

**Address by H.E. Dr. Dimitrij Rupel,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia  
Chairman of the OSCE Asian Partners Group for Co-operation  
3 December 2006**

ENGLISH only

Excellencies,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you all to the OSCE Ministerial Troika Meeting with the Asian Partners for Co-operation.

As the Chair of the Asian Contact Group in 2006, Slovenia intends to focus on issues of common concern and to make discussion as targeted as possible. In 2006, the OSCE participating States and the Asian Partners have jointly exerted considerable efforts to give new impetus to our relations. We promoted the participation of Asian Partners in some of the main events on the OSCE calendar, such as the ASRC, the Economic Forum and the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, as well as, naturally, the annual OSCE conference in an Asian Partner State, which was kindly hosted by Thailand this year.

The OSCE-Thailand Conference on Challenges to Global Security, entitled "From Poverty to Pandemic", was the third such gathering in Bangkok, a testimony to Thailand's active role as an Asian Partner for Co-operation, a role it has performed most pro-actively and with full engagement from the outset, when it joined Japan and Korea in 2000. As is demonstrated by the title of this Conference, we are faced with new security threats and live according to a new security paradigm. These threats include economic, social and political tensions, inter- and intra-state conflicts, terrorism, organized crime, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and environmental instability. International organizations are in the process of re-tooling themselves to better adapt to combating these challenges.

Following the Secretary General's proposal last autumn to establish a Partnership Fund to sponsor more "out of area" activities, Slovenia – with the assistance of the 2006 Belgian OSCE Chairmanship – immediately took steps to build support for the proposal and ensure that consensus is reached. Most OSCE participating States have expressed political support; however some countries still have some questions about the Partnership Fund. We must continue our activities towards consensus.

On the initiative of the Asian Partner countries, the Side Event on Human Security took place during the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw on October 3, 2006. Slovenia participated not only as the OSCE Chair of Asian Partners of Cooperation but also as the Chair of the Human Security Network Group. We are proud to be in the position to promote human security among the OSCE and HSN participating States.

To show the concrete implementation of OSCE's Confidence and Security Building Measures, Slovenia organized a visit of the Asian Partners to the International Trust Fund for Demining, the

First Brigade of the Slovenian Army, the Ministry of Defense and the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in October 2006. As we were told by the participants, this working visit deepened their understanding of OSCE commitments in the political-military field.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is still plenty of work for us to do to secure an enlarged space of security and stability. This is a goal that is achievable through the OSCE's tradition of comprehensive and cooperative security dialogue in all three dimensions. And, it can also be achieved through strengthened dialogue with our Asian and Mediterranean Partners, who have a common stake with the participating States in this endeavor.

Thank you.