as they unfold in the coming months. We encourage the Government to work closely with both the Office and ODIHR to ensure Azerbaijan fulfills to the greatest extent possible its OSCE commitments.

We wish Ambassador Herrero and his team all the best in their important work.