

**DASG's intervention at the OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting
29-30 November 2007, Madrid**

Distinguished Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to address the 15th OSCE Ministerial Council today on behalf of the Secretary General of NATO. In my statement on behalf of the Secretary General, I would like to convey his greetings to this important meeting. On behalf of NATO, I would also like to express sincere thanks to Minister Moratinos for his conduct of this meeting and Spain's Chairmanship during which we have continued the good cooperation between our two organizations. We look forward to continuing this cooperation under the incoming Chairmanship of our good partner Finland.

Relations between NATO and the OSCE have, over the years, developed pragmatically, including political dialogue as well as operational interaction in the field. For example, the Chairman-in-Office addresses the North Atlantic Council each year, and NATO officials are regularly invited to address the OSCE Permanent Council and NATO participates in a variety of OSCE meetings. Furthermore, working-level meetings between representatives of the two organisations address thematic issues of mutual concern, such as response to terrorism, border management and security, small arms and light weapons, the implementation of confidence- and security-building measures and, of course, regional issues.

NATO attaches great importance to its co-operation with the OSCE and is committed to defend our shared values. We have largely complementary responsibilities and common interests, both functionally and geographically.

Today's security challenges, for example, terrorism, failed states, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, far exceed 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. And both NATO and the OSCE have important roles to play in this respect.

Like the OSCE, NATO also embraces change and transformation. As you know, our next Summit is only four months away. Early in April, our leaders will meet in Bucharest to chart the way ahead for the Alliance. The decisions they will take 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. I will briefly set out our agenda as we run up to the Bucharest Summit.

Contributing to peace and stability in **Afghanistan** is and will remain NATO's key priority. All 26 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. Long-term success in Afghanistan depends on the ability of the Afghan National Security Forces to assume greater responsibility in the country.

Our ISAF mission today is at a critical stage – and it represents an important test of our solidarity as Allies. But not all of the problems, issues with which the Government of Afghanistan has to deal are ones where NATO is competent or even the best suited to provide assistance. Other organisations – the UN, EU, World Bank – must play their roles in a comprehensive approach that extend the ability of the Government of Afghanistan to meet its peoples' needs.

In that context, we welcome the fact that the OSCE has made Afghanistan a Partner for Cooperation. We look forward to continuing to work with the OSCE in Afghanistan and, in the context of the coordinated approach, appreciate the likely decision OSCE Ministers will take today to increase its support for Afghanistan by contributing to building institutions in that country in areas where the OSCE has expertise, such as police, elections, rule of law.

Kosovo is where we witnessed particularly close interaction in the field developing between NATO and the OSCE in the mid-1990's, for example through the NATO-led Stabilisation Force and the Kosovo Force. A robust UN-mandated KFOR presence has been crucial in helping to maintain security and promoting the political process, as, for example, with the peacefully held elections a few days ago. NATO will remain ready to

respond quickly to any threats to a safe and secure environment, and we will continue to co-ordinate our activities with the OSCE, but also with the UN and the EU. We believe that, as in Afghanistan, success in Kosovo will depend on a concerted effort. Therefore, we would like to see the OSCE mandate to develop and support government institutions in Kosovo extended especially as the status question has entered a critical phase.

Experience gathered in Afghanistan and Kosovo has underscored the need for a **comprehensive approach** by the whole of the international community. In the run-up to Bucharest, and as directed at the Riga Summit last year, 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.

Let me now move to another major area of work related to our next Summit – **preparations for decisions on enlargement**. NATO's door remains open. We will continue to assist those seeking membership to walk through that door as soon as possible. In Riga, NATO leaders committed to issue invitations in Bucharest to those aspirant countries that meet our performance-based standards, and are able to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security. But no tickets have been punched. The strong efforts made by the three countries engaged in the MAP - Albania, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹ - must continue, In addition , we will continue to pursue Intensified Dialogue with **Ukraine and Georgia** on their membership aspirations and the full range of their reform efforts.

Another area of work in the run-up to Bucharest involves further developing NATO's **partnerships**. 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. And, so, the Alliance has a strong interest in continuing this Partnership policy. As we approach Bucharest, we will look to tailor it even better to our

¹ Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

Partners' needs and requirements, and to further engage them in meeting today's security challenges.

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. Again, as we approach Bucharest, we will continue to work closely with these countries to identify further areas for co-operation.

In addition to the three formal partnership arrangements I've just mentioned, the Alliance is also responding to interest in and enhancing its contacts with an ever increasing number of countries – countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and China. Some of these countries already make valuable force contributions to NATO-led operations, and others have only just started a dialogue with NATO and are interested in learning more about the Alliance.

And that leads me directly to another area - the **NATO-Russia** relationship. Earlier this year, NATO and Russia celebrated the 10th anniversary of their relationship, and the 5th anniversary of the NRC. So, it is an appropriate time to reflect on where we stand. NATO-Russia co-operation is not just about overcoming the legacy of the past; it is first and foremost about building a more secure future: one that is in NATO's interest, but also in Russia's interest. It is therefore entirely logical that we should seek to meet the common challenges before us through co-operation, rather than through confrontation.

There are currently a number of issues that appear to divide us – the future status of Kosovo, Missile Defence and CFE are three examples that spring immediately to mind. On the latter, allies agree on the importance of the CFE Treaty regime to European security and would regret any steps to suspend participation in it. But when we take a closer look at these issues, we realise that our long-term interests actually converge. For example, we have a shared interest in a stable Balkans; we have shared interest in confronting the challenges posed by the proliferation of missile technology; and we have a shared interest in maintaining military transparency and predictability throughout the Euro-Atlantic area.

In sum, and just four months away from the Bucharest Summit, NATO remains firmly attached to its determination to provide security against new challenges and with the appropriate capabilities. We are stepping up our engagement in Afghanistan; we are deepening our political engagement across and beyond Europe; and we are modernising our military capabilities to project stability in a new security environment. An Alliance thus transformed will be a unique source of stability and security for the benefit of the entire international community. It will also be a stronger partner for the OSCE in tackling a range of concrete security challenges and in pursuing of our common interests and shared values.