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OSCE Expert Conference

Astana, Kazakhstan

October 14, 2010

As Prepared for Delivery

Introduction

I'd like to thank the Government of Kazakhstan for hosting this important OSCE Conference on "Successful Strategies, Effective Policies, and Best Practices to Prevent Terrorism." The United States recognizes the leadership Kazakhstan has shown in the OSCE and is very pleased to have this opportunity to collaborate with our partners here in Astana on the vital issue of terrorism prevention.

Kazakhstan's OSCE Chairmanship this year is significant. The OSCE is known for its comprehensive, multi-dimensional approach to security and for being the largest regional security organization in the world. Now, for the very first time, the OSCE is headed by a Central Asian country – an affirmation that the OSCE draws strength from the diversity of OSCE participating States from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

I would also like to express our gratitude to the hard work of the OSCE's Action against Terrorism Unit, which has done so much to spearhead our shared efforts.

As a significant contributor to peace and security in across its region, the OSCE is well-suited, across its three dimensions, to address the particular challenges of counterterrorism.

In view of the upcoming OSCE summit here in Astana, this discussion is a well-timed opportunity to consider ways in which the OSCE can continue to innovate and deepen its contributions in this area.

To begin our discussion, along with my fellow panelists, I'd like to discuss briefly some key terrorist-linked transnational threats and trends; highlight current U.S. approaches to prevent and combat terrorism, and to counter violent extremism; and offer possible areas for future action that OSCE could take to further efforts on terrorism prevention.

Global and Regional Transnational Terrorist Threats and Trends:

With respect to threats and trends, let me begin by saying that terrorism remains one of the most enduring challenges to international peace and security that we face. The United States is committed to the urgent need to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qa'ida's core and its adherents – a terrorist network that has killed thousands of people of multiple faiths

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and nationalities, many from OSCE members states.

While al-Qa'ida has had some successes over the past years, we believe its overall success has been significantly tempered by numerous setbacks. Al-Qa'ida's indiscriminate targeting of civilians, including Muslims, has increased popular disaffection with its extremist ideology. The number of imams, clerics and former militants speaking out against the organization's indiscriminate use of violence is increasing and that is good news.

In Pakistan and Afghanistan, the group is under serious military pressure. Al-Qa'ida's leadership is shrinking, and it is facing growing challenges as it seeks to raise money, train recruits, and plan attacks outside of the region. Despite these setbacks to the core leadership, however, the broader AQ threat is becoming more widely distributed, and more geographically and ethnically diversified among affiliates such as in Yemen and the Sahel.

We have also witnessed a continued evolution of the threat which is no longer limited to coordinated, sophisticated, 9/11-style attacks, but expanding to single individuals attempting to carry out relatively unsophisticated attacks.

We remain concerned about the terrorist threat to Central Asia posed by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and a splinter group known as the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU). Supporters of both terrorist groups are believed to maintain a presence in the region. Afghanistan's security also looms large. We are working with our allies to ensure that Afghanistan will not remain a safe haven for militants who aspire to cause regional instability. However, the extension of trafficking and organized crime networks in Central Asia with links to Afghanistan could help finance terrorists.

With the youth population expanding rapidly throughout South Asia and the Middle East, the prospect of increasing numbers of "at risk" young people also rises. Europe may also continue to be fertile ground for recruitment for extremists if sizable numbers of recent immigrants and, in particular, second and third generation Muslims continue to experience socioeconomic and integration problems and feel alienated by governments' domestic and foreign policies. Nor is the United States immune from AQ's ideology. Several high profile cases the past few years, such as native Californian Adam Gadahn who has become an AQ spokesman or the December 25th attempted bombing of a U.S. bound airliner by Nigerian Farouk Abdulmutallab, demonstrate that we must all remain vigilant.

We also see the expanded reach of its virulent ideology through the Internet. Al-Qa'ida has continued its efforts to encourage key regional affiliates and so-called "jihadist" networks to pursue a global agenda using both the Internet as a means to distribute propaganda and telecommunications infrastructure to plan attacks and coordinate movements.

Terrorists are not only using the Internet for communication, recruiting, training and planning – but also to transfer funds, although international action has made significant progress towards addressing this illicit activity. Most major terrorist groups have exploited the mass communication capabilities of the Internet through numerous propaganda websites and forums, although radicalization that leads to violent extremism still typically occurs through first-hand human interaction, rather than virtual interaction.

U.S. Strategies and Policies To Prevent and Combat Terrorism

Let me underscore: No single country can address the threat of terrorism alone. Nor can this threat be resolved through military power alone; rather it requires a comprehensive approach including continual exchange of ideas and engagement with the international community.

Addressing the challenge of terrorism over the long term demands multilateral cooperation; capacity building; and considered efforts to counter violent extremism by all levels of society and government.

The United States has been working hard to reinvigorate alliances and strengthen existing partnerships; this is especially true in the arena of counterterrorism. Through consistent diplomatic engagement, we are seeking to boost the political will and strengthen the resolve of leaders around the world to confront terrorist threats. Ultimately, our success will hinge upon strengthening the ability of others around the world to deal with terrorism in their countries and regions.

The more decentralized and diffuse threat heightens the important role of local communities, which can identify and bring the attention of lone actors to law enforcement officials who may have limited penetration in these communities. In a number of cases we have seen this happen in the United States, thus helping prevent terrorist attacks.

We are committed to addressing the limitations in some states that allow terrorists to operate freely, by promoting effective civilian law enforcement, good governance, and the rule of law, and the delivery of public services to the general population. A major focus of this work involves effectively building capacity and making counterterrorism training of police, prosecutors, border officials, and members of the judiciary more systematic, more innovative, and more

effective. We are committed to working with our OSCE partners to promote these efforts.

The United States has enhanced our approach to preventing acts of terror by pursuing an integrated set of security policies that seeks to build political will and concerted cooperation among partner countries in order to deprive terrorists of the conditions conducive to the perpetration of violent actions and the spread of their perverse ideology.

We need to look to the grievances and local factors that terrorist organizations exploit and the propaganda that is their key instrument in pushing vulnerable individuals down the path toward violence. More efforts are needed through words and deeds to undermine the insidious message of terrorist groups and to prevent vulnerable individuals from turning to violence.

To make progress on this front, we must resolve legitimate grievances peacefully and strive to foster good governance, reduce poverty and corruption, and improve education, health and basic services. In particular, we need to focus our efforts on locations where the risk for radicalization is exceptionally high. Once we understand the unique combination of grievances and needs that are driving recruitment in these "hotspots," we can set about creating tailor-made programs and strategies in response.

As we focus on these factors and pursue our counterterrorism work more broadly, we must constantly bear in mind that there is no tradeoff between security and human rights and the rule of law. To the contrary, it is increasingly evident that the recruitment of terrorists is most successful where local dynamics increase popular disaffection and create conditions of desperation.

To achieve this objective, we must empower national and local leaders to challenge extremist views through well-designed programs, training, and funding. We should recognize the added value of partnering with non-traditional actors such as NGOs, foundations, public-private partnerships, and private businesses because these actors are often the most capable and credible partners in local communities.

Regional/Multilateral Efforts and the Role of OSCE in Preventing Terrorism

What should be the way forward for the OSCE and its participating states?

This is an important question that we should try to address as we look at the role of OSCE and regional organizations in preventing terrorism. Let me offer some thoughts.

For the United States, we seek to build a network of alliances and partnerships, regional organizations, and global institutions that is durable enough to meet today's challenges and adapt to threats of which we cannot yet conceive.

In this respect, the OSCE also has an important role to play in helping to build a common strategy with regional cooperation. Moreover, like other regional organizations, the OSCE plays a useful role in building both regional ownership of the UN CT framework and indigenous counterterrorism capacity at the national level. This is done through the sharing of best practices and the implementation of training programs designed to improve the ability of national and local leaders to mitigate the vulnerabilities on which terrorism thrives.

In addition, we should seek to strengthen the role and programs of OSCE's field missions, carefully evaluate the effectiveness of OSCE activities and programs in the run-up to the summit, and determine priorities for the way ahead.

An important theme for the summit will be further development of OSCE's capabilities to combat transnational threats and continued work on counterterrorism will be a fundamental building block of that effort.

The United States has focused its counterterrorism efforts over the past few years in the OSCE on issues including building public private partnerships; protecting critical energy infrastructure and cyber security, securing travel documents, and enhancing the capacities of prosecutors and judges, and the wider criminal justice system. The OSCE should continue to deepen and strengthen its capacity-building activities.

However, we also believe that confronting violent extremism that leads to terrorism is and will remain one of the greatest challenges facing the OSCE region. As an organization, the OSCE needs to embrace this challenge, identify where its comparative advantages lie in working with countries in the region to address this challenge.

OSCE activities should be strengthened to address the conditions that are conducive to terrorist recruitment and the spread of transnational threats. Policies and programs designed to counter violent extremism will complement capacity-building projects by mitigating the very threats that otherwise necessitate a law enforcement response. The key to

success is focusing our attention on locations where the risk of radicalization may be of particular concern. These areas can be as large as a province and as small as a city block.

We believe that the OSCE should work to counter violent extremism by using innovative approaches to mitigate the social and economic factors that amplify the appeal of al-Qa'ida's radical ideology. For instance, the OSCE should work closely with victims and survivors of terrorism to encourage their efforts to condemn violent and extremist ideologies. Other areas of potential are in prison reform and inmate education to prevent radicalization and rehabilitate those who have been radicalized already, as well as programs to strengthen co-operation between government institutions and civil society.

We also support the expansion of the OSCE's efforts for and with Afghanistan to more effectively address transnational threats in the region, and we believe that the OSCE's engagement on issues such as border management will help increase security for the entire region. Transnational criminal networks can move not only illicit goods such as narcotics, but violent extremists as well.

The OSCE should also endeavor to elevate our understanding of the special role played by women and youth, both as victims and possible perpetrators of terrorist acts. Due to their positions in their families, women can exert a stabilizing influence and empower individuals to be able to resist violent extremist propaganda and radicalization that can lead to terrorism. Providing opportunities for women to apply their skills and share their knowledge can drive social and economic progress that not only brings material benefits to their families and societies, but has a derivative effect that increases ideological moderation.

In this regard, the United States welcomes the chance to help raise awareness of a relatively new and innovative initiative called Sisters Against Violent Extremism (or SAVE), within Central Asia and the wider region, including Afghanistan. SAVE promotes the roles that women and children can play in countering and preventing violent extremism. In places like Northern Ireland, Spain, Pakistan, and Indonesia we have seen and are impressed by the courageous efforts of women who have used films, press events, reconciliation workshops, newspaper editorials, leadership training retreats and schools to energize and mobilize civil society's contributions toward a safer world. We look forward to discussing in more detail a potential OSCE-organized SAVE workshop next year with our hosts for this important meeting and welcome questions or feedback on this initiative from conference participants.

This is but one example of the ways in which non-governmental organizations can effectively partner with the OSCE and other multilateral institutions to advance our work in this area.

We have also been pleased with the opportunity OSCE's work and activities have given us to pursue and develop specific bilateral initiatives, notably with the Russian Federation on public private partnerships and tourism security; and with Turkey on countering violent extremism. We look forward to developing these and other partnerships further.

Conclusion

Through continued dialogue, the implementation of sound policies, and a comprehensive approach, we believe the OSCE has an important role to play in securing long-term stability in this region.

My remarks were intended to lay out U.S. views of our common threats and our thoughts on ways in which OSCE's mandate can constructively expand to build capacity of its participating states, at a national and regional and sub-regional level, and begin to take on preventive measures to counter violent extremism.

The OSCE must respond to the needs of its participating states and maintain flexibility to meet these requirements. One-size-fits-all programs may work in some instances, while in others, regional and trans-regional strategies have a better chance of succeeding. This is why this conference is so important to hear from other members and maintain a dialogue.

We anticipate that this conference will serve as a critical step in the ongoing process of sharing best practices for strengthening domestic counterterrorism infrastructures and addressing the issue of recruitment to terrorism. The United States looks forward to participating in this important work with all of you and working to ensure our mutual goals of defeating terrorism and ensuring our common security.

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