



Remarks to the Astana Summit of
the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

by H.E. Mr. Boris Tadić
President of the Republic of Serbia

Astana, 1 December 2010

Mr. Chairman,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Dear Colleagues,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor and privilege to join you today in Astana—the first such gathering under the OSCE's auspices in Central Asia.

I wish to thank our host and my good friend, President Nursultsan Nazarbayev, for his generous hospitality. I congratulate him for Kazakhstan's extraordinarily active and dynamic chairmanship-in-office, and for his leadership in bringing us together, at the heads-of-state level, for the first time since Istanbul eleven years ago—and 35 years after the adoption of the Helsinki Final Act.

Serbia expects this Summit's Final Document to ensure the OSCE enhances its role as *the* custodian of an indivisible, cooperative and comprehensive approach to consensus-based security in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area. The Framework for Action will lead us to fulfill the vision of a 21st-century security community framed by agreed principles, shared values and commitments, and common goals.

Mr. Chairman,

A little over a month ago, Serbia proudly celebrated the 10th anniversary of our peaceful democratic revolution. The OSCE, and in particular the Belgrade-based field mission, has greatly supported the consolidation of the new, modern Serbia. It has contributed to the process of democratization and reform in areas such as the rule of law, media and minority rights.

I would like to emphasize the fact that our democratically-elected National Minority Councils can serve as a model for a number of other participating States—as can our efforts to improve the quality of life of our Roma population. I would also like to acknowledge the OSCE's role in promoting greater access to higher education for our ethnic-Albanian minority in the Presevo-Bujanovac region, through the establishment of a Faculty of Business in the Southern Serbia.

Regionally, the OSCE has helped to ensure refugees and their rights—including occupancy and tenancy rights—remain high on the agenda. The OSCE has also helped us enhance our fight against terrorism, human trafficking, and organized crime in particular. Our zero-tolerance policy has produced concrete results. However, ultimate success cannot come without a much stronger and more coordinated effort by all. The expanding network of bilateral extradition agreements is an encouraging sign that the *entire* region has recognized the importance of fighting organized crime together, as one.

By helping us entrench stability throughout the region, the OSCE has contributed to the more rapid integration of the Western Balkans into the EU—Serbia’s strategic goal.

Crucial to securing the region’s European future is the enhancement of good neighborly relations. The commitment by national capitals in our part of the world to engage on all outstanding issues has greatly contributed to building up the regional level of trust to an all-time high. Key relationships in our part of the world have begun to visibly improve—and this has taken place in the midst of a renewed impetus to complete the process of full reconciliation in the Balkans.

Serbia has taken the lead in working for change. Our Government has worked tirelessly to hold individuals to account for what they did—by fully cooperating with the Hague Tribunal—and our society has taken great strides in overcoming the tragic legacy of the 1990s. This paradigm shift prompted the Serbian National Assembly to pass a historic Declaration on Srebrenica earlier this year. The crime was condemned, apologies were made, and condolences were extended.

Mr. Chairman,

While regional cooperation has never stood on more solid ground than it does today, the overall security environment has become more complicated as a result of UDI—or the unilateral declaration of independence by the ethnic-Albanian authorities of our southern province of Kosovo and Metohija.

Serbia’s principled position remains unchanged. We will not recognize Kosovo’s UDI, explicitly or implicitly.

We continue to believe that like anywhere else in the world—and especially in the OSCE space—there can never be a sustainable solution to an issue of such magnitude and sensitivity without the consent of all stakeholders.

We feel vindicated that the world has now supported by acclamation the fact that dialogue is the only road to peace in Kosovo. We look forward to beginning this dialogue as soon as possible.

Working towards a durable settlement also requires everyone to stay committed to engage in good-faith.

We reasonably expect the Pristina-based OMIK field mission to remain fully status-neutral, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), and to focus more on improving the lives of the non-Albanian communities in the province.

We also expect there be no attempts to alter realities on the ground while discussions get underway. Any attempt to change these realities through the use of force would bring an immediate end to the process of dialogue.

Lastly, we also expect the continued pursuit of UDI recognitions to recede. Everyone who wanted to make their point has already made it—and obviously, we still do not have a settlement.

A number of OSCE participating States—and EU members—have refrained from recognizing UDI. On behalf of the Republic of Serbia, allow me once again to sincerely thank these countries for their support and solidarity. I would like to appeal to them to stay the course, for I believe this will directly contribute to the success of the peace process—which, I wish to underline—fully in accordance with the spirit of Helsinki that guided us all the way to Astana.

Mr. Chairman,

I conclude by reiterating Serbia's absolute commitment to the founding principles of the OSCE, and to underline our intent to keep supporting the Organization's work both in the Balkans and further afield.

I wish the Republic of Lithuania all success as it takes over the chairmanship for next year, during which Serbia's capital, Belgrade, will proudly host the 20th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. In 2011, we will also preside over three critical regional bodies—the Central European Initiative, the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative, and the Southeast European Cooperation Process—before taking up the chairmanship of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation in 2012. We see these activities as setting the stage for Serbia to assume additional responsibilities designed to strengthen the OSCE.

We hope all this will encourage everyone to work even harder to get the Western Balkans to the finish line as soon as possible.

Thank you for your attention.