

Please check against delivery

**Statement by Ms. Angela Kane, Assistant Secretary-General for
Political Affairs, United Nations, New York**

**Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Ministerial
Council Meeting (Ljubljana, 5-6 December 2005)**

Mr. Chairman,

It is both a pleasure and an honor to represent the Secretary-General of the United Nations at this thirteenth Ministerial Council Meeting. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador de Brichambaut on his appointment as Secretary-General of the OSCE and to express appreciation to Ambassador Jan Kubis for his important contribution.

As you know, the Outcome Document of the 2005 UN World Summit provides for a programme of reform that strengthens the United Nations to better enable it to deal with today's threats and challenges. Many decisions taken at the Summit such as the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Human Rights Council and the Democracy Fund are of direct interest to the OSCE Participating States. On the Peacebuilding Commission, negotiations continue on its format and on the membership of the Organization Committee. On the Human Rights Council, about 80% of the agenda has been agreed to, but some issues such as voting, qualification for membership and number of members remain to be resolved. The UN Democracy Fund has been set and pledges of over US\$ 42 million have been received.

We are now confronting a dual challenge: to implement decisions made and to continue negotiations on key outstanding issues. This is a responsibility shared by the United Nations as a whole and in particular by Member States and we must move forward in a spirit of collaboration, with determination and due speed. While progress has been made since the Summit, agreement on a number of issues such as budget and management reform still requires further discussion by Member States. The active engagement of the OSCE Participating States in this process in the following weeks will be vital in order to secure the full implementation of the Summit Outcome and progress on crucial issues such as the Comprehensive

Convention on Terrorism. The issues of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament will also have to be addressed since they were not included in the Outcome Document.

Mr. Chairman,

At the UN Summit, the Heads of State and Government supported a stronger relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, as envisaged in Chapter VIII of the Charter, and encouraged the establishment of predictable partnerships and arrangements. The role of regional organizations is indeed crucial as global security derives in great part from regional stability.

A wide-ranging cooperation is already taking place between the UN and the OSCE, both at Headquarters and in the field. The comprehensive OSCE approach to security, involving the three dimensions of OSCE activities, are indeed a natural complement to United Nations efforts, particularly as they relate to conflict prevention, democratization and peacebuilding. Through the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Conflict Prevention Center and the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the OSCE plays an important role in these areas, often in close coordination with the United Nations. Strengthening our common efforts to respond to new threats to security, ranging from terrorism and small arms, to organized crime, drugs and human trafficking, is also vital.

A close relationship has been established between the OSCE and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which have cooperated in solving a number of refugee and IDP situations. I would like to acknowledge, in particular, the role played by the OSCE in mobilizing political support and shaping government policies regarding refugees, displaced persons and minority groups in the Balkans, the South Caucasus and Central Asia.

The United Nations and the OSCE have also cooperated in peacebuilding and peacekeeping activities, particularly in Kosovo, where the OSCE is one of the pillars of UNMIK, and Georgia.

As suggested by the Secretary-General during the last meeting of the Security Council on cooperation with regional organizations held in October, we must now draw a comprehensive picture of existing capabilities in these areas, which would allow us to assess possible gaps. Furthermore, Security Council Resolution 1631 (2005) invited regional organizations that have the capacity for conflict prevention or peacekeeping to place such capacities within the framework of the UN Standby

Arrangements System. This would be an important step towards a more rapid and flexible multilateral crisis response that would truly reflect our collective will.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me also recall that through Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), the international community has committed itself to advancing the role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. In that respect, the work so far conducted by the OSCE, including the Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality upon which the Participating States agreed in 2004, is highly commendable.

Mr. Chairman,

The OSCE and the UN are deeply committed to the promotion of tolerance and inter-cultural dialogue. Earlier this year, the UN Secretary-General launched an Alliance of Civilizations intended to respond to the need for a committed effort by the international community - at both the institutional and civil society level - to bridge divides which may threaten international peace. The task ahead is to translate the broad aims of the initiative into concrete action.

The High-Level Group for the Alliance of Civilizations, which will be guiding the initiative, convened for the first time in Palma de Mallorca on 27 November. It is expected to present a report with recommendations and a plan of action in late 2006.

The United Nations hopes other Governments and entities will join in supporting the initiative.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by expressing our gratitude to you personally as Chairman-in-Office and your team for a successful handling of the chairmanship. I also wish the incoming Belgian Chairmanship every success in tackling the challenging agenda of the OSCE in 2006. Please rest assured of our full support and cooperation.

Thank you for your attention.