



**DASG/RESA's intervention at the OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting**  
4-5 December 2008, Helsinki

Distinguished Ministers,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to address the 16<sup>th</sup> OSCE Ministerial Council today on behalf of the Secretary General of NATO. I would like to convey his greetings to this important meeting in Helsinki, the birthplace of the Helsinki process, which has contributed so much to the security and stability of Europe.

I would also like to express sincere thanks to Minister Stubb for his conduct of this meeting and Finland's Chairmanship, during which we have continued the good cooperation between our two organizations. We look forward to the continuation of this cooperation under the incoming Chairmanship of Greece.

Today's security challenges threaten basic elements of security, far exceeding the ability of any individual nation or institution. They require the broadest possible international coalition, and the most comprehensive set of instruments – including political, economic and military tools. Since both NATO and the OSCE have important roles to play in this respect, and they have many issues of common interest, NATO attaches great importance to its **co-operation with the OSCE**.

Relations between NATO and the OSCE have, over the years, developed pragmatically, including through political dialogue, as well as operational interaction in the field. NATO officials regularly participate in a variety of OSCE meetings, and we also invite OSCE representatives to our meetings. For example, the representative of the Chairman-in-Office will address the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in a few days (10 December).

As you know, NATO had its last Summit in Bucharest in April this year, charting the way ahead for the Alliance. The decisions our leaders took will not only make NATO a more effective organisation, but will also lead to closer co-operation and co-ordination between NATO and other major international institutions.

You are also aware that, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of December, the Foreign Ministers of the Alliance met in Brussels, and made decisions that, while enhancing NATO's ability to maintain its core purpose, will also enable it to meet emerging challenges, and add momentum to implementation of the decisions of the NATO Summit in Bucharest. I will now highlight some decisions of interest to the OSCE.

First of all, the NATO Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to a **common vision** of how to meet existing security challenges in ways which contribute to lasting peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic area. They underscored that the existing structures – NATO, the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe – based on common values, continue to provide every opportunity for countries to engage substantively on Euro-Atlantic security with a broad acquis, established over decades, that includes respect for human rights, territorial integrity, the sovereignty of all states, without dividing lines, and the requirement to fulfil international commitments and agreements. Within this framework, Allies are open to dialogue within the OSCE on security perceptions and how to respond to new threats, and seek the widest possible cooperation among participating States to promote a common Euro-Atlantic space of security and stability. The common aim should be to improve implementation of existing commitments and to continue to improve existing institutions and instruments so as to effectively promote our values and Euro-Atlantic security.

Contributing to peace and stability in **Afghanistan** is and will remain NATO's key priority. All Allies are committed to a long-term role, together with other international actors, to support the Afghan people in building a prosperous, democratic country, free from terror and drugs, providing for its own security, and at peace with its neighbours. Ministers concluded that NATO, together with its partners, had made progress in realising the strategic vision set out at the Bucharest Summit, through implementing the four principles of our Comprehensive Strategic Political-Military Plan, notably a firm and shared commitment among Allies; support for enhanced Afghan leadership and responsibility; a comprehensive, civilian-military approach by the International Community; and increased cooperation with Afghanistan's neighbours, especially Pakistan. The UN-mandated and NATO-led ISAF mission will support the Afghan Government's efforts to secure the election process, including through temporary deployment of additional forces. We welcome the fact that the OSCE made Afghanistan a Partner for Cooperation and had decided to be engaged with Afghanistan, and we look forward to continuing to work with the OSCE in this context.

The robust, UN-mandated NATO-led KFOR presence will remain in **Kosovo** on the basis of UNSCR 1244. KFOR will cooperate with and assist the UN, the EU, the OSCE and other international actors, to support the development of a stable, democratic, multi-ethnic and peaceful Kosovo. The prompt deployment of the European Union's Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) throughout all of Kosovo is an urgent priority. NATO ministers noted the adoption by the UN Security Council of a statement by its Presidency in support of the reconfiguration of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and strongly encouraged the Kosovo authorities and Serbia to cooperate fully with all relevant actors during and after the period of transfer of authority. NATO continues to stand ready to play its part in the implementation of future security arrangements.

Experience gathered in Afghanistan and Kosovo has underscored the need for a **comprehensive approach** by the whole of the international community. As directed by our leaders in the Bucharest and the Riga Summits, NATO aims to develop proposals for a coherent crisis management, as well as practical co-operation at all levels with other

actors, such as, of course, the OSCE. The Joint **UN-NATO** Declaration, which the two Secretaries General signed in September 2008, also shows that NATO is determined to further develop its cooperation with other actors, in order to be better able to address the threats and challenges to which the international community is called upon to respond.

Another area of our work involves further developing NATO's **partnerships**. The Alliance's partnerships across the globe have an enduring value, contributing to stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area and beyond. Over the past 15 years, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Partnership for Peace have been a major boost to the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area which corresponds to that of the OSCE by fostering trust and transparency. Many of our Euro-Atlantic Partners have also made very valuable contributions to NATO missions and operations.

At the same time, through our **Mediterranean Dialogue** and **Istanbul Co-operation Initiative**, many countries in North Africa, the Middle East and the Gulf region are looking to benefit from NATO's unrivalled expertise in security sector reform, military training and education, as well as a number of other areas. In the margins of the NATO Foreign Ministers meeting this week, the Foreign Ministers had a working lunch with their Mediterranean Dialogue counterparts to discuss how to deepen their political dialogue and practical co-operation.

Turning to **enlargement**, NATO's door remains open. In Bucharest NATO Heads of State and Government invited Albania and Croatia to start accession talks. The aim is to welcome the two new members into the Alliance at our next Summit. NATO continues to believe that Euro-Atlantic countries must be able to freely choose their own security arrangements, and NATO will continue to assist those seeking membership to walk through that door as soon as possible, provided they can meet performance-based standards, and are able to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security.

With respect to **Georgia** and **Ukraine**, the NATO Foreign Ministers reaffirmed all elements of the decisions taken by their Heads of State and Government in Bucharest.

Both countries have made progress, yet both have significant work left to do. Therefore, they have decided to provide further assistance to both countries in implementing needed reforms as they progress towards NATO membership. The Foreign Ministers also reiterated their commitment to supporting the Euro-Atlantic integration of all countries of the **Western Balkans**.

The **NATO-Russia** partnership was conceived as a strategic element in fostering security in the Euro-Atlantic area. However, following Russia's disproportionate action during the conflict with Georgia in August, NATO has not conducted business as usual in the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), since, in a partnership based on common values, the lack of a shared commitment to those values must naturally cause the relationship and the scope for cooperative action to suffer. Nonetheless, NATO Ministers continue to believe in the importance for Euro-Atlantic security of relations between NATO and **Russia** that are based on constructive dialogue – including on issues that divide the Alliance and Russia – and co-operation. Therefore, Ministers agreed on a measured and phased approach to re-engage Russia.

Ministers also expressed support for the constructive exchanges between all the parties involved in the Geneva international discussions. In that context, we deem it important that the OSCE plays an active role in this process.

Concerning the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (**CFE**), paragraph 34 of yesterday's NATO Foreign Ministerial Communiqué states the Alliance's position on the Treaty.

In sum, the Foreign Ministers meeting was an important step to set the stage for a successful 60th Anniversary Summit next year, where the Heads of State and Government will adopt a Declaration on Alliance Security which will articulate the Alliance's vision of its role in meeting the evolving challenges of the 21st century and maintaining the ability to perform the full range of its missions, collectively defending Allies' security at home and contributing to stability abroad.