

OSCE Ministerial Meeting

Address by the Estonian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Urmas Paet

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Chairman, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I'd like to thank Ireland for hosting this meeting and for chairing the OSCE this year. I would also like to welcome Mongolia as the newest member of the OSCE. Mongolia has stood and continues to stand for the OSCE's core values. This summer you chaired the Community of Democracies meeting where Secretary Clinton and I launched the LEND, Leaders Engaged in New Democracies initiative.

Increasingly, we must accept that as the world around us changes, we must change with it. Human rights and freedoms remain the same, they remain universal. But new developments mean that these rights and freedoms need protection in new environments. Information and communications technology is changing our world at great speeds. Not keeping up with this is equivalent to being left behind. Naturally, this goes for the OSCE too. Helsinki +40 should help shape the OSCE to correspond to 21st century realities and modern security challenges. And do so in a way that does not undermine fundamental rights and freedoms.

Estonia vocally supports Internet freedom as a form of the freedom of expression. Supporting freedom of expression online is just as important for Estonia as other human rights issues. To retain its relevance, the OSCE must keep up with the pace of change too. We need a strong decision on Strengthening Media Freedom in the OSCE. A decision that would correspond to today's environment and take into account the fact that freedom of expression applies both on and offline. Shutting down the Internet is equivalent to shutting up the world.

This year the OSCE has made good efforts to increase transparency and stability and to reduce risks stemming from cyberspace. The OSCE has an important role to play in regional cyber security arrangements and provides added value in the global debate. We must all be able to deal with cyber threats without undermining fundamental rights and freedoms.

Transparency is a keyword here. The Vienna Document provides practical transparency measures. We attach great importance to its full implementation. We also support the on-going work to substantially modernize the document without undermining the transparency we have.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I'd like to continue by looking at the three protracted conflicts. Ireland and Lithuania deserve recognition for their noticeable efforts to contribute to the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict in Moldova. We have the preconditions: the 5+2 format and its meetings, the rules of procedure and the agenda. But we need results. Ukraine, as the next chair, is in a unique position to improve the situation. We also need constructive engagement of all the parties involved in the settlement process.

The recent general elections confirmed that Georgia is a mature democracy. But in relation to the protracted conflict, there has, however, been no progress. Allow me to recall that we have the Six Point ceasefire agreement with its clearly defined objectives. But instead of implementing the agreement, we see excuses. Not from the Georgian side, but from others. Meanwhile, the situation on the ground in the occupied territories is deteriorating. All parties, the OSCE included, must get engaged and find a lasting, mutually acceptable solution. And, of course, this is also what we need in Azeri-Armenian relations.

And finally, Estonia would like to highlight gender equality, and the empowerment of women. The UN Security Council resolution 1325 is a useful guideline for all OSCE member states. The OSCE's Action Plan on resolution 1325 would be a welcome step in the right direction.

Chairman,

To conclude, allow me to wish Ukraine all the best in taking up the responsibilities of chairing the OSCE in 2013 and promoting its core values. Once again, thank you Ireland.