



**Chairmanship: Ukraine**

**REPORT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE  
CONTACT GROUP WITH THE OSCE ASIAN PARTNERS FOR  
CO-OPERATION TO THE TWENTIETH MEETING OF THE  
MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

The 2013 Irish Chairmanship of the Asian Contact Group assisted the Ukrainian OSCE Chairmanship in fostering an open and interactive dialogue with the Asian Partners for Co-operation and in following a demand-driven approach to responding to the interests and priorities of the Asian Partners.

During the course of the year, five meetings of the Asian Contact Group were held, as well as a joint meeting with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. For each meeting, the topic was chosen jointly by the Chairmanship and the Asian Partners for Co-operation, featuring a speaker from a Partner's country. In addition to presentations by the Partner countries, each meeting saw a presentation by experts on topics pertinent to the Asian Contact Group.

At the first meeting of the Asian Contact Group, held on 15 February, the Irish Chair, Ambassador O'Leary, underlined the 2013 working schedule of the Asian Contact Group meetings and announced that the annual OSCE Conference with its Asian Partners for Co-operation would be hosted by Australia in March on the subject of the security of women and girls. The topic of the first presentation was "Outline of the Foreign Policy of the New Administration and Japan's Contribution to the OSCE" and was presented by Japanese Ambassador Shiego Iwatani. The second presentation on "Freedom of Expression of Minorities in a Digital Age" was given by Dr. Tarlach McGonagle, Senior Researcher and Assistant Professor, Institute for Information Law (IViR), Faculty of Law, University of Amsterdam.

The 2013 OSCE-Australia Conference "Improving the security of women and girls" was held in Adelaide on 18 and 19 March. The Conference was co-organized by the OSCE and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia. It gathered approximately 100 participants from the OSCE participating States and all five OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation, as well as representatives of international organizations, civil society and academia. The Conference provided an opportunity for high-ranking national experts and civil society representatives to engage in the joint consideration of various aspects of the topic. The main focuses were: combating gender-violence, the economic empowerment of women, and the global crime of trafficking in human beings. The Partner States, the OSCE participating States, as well as representatives from NGOs and academia had an extensive

exchange of ideas, experiences and best practices and identified several areas where it would be desirable to deepen co-operation between the OSCE and its Asian Partners.

The second meeting of the Contact Group took place on 26 April. The Group was briefed on recent developments on the Korean peninsula by Ambassador Hyun Cho of the Republic of Korea. Ambassador Cho also made a presentation on the “Hague Code of Conduct against ballistic missile proliferation.” The meeting also saw a presentation by the Ambassador of Australia, David Stuart, on the outcome and follow-up to the 2013 OSCE-Australia Conference. Ambassador Stuart stressed that the urgent need to move beyond declarations to effective action and programs. The Irish Chair called upon participating States and Partners to make available additional extrabudgetary support for OSCE projects against gender-based violence.

The third meeting, on 7 June, focused on human security. The Ukrainian Chairmanship briefed participants on recent activities and priorities of the Chairmanship in the third dimension including the High Level Conference on Trafficking in Human Beings in Kyiv on 10 and 11 June, the Media Freedom Seminar in Warsaw on 15 May, and the Conference on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination on 21 and 22 May in Albania. The Ambassador of Japan, Shiego Iwatani, and Mr. Claus Neukirch, Deputy Director of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, made presentations on “Human Security.” Ambassador Iwatani drew parallels between the OSCE’s comprehensive approach and Human Security – a concept that Japan has pioneered – and gave an overview of projects financed by Japan in the OSCE framework.

The annual joint meeting of the Asian and Mediterranean Contact Groups was held on 19 July and focused on the “OSCE Code of Conduct on politico-military aspects of security” with interventions by four speakers: Mr. Detlef Hempel, FSC Co-ordinator and Military Advisor, German Delegation; Dr. Haykel Ben Mahfoudh, Senior Advisor, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF); Colonel John Spierin, Director of Legal Services, Irish Defence Forces; and Ambassador Ayoob M. Erfani, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan. The meeting provided an opportunity for an update on recent developments and progress achieved in making the OSCE Partnership more interactive and action-oriented, as well as an update about developments within the Helsinki+40 process. A representative from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly also briefed on the conclusions of their annual session relevant to the Joint Contact Group.

The fourth meeting on 11 October was chaired for the first time by the new Permanent Representative of Ireland, Ambassador Philip McDonagh. The Contact Group saw three presentations, the first of which was given by Her Royal Highness, Princess Bajrakitiyabha Mahidol, Ambassador of Thailand, on “The Rule of Law, Crime Prevention and Sustainable Development.” The second was delivered by Mr. Roel Janssens, Economic Adviser, OCEEA, on “The OSCE’s Role in Promoting Good Economic Governance and Combating Corruption;” while the third was given by Ms. Friederike Wuenschmann, Policy and Co-ordination Officer, TNTD, on the subject of “The OSCE Approach to Transnational Threats.”

The final meeting of the year took place on 8 November. The OSCE Ukrainian Chairmanship briefed participants on preparations for the upcoming Ministerial Council Meeting. The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, Ambassador Cho, briefed on the outcomes of the Seoul Conference on Cyberspace. Several speakers underlined the usefulness

of the Conference and the fact that the OSCE's work in developing confidence-building measures had been positively noted. The main topic of the meeting was combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Four presentations were made to the Contact Group: Australian Ambassador, David Stuart, discussed "Combating the illicit trade and misuse of small arms and light weapons and highlighting the humanitarian consequences;" Ambassador Philip Griffiths, Head of Secretariat, Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies, made a presentation on "The Wassenaar Arrangement's export controls on SALW as a contribution to combating the illicit trade in these items;" Mr. Diman Dimov, UNODC Global Programme on Firearms, elaborated on "The UNODC's tools and capacity building initiatives to combat illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms;" and a joint presentation was made by Lieutenant Colonel Simon J. MacRory-Tinning, Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends (IGoF) on SALW, and Ms. Maria Brandstetter, CSBM Officer, OSCE Secretariat/CPC, on "The OSCE's efforts to combat the illicit trade in SALW and possibilities of engagement with the Asian Partners for Co-operation." The participants also welcomed the incoming Ukrainian Chairmanship of the Asian Contact Group.

The Irish Chairmanship of the Asian Contact Group expresses its sincere gratitude to all the Asian Partners for Co-operation and the participating States for their commitment and co-operation in the framework of the OSCE Partnership as a platform for open dialogue and exchange of views, as well as in promotion of a results-oriented and demand-driven co-operation.