



Distinguished Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE, Minister Lajčák,  
Esteemed Secretary General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to have the opportunity to address you at the opening of this important meeting, at the invitation of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and my dear colleague Minister Lajčák. Only three months ago, Minister Lajčák and I jointly opened a Conference on security sector governance and reform in South East Europe, which brought together experts from this part of the world in Belgrade to share their views and positive experiences acquired throughout the process. I hope that the outcomes of the Belgrade meeting will add up to the success of this conference.

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I would like to take this opportunity to recall that Serbia is one of the founding members of the OSCE Group of Friends of Security Sector Governance and Reform since its inception in 2014. During the Serbian OSCE Chairmanship in 2015, we placed this issue among our priorities and organized a successful conference in Belgrade on this topic. Our activity and constant commitment to the SSG/R indicates our readiness to continue to invest efforts in the promotion of this concept, for we deeply believe that a well-organized security sector is one of the cardinal elements for good governance of a state as a whole.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In the complex security environment at the global level, the topic of the security sector reform is gaining in importance. The growing security challenges we are facing daily, particularly those of transnational nature require a comprehensive response of the security sector at national, regional and global levels alike. Proceeding from the fact that the current security challenges and threats are indivisible and know no national borders, I am confident that a priority task for us all is to devise and implement a common approach and mutual coordination in order to

counter as efficiently as possible the phenomena posing a threat to peace, stability and progress in our societies. Key precondition for joint action that would contribute to building of peace and stability at the regional and global levels, is first and foremost, the creation of efficient and reliable national security sectors.

Strengthening the capacity of national security sectors to efficiently respond to challenges such as terrorism and violent extremism, transnational organized crime, human and drug trafficking, as well as cyber security challenges, calls for dedication, perseverance and resolve of all relevant social stakeholders. Key elements for the success of this undertaking are the national ownership of the reform process and comprehensive approach and cooperation among the representatives of state institutions, civil society, academia and the media.

I am deeply confident that the OSCE as a regional security organization and a platform for dialogue between the participating States and Partners for Co-operation has a huge potential for ensuring an inclusive and holistic approach to the security sector governance and reform process. In addition to the OSCE principles and commitments assumed by the participating States that represent a solid framework for the promotion and implementation of the security sector reform concept, the Organization also has the comparative advantage provided by its field operations extending considerable support to the participating States in reforms at many levels, such as police and judiciary reform, counter-terrorism capacity building, combating corruption, and border management.

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The mission activities also include the assistance to states in the process of formulating their national strategies and policies, promotion of legislative frameworks, strengthening control of security structure operations, improving coordination among various bodies, staff education and training and monitoring the results achieved.

Based on longstanding experience with the OSCE Mission in Serbia, spanning over two decades, I am of the view that the OSCE field operations should continue to play an important role in creating a long-term sustainable security sector in participating States by lending support to institutions in the reform process, while taking care of the specific needs of individual states. Key principle and precondition in this process is the national ownership over the reform process including maintaining partnership relations between a host state and OSCE presence.

In the Republic of Serbia, SSG/R represents a major segment of comprehensive reform processes in society. The purpose of the reform is the establishment and development of security system ensuring peace, stability and prosperity of our state and its citizens while guaranteeing the respect of human rights and rule of law.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am confident that the participation in multinational operations makes a very important

contribution to shared responsibility for the establishment and preservation of peace and stability in broader global areas and for the building of post-conflict societies. Serbia attaches utmost importance to the participation in the UN- and EU-mandated missions and operations for which the members of the Ministry of Defense, Army of Serbia and Ministry of the Interior have been recognized. The efforts of Serbia to increase its participation in civilian missions like the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine reaffirm our readiness for responsibility- and burden-sharing towards building peace and stability, wherever necessary, respecting international law and recognized universal standards.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I expect that the forthcoming two-day debate will make a positive contribution to our joint efforts to find the best way of cooperation with a view to strengthening comprehensive security and ensuring lasting peace and stability in the OSCE area.

Allow me to once again thank the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Minister Lajčák and Slovakia currently holding Chairmanship for organizing this important conference and for its leadership role and efforts invested over many years in promoting the SSG/R concept.

I wish you a lot of success in your work.