



Speech by OSCE Chairman-in, first Serbian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ivica Dacic, the 2BS forum titled "Future perspectives of the global security architecture" held in Budva:

Mr. President,
Madam President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to be here today in my capacity as Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. I would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro, and the Atlantic Council of Montenegro, for bringing together such an impressive group of policymakers, diplomats and other experts to discuss some of the most urgent issues on our common security agenda.

Serbia's OSCE Chairmanship comes at a defining moment for European security and for the OSCE. When Serbia was assigned to lead the OSCE in 2015, we expected that the high point of our Chairmanship would be the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act. For decades, the ten principles of security enshrined in that pioneering document were a cornerstone of European stability. But last year those principles were seriously jeopardized, and we witnessed the return of armed conflict in Europe. So instead of celebrating the historic triumph of cooperation over conflict embodied by the Helsinki Final Act and continuing our work toward the 2010 Astana Summit vision of a security community, the Serbia's OSCE Chairmanship is now dealing with a deep crisis of European security.

In retrospect, it is clear that the crisis in and around Ukraine did not come from "out of the blue." A renewed East-West divide, fed by different threat perceptions and security narratives, had already been growing for some time. Constructive engagement on key issues of European security became increasingly difficult. Growing mistrust, mutual suspicion and confrontational policies hindered cooperation even in areas of common concern. We saw a lack of progress in a number of key areas of the OSCE agenda. Since the emergence of the crisis in and around Ukraine, all of these challenges have only grown worse.

Today the situation on the ground in eastern Ukraine remains tense. The ceasefire is fragile, marred by daily violations, continued use of heavy weapons, and eruptions of fighting around Shyrokyne and the Donetsk airport. So far more than 6,400 people have died in the conflict, and both combatants and civilians continue to be killed. Over 2.1 million Ukrainians have fled their homes, with more than 1.3 million internally displaced and over 850,000 refugees in neighboring countries. Those who remain in the regions of conflict face worsening humanitarian conditions and life-threatening risks from shelling, mines and unexploded ordnance.

This ongoing human suffering is completely unacceptable. I once again call on all parties to stop the fighting, to fulfill their obligations under the Minsk agreements in good faith, and to resolve this crisis through diplomacy and dialogue. We must restore peace and reduce tensions, otherwise we could see a renewed escalation of the conflict and the risk of a larger confrontation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Reconsolidating European security will only be possible if we can achieve a durable settlement of the crisis in and around Ukraine, and jointly address its broader implications for European security. This is exactly where the OSCE is making a difference.

The OSCE is playing an invaluable role in helping to de-escalate the conflict and facilitating the political process. The Serbian Chairmanship is doing its utmost to pursue a diplomatic solution to the crisis in an impartial, transparent and reliable manner. Serbia brings to the table good relations with all the key stakeholders, and we are committed to working with them toward this goal. Our highest priorities are to prevent the crisis from escalating into a larger conflict, to support efforts to find a political solution on the basis of the Minsk agreements, and to protect the inclusive and cooperative nature of the OSCE's work. Serbia's own recent past demonstrates that, despite many difficulties, it is possible to set a positive agenda for the future focused on cooperation and reconciliation.

The Trilateral Contact Group of senior representatives of Ukraine, the Russian Federation and the OSCE has been working hard to achieve a peaceful and sustainable solution. The package of implementation measures it announced in Minsk on 12 February provides the best roadmap to restore peace to eastern Ukraine and to enable reconstruction and reconciliation efforts to begin. A comprehensive ceasefire and the withdrawal of heavy weapons are the top priority. De-militarizing the conflict would allow the other critical steps in the implementation plan to move forward, including restoring economic links, holding local elections, and introducing constitutional reform. We managed to establish four working groups to address key issues of security, the political process, humanitarian issues, and economic affairs and rehabilitation. I would like to thank Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, my Special Representative to Ukraine and to the Trilateral Contact Group, for her tireless efforts to help the parties find the path toward peace.

The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine is doing its utmost to facilitate the ceasefire

and withdrawal of heavy weapons. Indeed, it is the only entity that can monitor and verify this process in a credible manner. Earlier this year, we managed to extend the mandate of the Mission for twelve months, until March 2016 (previous mandate lasted 6 months), providing for better planning. But let's not forget that it is an unarmed civilian mission carrying out what is essentially a peacekeeping operation. OSCE monitors are working under serious operational constraints in a dangerous and volatile situation. I applaud their courage and commitment. But they need to be able to do their jobs properly—which means they need full and unhindered access throughout its area of operation, and all parties must guarantee their safety and security.

The Special Monitoring Mission is the most visible element of the OSCE response to the crisis in and around Ukraine. But the entire OSCE toolbox has been mobilized to address the crisis, as well as to support other critical steps Ukraine must take, including constitutional reform, protection of the rights of national minorities, national dialogue and reconciliation.

All in all, the OSCE has persuasively demonstrated that it can deliver.

As a result, the international community has “rediscovered” the OSCE. Indeed, the Organization is experiencing a renaissance of the sort. The participating States have a new willingness to make greater use of our inclusive platform for dialogue and our flexible toolbox.

In the current context, the OSCE could be a valuable tool for defusing the crisis and moving away from the logic of moves and counter-moves, which fuels escalation, and toward engagement and shared responsibility. As the only regional platform that brings all the key stakeholders to the table, the OSCE is keeping critical lines of communication open, and finding opportunities for joint action.

However, we must not overlook the detrimental impact of the crisis in and around Ukraine on the broader OSCE agenda, in particular the protracted conflicts in Moldova and the South Caucasus. The protracted conflicts continue to demand OSCE engagement to prevent armed confrontation and find peaceful and sustainable solutions. At the same time, new and emerging transnational and global threats to security like terrorism, foreign fighters phenomenon, organized crime, as well as instability in neighbouring regions—particularly in the southern Mediterranean and Afghanistan—are also high on the OSCE agenda.

One of the key lessons we have learned from the OSCE response to the crisis in and around Ukraine is that we need to strengthen the Organization's capacity to prevent and respond to conflicts. We also need to strengthen its ability to address new and emerging threats to security. If we want to ensure that the OSCE can carry out its many mandates effectively, we must invest more in the Organization, both politically and in terms of resources.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we prepare to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, we should look back to the roots of the Helsinki process and learn from the commitment of those Cold War-era

leaders to work together. We should remember that we have a joint responsibility for peace and security in Europe. Although the Helsinki principles have been violated, they remain valid and do not need to be reconsidered. Instead they need to be reaffirmed, strengthened, and made more difficult to defy.

With this in mind, next month I will convene an informal high-level meeting in Helsinki to address the broader implications of the current crisis on Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security, and on the OSCE in particular. We will explore opportunities for finding common ground on how to move our security dialogue and cooperation forward. Some of the key questions for discussion include:

- How can we promote a shift from confrontation to cooperation? Are there security challenges on which we can work together and engage in constructive cooperation?
- How can we ensure that the principles and commitments that all OSCE participating States have committed to uphold are respected and implemented fully and in good faith?
- And how can we strengthen the capacity of the OSCE to address current and future challenges to our security, including preventing and resolving conflicts?

Much more needs to be done to revitalize the OSCE as a platform for cooperative security. We need to find ways to rebuild trust and confidence and to re-engage in joint efforts to strengthen security across the whole OSCE area. We are looking forward to the outcome of the work of the Panel of Eminent Persons, which is discussing ways to reconsolidate European security as a common project.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The crisis in and around Ukraine has reconfirmed the value of the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security. It has clearly shown that security and stability will not endure without full respect for, and strict implementation of, all OSCE commitments across the three dimensions of security.

The OSCE is a unique and invaluable asset for the international community. The current crisis has underscored its enduring strengths and its utility as the organization best suited to bridge divides and facilitate cooperative solutions. Now it is up to us to make good use of it.

Thank you.