



## ADDRESS

**by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office Dr Dimitrij Rupel**  
**at the meeting of the Expanded Bureau of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly**  
*Ljubljana, 4 December 2005*

President Hastings,  
Secretary General,  
Vice Presidents,  
Colleagues,

Welcome to Ljubljana! In addition to your Expanded Bureau meeting and the Ministerial Council I hope that you will have some time to look around our beautiful city of Ljubljana and to see some of Slovenia.

Tomorrow morning I will have the honour to open the 13th OSCE Ministerial Council.

This is a major event for Slovenia and an important meeting for the OSCE. The number of Foreign Ministers expected is high, and I believe the mood will be constructive. The OSCE community has an opportunity over the next two days to define common objectives, enhance our capacities, and strengthen the effectiveness of the OSCE.

### *Implementing the “3 R” agenda*

On assuming the Chairmanship I said that Slovenia wanted to advance a “3 R” agenda: to reform, rebalance, and revitalize the OSCE.

I think we have been successful. At this Ministerial Council participating States will most likely adopt a roadmap for reform that will list common objectives which we hope to implement in 2006 in order to strengthen the effectiveness of the OSCE.

Many of these ideas stem from the Parliamentary Assembly. Thank you for your input through the report of the Colloquium on the Future of the OSCE, the ideas generated in the Annual Session, and your participation in the High Level Consultations. I encourage you to continue to act as a motor for reform to ensure that the process moves ahead.

In terms of rebalancing the Organization, a new emphasis has been put on the cross-dimensional nature of OSCE activities. The OSCE was a pioneer in recognizing the link between security, human rights, and development. That link needs to be maintained in order to move forward our traditionally comprehensive and holistic approach to security.

Issues like trafficking, organized crime, migration, and counter terrorism defy categorization. They need to be looked at in their full complexity, and the OSCE is well placed to do that.

As far as revitalizing the Organization, one can simply compare the end of the year with the beginning of the year. When Slovenia took over the Chairmanship the OSCE had no budget, no scales, no agreement on a Secretary General and faced a deep political crisis.

Now we have scales, an excellent Secretary General, hope for a timely adoption of the budget, and a much more constructive atmosphere. The OSCE is not only back on its feet, it is taking confident strides towards the future.

I would like to thank the Parliamentary Assembly for its part in this transition. Your enthusiastic support for the OSCE is vital for generating political will and new ideas. This was particularly evident in the excellent Annual Session in Washington. I would also like to express admiration to you, President Hastings, for your active role in travelling the OSCE area and spreading the word about the OSCE.

As a result, ideas coming from the Parliamentary Assembly are increasingly shaping the OSCE's agenda. You have long called for strengthening the effectiveness of the OSCE, and that is now a priority. Migration and integration are now being seriously discussed. Anti trafficking is a high priority, as is human rights education. So too is promoting the role of women in core OSCE activities. We are working towards adoption of an OSCE concept on border management and security, and the economic and environmental dimension is being

strengthened. These are all issues which you have long championed and I hope that decisions will be taken in the next two days to strengthen the OSCE capacity in these areas.

### *Easing tensions and enhancing stability*

One thing that a Chairmanship can not predict is world events.

This year, on a number of occasions, we have had to react quickly to major developments in the OSCE area. For example, you will recall the events in Kyrgyzstan in March before and after the resignation of President Akayev. The OSCE was on the scene and helped to stabilize the situation and assist the authorities in the process of transition. This process will require our on-going engagement.

The bloody events in Andijan, Uzbekistan, in May were a shock to the whole OSCE community. I called on Uzbekistan to allow for an independent investigation into the events that started in Andijan on 13 May 2005 in the interest of the stability of the whole region. The Secretary General and the OSCE Centre have been actively engaged in keeping the channels of dialogue open with the Uzbek authorities.

As you know, the OSCE has been monitoring the trials. Now, we have some problems with further trials, I will use this opportunity to discuss this issue with appropriate authorities.

We have to acknowledge Uzbekistan's desire to maintain law and order and to fight extremism and terrorism. But we should use any opportunity to communicate that this should never happen to the detriment of human rights commitments.

Elections have also kept us busy. Today all eyes are on Kazakhstan where the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is an important part of the OSCE team. You have also been a key component of OSCE election monitoring in Kyrgyzstan, Albania, Moldova and Azerbaijan.

OSCE election expertise is world famous. We need to retain that high reputation, strengthen our commitments and improve our techniques where possible. The dialogue that we have had on elections this year has been open and constructive, and has contributed to building greater understanding and appreciation of the OSCE's work in this field. Thank you for your active engagement in elections-related issues.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Every Chairmanship hopes to solve at least one frozen conflict. Our expectations were even more modest: we hoped to make significant progress in one or two. And I think we have been successful.

Progress for peace was made this year in the framework of the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The dialogue between the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan has become more frequent and more constructive. I hope that at this Ministerial Council we can broker a good Ministerial statement on Nagorno-Karabakh. Prospects for a peaceful resolution of this long-standing conflict look better than they have for some time.

In Georgia, there are grounds for optimism with the joint declaration on 30 May between Georgia and the Russian Federation on the agreement of closure of Russian military bases in Georgia. I understand that implementation is proceeding well. The Training Assistance Programme for Georgian border guards is also an encouraging story. While the situation in South Ossetia remains volatile, the OSCE is helping to build confidence between the parties, and is supporting economic rehabilitation. We need to maintain constructive dialogue between the parties, and to seek a peaceful and lasting solution to the status of South Ossetia within Georgia.

In Moldova negotiations have resumed – after more than one year of interruption – on a peaceful and sustainable resolution of the status of Transdniestria within Moldova. The new 5+2 format, that now involves the EU and US in the negotiation process, has brought a new dynamic to the process that offers hope for a settlement to this long-standing dispute. So too have efforts of the mediators, particularly the Yushchenko plan. Now that we are back on track, we need to keep up the momentum.

That being said, I do not expect any major breakthroughs here in Ljubljana. The resolution of these conflicts is complex and incremental. The issue of the so-called Istanbul commitments is very delicate and remains a source of disagreement to the point that we may not have consensus on a Ministerial Declaration for the third year in a row. Nevertheless, Slovenia will try – until the end – to seek consensus. It may be a long night.

## *A Community of Values*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The anniversaries of the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris this year have reminded us all of the importance and impact of OSCE commitments.

Through its strong acquis of shared commitments, the OSCE has become a community of values. This is most evident in our work to promote tolerance and non-discrimination, democracy, freedom of the media, and human rights including the rights of persons belonging to national minorities. Your active engagement in these issues, most recently at the Annual Autumn conference in Sveti Stefan that looked at good governance in multi-ethnic societies, is extremely valuable.

Democracy has no end point. It is a constant work in progress. As new threats arise, our societies need to adapt to address challenges like terrorism, disease, hate crime on the Internet or organized crime. The way that we deal with these threats is a test for our democratic systems.

Our societies are as strong as the democratic foundations on which they are based. Through strengthening all links of the OSCE's comprehensive security chain we have a better chance of coping with modern challenges.

Since these challenges do not respect borders, we need to pool our resources and work together through organizations like the OSCE. That is the essence of effective multilateralism that has kept the OSCE in business for the past thirty years.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you can understand this is a busy time for me. I will therefore conclude my remarks by wishing you a productive Expanded Bureau meeting and all the best with your future work.

Thank you.