

**Keynote Address by U.S. Ambassador Cofer Black
OSCE Annual Security Review Conference
Working Group A - “Preventing and Combating Terrorism”**

WHERE WE STAND

Over the past two years, the world has swung into action to fight the scourge of terrorism and the threat it represents to the lives, freedoms, and prosperity of all of our citizens. We have accomplished much in this period:

- A military coalition liberated the bulk of Afghan territory from Taliban control and disrupted the al-Qaida leadership and cadre it sponsored.
- Law enforcement services in more than 100 countries have detained over 3000 al-Qaida operatives and associates.
- Intelligence services are cooperating to hinder terrorists’ ability to move and operate freely as never before.
- The international community – including this organization – has forged new relationships and established new standards to institutionalize the war against terrorism globally.
- Countries with hard-earned skill in fighting terrorism are working together to build the capacity of less experienced nations.

With this increased action and cooperation, the international community has helped to stop multiple planned terrorist attacks that would have killed more innocent civilians and destroyed the lives and livelihoods of innumerable others.

Although the situation is better than it was two years ago, we have not yet won the war. As the cruel attacks against civilians in Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Indonesia, Kenya, and elsewhere show, terrorism is still a threat. We will eliminate terrorism only if we maintain and strengthen our will to fight, and build the capabilities of those countries that have the will but not the necessary skill to join us in this fight.

Support for the OSCE

That is why the U.S. strongly supports this first Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC) and the OSCE's efforts to combat terrorism. This meeting can help to keep the OSCE and participating States focused on security threats in the region, especially terrorism, and help to coordinate our individual efforts.

The United States is delighted to have made former S/CT director at the US Department of State, Brian Woo, available to the OSCE's Anti-Terror Unit (ATU) as its director. We have sent you one of our best because we regard the work of the Anti-Terror Unit as crucial to our collective security policies.

The U.S. is committed to ensuring that the ATU has the resources necessary to do its job. We hope all participating States will engage fully with Mr. Woo – and make resources/experts available – to strengthen the region's counterterrorism capabilities.

With the Anti-Terror Unit, the Senior Police Advisor, the Office of the Economic Coordinator, field offices, and the various Ministerial Decisions taken since September 11, 2001, the OSCE is well-organized as an institution to implement programs that will help all participating States to improve their capacity to fight terrorism.

OSCE IN GLOBAL CONTEXT

Regional organizations like the OSCE need to foster cooperation in promoting broad adherence of its members to the international standards dealing with counterterrorism and organized crime. We do this by meeting in forums like this one to agree on and promote common standards dealing with counterterrorism and organized crime. I hope this meeting will produce a new agenda of items for the PC to consider.

But we can also do it through OSCE field missions. We should ensure that each of these field missions adopts, as a priority, assisting its host nation in combating terrorism. We should send more counterterrorism experts to these missions, and ensure that they coordinate closely.

WHAT THE OSCE IS DOING

As we look back on the OSCE's action on security, we can be proud of a growing record of achievement. At Porto, Bucharest, and Bishkek, OSCE states adopted forward-looking documents that establish a region-wide standard and framework for OSCE action against terrorism.

We have made genuine progress on terrorist finance. With OSCE assistance, fifty-one of our members have completed their self-assessments on their compliance with the FATF recommendations on terrorist financing. And the OSCE continues to conduct training seminars in several countries – with more in planned – on money laundering and terrorist financing issues.

WHAT THE OSCE CAN DO

In 2003 and beyond, the OSCE must continue to focus on concrete and achievable steps that advance regional security and combat terrorism. There is much that can and should be done.

FATF/Terrorism Finance/Money Laundering

The OSCE can expand the role it has already played on the terrorist financing front in the following ways:

- Encourage countries that have not yet completed their FATF questionnaires to do so; and
- Offer technical assistance to any states that may need it, in coordination with the UN/CTC and the Counter-Terrorism Action Group (CTAG).

Implement UN Conventions

OSCE participating States must make every effort to become parties to the 12 UN conventions and protocols on terrorism and begin implementation of these commitments. Only 38 percent of the OSCE states have become parties to all 12. The OSCE should encourage participating states to adopt the highest possible implementation standards for international terrorism conventions and protocols, and the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Cooperation should make this an item of regular discussion.

Legislative Reform

The Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the ATU are already providing technical assistance to states in developing their counterterrorism-related legislation. Participating States should strongly support this effort, and facilitate its expansion by working to develop an OSCE-wide plan for legislation. The weak link in legislative assistance is not its development, but its implementation. Therefore, the OSCE Permanent Council should make regular and consistent efforts to encourage all states to implement such legislation.

Reform of REACT

The REACT Program – which provides a pool of experts on which OSCE can draw – is a critical tool for the OSCE to maintain its ability to respond quickly to the needs of participating states by providing experts or observers. In order to provide qualified counterterrorism experts, the OSCE and participating states should promote an expansion of the REACT system to include a new category of experts in counterterrorism, and should promote the broadest possible recruitment of such individuals.

Small Arms/Light Weapons (SALW)

The OSCE is doing its utmost to prevent the illegal, destabilizing spread of small arms and light weapons. We note the excellent work done this year by the Forum for Security Cooperation, and under Dutch stewardship, and call for the OSCE and participating States to build on the results of the Prague Economic Forum to stop terrorists and criminals from acquiring weapons.

Improved Coordination with International Organizations

The OSCE must work closer than ever with the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), the G-8, ICAO, and others, to develop international standards where needed, to encourage their regional implementation, and coordinate the delivery of technical assistance. Regular high-level meetings should be held and representatives of these organizations should be invited to brief the Permanent Council.

Travel Document Security

At present, the G-8 and ICAO are developing minimum standards for issuance of travel and identity documents and for biometric authentication. The OSCE should coordinate with ICAO and G-8 transportation security experts and adopt these standards for the OSCE region.

Recently, the OSCE's ATU organized a number of workshops on detecting counterfeit travel documents. The OSCE should advance plans to offer these workshops elsewhere and to provide training and technical assistance.

OSCE participating States should also seek to implement a common global standard based on the automated UN EDIFACT system for the collection and transmission of advance passenger information (API). The ASEAN Regional Forum (RF) and the G-8 have adopted this commitment already.

In addition, the OSCE should improve procedures and practices for sharing data on lost or stolen passports and denial of entry to intending visitors. As with the UN EDIFACT system, the G-8 and ASEAN Regional Forum have adopted this commitment.

Border Security

In the war on terror, it is crucial that we all work to secure our borders. Drawing on OSCE institutions and the standards already developed by the G-8, the IMO, and the ICAO, the OSCE should endorse a common set of region-wide standards and provide assistance to help states implement these standards.

As a first step, the OSCE could endorse the ICAO Aviation Security Plan of Action, including the rapid implementation of mandatory aviation security audits of all ICAO contracting states. The OSCE should also encourage participating States to assist developing countries in the OSCE region in this and other aviation, port and land border security areas.

Some countries have suggested the development within the OSCE Secretariat of a Border Unit to work with the Strategic Police Unit and the

Anti-terrorism Unit to create comprehensive border security standards. We endorse this idea.

If the OSCE can make headway in all the areas that I have mentioned, I believe it will be making a substantial and important contribution to ridding the world of terrorism.

RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

In closing, I would also note that the OSCE's broader work to promote respect for human rights, to foster democratic institutions and market reform, and to prevent conflict are also critical to the long-term success of the war against terrorism.

There is no excuse or rationale that can justify terrorism and the atrocities terrorists commit against innocent civilians. We can, however, seek to remove the factors that terrorists use to serve their twisted goals by enabling good governance, human dignity, and economic opportunity in the OSCE region and beyond.

The rule of law, anti-corruption efforts, and equal economic opportunity give citizens confidence that they will be treated fairly, receive justice, and have a real chance to meet their needs and those of their children. By encouraging tolerance for ethnic and religious differences, and by defending the rights of citizens belonging to national minorities, we deny terrorists a pretext for their self-serving violence.