



## **Statement by**

**Didier Burkhalter**

**President of the Swiss Confederation and  
Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE**

***“Cooperative security à la OSCE: Building  
bridges in Europe and Asia”***

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Dear colleagues

Europe and Asia are two regions of prosperity and great potential. But both regions are also confronted with major security challenges.

This is why our discussion of how to strengthen connectivity between Europe and Asia should also cover security cooperation.

The promotion of security is a priority of Swiss foreign policy. We are particularly committed to *cooperative* security – security that is inclusive and based on dialogue and broad cooperation.

This year, Switzerland is chairing the OSCE – Europe's biggest promoter of cooperative security.

The OSCE enhances the security of its 57 participating States through regional dialogue, confidence-building measures, shared commitments, and comprehensive cooperation. It is consensus-based. All participating States are equal. There are 57 veto powers in the OSCE.

The Ukraine crisis has shown the usefulness of the OSCE as a bridge-builder in Europe. The OSCE is assisting Ukraine's efforts at political stabilisation. We are also launching a discussion on how to overcome the broader crisis of European security. At the OSCE Ministerial Council in Basel this December, we will seek the commitment of all participating States to strengthen the OSCE as an anchor of cooperative security in Europe.

But the OSCE can also act as a bridge between Europe and Asia. It can support ASEM's efforts at strengthening connectivity between our two regions, by promoting cooperation in the security field in the broadest sense.

As Switzerland is chairing the OSCE's Contact Group with the Asian Partners for Cooperation next year, strengthening ties between Asia and Europe through the OSCE will be a priority of our foreign policy.

There are three avenues on how we plan to proceed:

First, we will seek to strengthen the OSCE's cooperation with its existing Asian Partners. We aim for more joint action with our Asian colleagues.

An excellent example for practical cooperation is the support for the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) in Ukraine by our Asian Partners Australia, South Korea, and Japan. Further support, by Partners and by participating States, is now needed to enable the SMM to monitor the ceasefire and the border.

The potential for more cooperation between the OSCE and its Asian Partners in addressing common issues such as trafficking, border management, the situation in Afghanistan, foreign terrorist fighters, or disaster risk reduction is large. Broadening participation beyond the current six Asian Partners is also an issue to look into.

Second, we will engage in promoting dialogue and cooperation between the OSCE and Asian multilateral frameworks. Europe and Asia can much learn from each

other in dealing with security issues. Multilateralism is on the rise in Asia, and there is much scope for building ties between some of these Asian dialogue formats and the OSCE. Our institutions can mutually reinforce each other by exchanging views, know-how, and perhaps even staff.

First steps at such inter-institutional dialogues have already been taken. Much more could and should be done, including at the ministerial level.

Finally, the third avenue is about promoting cooperative security for Asian contexts. While the OSCE as an institution may not be exportable to other regions, specific aspects of the OSCE model such as its broad range of confidence-building measures and its preventive diplomacy can certainly make a positive difference in Asia too.

With our broad expertise in promoting peace through dialogue and cooperation, Switzerland will engage with Asian countries to explore the potential of cooperative security in Asia and ideally establish a series of partnerships in this regard.