

**OSCE ministerial meeting**

ENGLISH only

**Address by the Estonian Minister of Foreign Affairs**

**Mr Urmas Paet**

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*Please check against delivery!*

Mr Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Firstly, I would like to join the previous speakers in thanking Lithuania for leading the OSCE throughout this year. Let me also wish our Irish colleagues success in continuing the OSCE's work next year. Allow me also to congratulate Lamberto Zannier upon his election to the position of Secretary-General of the OSCE and wish him all the best in office.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Estonia would like to emphasize the significance of the human dimension of the OSCE. It has a central role in the comprehensive concept of security. Therefore, the OSCE must continue to make active use of existing instruments like the HCNM, the ODIHR, and the human dimension implementation meeting in Warsaw, which should continue in an even more effective way.

My country is an avid supporter of the freedom of the press. We value very highly the role of the commissioner for free media, Dunja Mijatovic, and the work she has done. We need to ensure that new technologies and the digital age result in more, not less, media freedom. After all, universal human rights and fundamental freedoms apply to the Internet too.

The events of the Arab Spring demonstrated clearly the role of the modern information and communications technology in promoting democracy and human rights. A lesson that we can draw from this is that we should all work to increase access to the Internet both at home and abroad.

Mr Chairman,

I would also like to stress that while dealing with other partners the OSCE should not neglect its own space. Therefore, Estonia would like to encourage the OSCE to support the civil society of Belarus as well as democratic aspirations within that country.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The OSCE continues to play an important role in the resolution of protracted conflicts. However, greater activity and more concrete results are required. As we speak, Georgia remains an OSCE country with part of its territory occupied already since 2008. The return of international monitors is a stability and security imperative. We hope that the OSCE observers return to Georgia and that the EU's Monitoring Mission can start to fulfill its mandate on the entire Georgian territory.

Estonia believes that all formats dealing with frozen conflicts require increased political will and attention. We welcome the work of the Minsk group, the continuing of the Geneva talks and IPRM meetings, as well as the 5+2 format for resolving the Transnistrian conflict. The resumption of the negotiation format and the recent first session of the talks holds particular importance in that respect.

It is vital for the OSCE to help build trust between people in conflict areas and to ensure transparent and objective reporting of the situation on the ground. OSCE early reaction and conflict prevention mechanism led by the HCNM should continue to pay attention to the genuine problems, first and foremost in the South Caucasus and Central Asia. My government believes it is important to channel political will in this direction.

Mr Chairman,

Estonia places great importance on an effective conventional arms control regime in Europe as it makes a substantial contribution to military stability, predictability and transparency as well as to overall security. The Astana Summit Declaration gave us a mandate to revitalize, update and modernize conventional arms control regime, the Vienna Document and the confidence- and security-building measures. Nevertheless, the process needs a new impetus so that further and more substantial efforts will be undertaken in 2012. Estonia participated in CFE revitalization consultations that unfortunately have stalled. We are willing to reengage in consultations, should circumstances change.

The OSCE with its comprehensive approach is a suitable organization for dealing visibly and effectively with 21<sup>st</sup> century transnational threats. These include cyber security and terrorism. The OSCE members as well as all other states should be able to deal with cyber threats without harming democracy, freedom of speech and civil rights. This is the main principle for Estonia as we deal with cyber security issues here at the OSCE.

Mr Chairman,

In conclusion I would like to stress that the ongoing efforts to develop OSCE's capabilities and to consolidate its mandates are a proof that the door remains open for future enhancement of the OSCE's work.

I thank you for your attention.