

Address

by Mr. Bogdan Aurescu

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Your Excellency Mr. Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs George Papandreu,

Mr. Secretary General,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Hellenic Government for welcoming us in this arena where the preeminent athletes of the world have strived for an Olympic medal.

While Romania fully subscribes to the statement delivered by the Swedish Presidency of the European Union, I would like to elaborate, in my national capacity, on some particular aspects.

2009 marks a landmark in the modern history of our continent, as we celebrate 20 years since the fall of the dividing walls that have split the European continent for almost half a century. We avail ourselves of this opportunity to pay tribute to the CSCE / OSCE for shaping the irreversible democratic transformation of our society.

Romania, as a strong believer in OSCE's comprehensive concept of security, favours a cross-dimensional focus on the observance of OSCE norms, values, principles and commitments, including the promotion of the rule of law and human rights.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Following our discussions in Corfu, last June, under the valuable guidance of the Greek Chairmanship, we have taken the debate on the European security within the OSCE forward. The Process has progressed well until now. In a good working atmosphere, through open and frank discussions, we have improved our understanding on the main issues we should focus on. The debate has just started

to gather steam. In 2010 and beyond we should build on the achievements so far. We believe that the process should be kept informal, open-ended and consistent with the general principles it has already observed, keeping at the core of the process the comprehensive security concept of the OSCE.

We should be able to define, here in Athens, the key topics for the future debates, focusing on the most relevant items of the OSCE agenda e.g. protracted conflicts, implementation of existing commitments, prevention and early warning in conflict situations, addressing the root-causes of the problems, promoting a vast inventory of relevant CSBMs, assessment of the efficiency of existing mechanisms and their utilization, possible improvement of the OSCE mechanisms, if such a need is identified. It is essential that we assess concretely how to enhance the mechanisms we have in order to make them fully operational and able to respond to the challenges we face.

If we want a better security for Europe, we have to start by thoroughly reviewing the implementation of all existing commitments. There is no other way.

Mr. Chairman,

Settling the protracted conflicts continues to be an indispensable element for the overall development of the Black Sea region. This remains a significant challenge, but not an impossible one. There is need for renewed energy and creativity, intensified dialogue and direct negotiations among parties within the established formats.

Romania favors a more substantial contribution of the international community in peacefully settling the protracted conflicts. A constant dialogue on all aspects, including on diverging issues, is absolutely necessary for stabilizing the wider Black Sea region. Romania is confident that the existing mechanisms will facilitate solving these conflicts in the spirit of our common values. OSCE, through its direct involvement, should play an active role.

Regarding the Transnistria file, the “5+2” format should remain the only framework for reaching a fair and long-lasting political agreement. We encourage formal meetings in the “5+2” format to be resumed, without preconditions, as soon as possible. Regarding Nagorno- Karabach, we stand by our principled position that any solution should be based upon respecting the State independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, on the basis of negotiated solutions.

I would like to express my regret that we have not been able to reach consensus allowing the OSCE presence in Georgia to fulfill its cross-dimensional mandate for the benefit of the people living in the region. We would like to see these efforts restarted, aiming at establishing a presence that will operate throughout the entire territory of Georgia.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I was recalling that 2009 is a year of celebrations. The last OSCE Summit took place in Istanbul, 10 years ago. Unfortunately, a number of commitments assumed in 1999, at the highest level, are still outstanding. The Istanbul commitments have been subscribed to by all the States Parties. They have been part and parcel of a political agreement which made it possible for many countries, including Romania, to give their consent on the signing of the Adapted CFE Treaty. That is why only tangible progress on the ground in the implementation of these commitments will allow us to move forward on the ratification of the Adapted CFE Treaty.

Let me underline that Romania remains concerned about the erosion of the CFE regime, due to the non-implementation by one State Party. The viability of the CFE Treaty needs to be safeguarded as a cornerstone of the arms control regime in Europe.

Moreover, the CSBMs - particularly the Vienna Document 1999 are a valuable and solid *acquis* which has played a crucial role for security and stability in Europe. This *acquis* needs to be fully and unconditionally implemented, while ways for its strengthening should be further explored.

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

We thank the Greek Chairmanship for putting forward a meaningful set of decisions in all three major areas of the human dimension.

We still hope that the decision on freedom of the media and pluralism will be adopted. Strong political commitments are, indeed, needed to combat violence against journalists, to safeguard pluralism and freedom of expression, including in the new means of communication and new technologies. We strongly believe that this topic needs to stay on the agenda in the future.

We also support the decision regarding Roma and Sinti as a step further in fulfilling several goals of the Action Plan adopted 6 years ago.

Romania welcomes this year's ambitious agenda in the economic and environmental sphere, reflected also in the ministerial decisions and we welcome the intentions of the incoming Kazakh Chairmanship to continue this trend next year.

Romania also commends the decision on energy security that marks a new stage in enhancing the OSCE's role in this field. We regret the fact that the decision on the security implications of climate change would not be adopted for the second consecutive year.

Distinguished colleagues,

As for the perspective of an OSCE informal Summit in 2010, Romania considers that such a high level meeting can point not only towards a symbolic celebration of the 35th anniversary of the Helsinki pan-European entente and the 20th celebration of the new start offered by the Paris Summit. It can also mean a renewed impetus for the OSCE, a restored commitment to its values and principles. We shall be working closely, along these lines, with the incoming Kazakh CiO. I would like to extend Romania's full support for the Kazakh priorities and initiatives aimed at reinforcing the comprehensive approach of security and further supporting the work and programs of OSCE Institutions and Field Operations.

We wish them to maintain the stewardship of the Organization at the high standards set by the Greek Chairmanship. At the same time, we welcome Lithuania in the Troika and wish them success in preparing for the important task in 2011.

Thank you.