

**CENTER FOR
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PASSING THE TORCH OF THE OSCE CHAIRMANSHIP

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JANUSZ BUGAJSKI: First of all, I'd like to thank everybody for braving the weather. We decided to bring Astana to Washington, literally, except I think they clear the snow quicker over there. But anyway, thank you for coming. Thank you for coming a little bit late. We thought the federal government starts at 9:00, so two-hour delay, starts at 11:00. Evidently, they start at 10:00. But anyway, that's neither here nor there.

What we've decided to do because we have less time and fewer panelists, some people are stuck in places like Florida, Connecticut, Pennsylvania. I think Andy Kuchins did well. He got stuck in Tampa. But those of the panels that could make it we've decided to combine to put on one panel, which makes the whole panel more exciting. We'll cover more issues. We'll have a little bit more time. We'll go on till 1:00.

By the way, do finish your breakfast because lunch is arriving soon. So – (laughter) – we want you to eat as much as possible. So we do have – and I'm very happy that they're all here. We do have six panelists. I'm still waiting for Richard Weitz, who was supposed to chair the session, but I'm going to moderate myself.

MS. ASSENOVA: He's stuck on the Metro.

MR. BUGAJSKI: He's stuck on the Metro, okay. Anyway, I'm going to go straight – I'm not going to say many introductions. I mean, what we're going to try and do today, basically, is to assess the performance of the Kazakh chair in office for 2010 of OSCE and then look forward to the Lithuanian chair, which has already begun, for 2011, the priorities that Lithuania has set for itself and the obstacles that they are likely to face.

In any case, six panels – six panelists. In order of appearance – and I'll be very brief; the bios are contained in the package you should have received – first, we'll have Ambassador William Courtney, who will say a few words about the “Outcomes of the Astana Summit.”

Secondly, we will have Jeffrey McCausland from U.S. Army War College who will talk about – he has the – like all military people, he has a PowerPoint, dealing with “Military Security: Vienna Document and the CFE.” Quite a lot on his plate.

Third, because he has to leave a little bit early, and I'm so happy he's here, Simonas Satunas from the Lithuanian Embassy, DCM for the Lithuanian embassy. The ambassador, unfortunately, is very busy today. He couldn't make it. But thank you for coming, Simonas.

Fourth, we'll have our good friend from Muenchen, Vladimir Socor, who's going to be talking about protracted conflicts, some of which he started. (Laughter.) No – (chuckles) – I'm joking. Some of which he – all of which he continues to monitor very closely.

Fifth, we'll have Mike Haltzel, who feels very energetic today, just dug himself out of a long driveway. And he's going to be talking about the "Human Dimension: Freedom of the Media, Protection of Civil and Political Rights."

And sixth, but not least, and we decided to leave him till the end of the panel because I'm sure he has a lot to say, Ambassador Erlan Idrissov, our good friend here in Washington, who's going to talk about the performance of the Kazakh chair and some of the issues that Kazakhstan still confronts.

So without further ado, one other thing, make sure you do get a copy of our report on the Kazakh chair, which we literally finalized about 72 hours ago. Miraculous speed of publishing, I must admit, within 48 hours. In any case, let's begin with Bill – William Courtney, on the Astana summit.

And I'd like to ask you all to maybe limit your remarks to 15 minutes maximum, shorter if possible, so we have as much time as possible for discussion. Thank you.

WILLIAM COURTNEY: Janusz, thanks very much. It's a pleasure to be here, especially with some good, close friends. The Astana summit was modest and useful, such as in restating a commitment to the OSCE's noble principles. The summit would not have taken place had not Kazakhstan brought commitment, energies and resources to the chairmanship.

Helsinki Commission Co-Chair Senator Benjamin Cardin said that Kazakhstan was a credible steward of the OSCE during its chairmanship, and this is true, despite Kazakhstan's nonfulfillment of its prior pledges on human rights and democracy improvements.

At the same time, the summit signaled that the OSCE remains on the sidelines of the big issues of politics and security in Europe and Eurasia. The OSCE is continuing its slide from a high-profile body into a provider of technical assistance and monitoring of elections and media. In Astana, the president of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly said that the organization was facing an identity crisis. And he was not wrong.

The ongoing political crisis in Belarus illustrates the OSCE's slide. The OSCE Permanent Council, as a council, has said not a word about it. Instead, the European Union and America are playing the key roles. They have issued joint statements condemning the violence and calling for the release of detainees. They were also coordinating strategy for sanctions and travel. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton recently met with Belarusian human-rights activists.

To assess the value of the summit and of the OSCE, let's look at six major challenges in Eurasia and Europe last year which are relevant to the OSCE's role of promoting comprehensive security, and then look at the role of the OSCE and the summit in addressing them.

The first challenge was the spread of terrorism, insurgency, and human-rights abuses in Russia's North Caucasus. According to the 2009 Department of State Report on Human Rights, issued in March 2010, in the North Caucasus, there were serious problems with civilian control of security forces. The government's poor human-rights situation worsened. Authorities

appeared to act outside of federal government control, and many of the killings of prominent human-rights activists and journalists were related to the conflict in the region.

Russia, which like other OSCE participating states has a veto power over decisions of the permanent council, has forestalled any action by the OSCE to ameliorate the tragedy in the North Caucasus. In Astana, both Secretary Clinton, in her intervention, and the Astana Summit Declaration were silent on the North Caucasus.

The second challenge last year was the wave of persecution last June against the ethnic Uzbek minority in Kyrgyzstan. According to Freedom House, hundreds are believed to have been killed. Kazakhstan helpfully facilitated the removal of the corrupt former president, Kurmanbek Bakiyev. In July, OSCE participating states agreed to deploy a 52-person police advisory group in southern Kyrgyzstan, but without authority to make arrests or to investigate the ethnic violence that took place in June.

In Astana, Secretary Clinton called for the OSCE to be empowered to respond more effectively to crises within its own area, and she said the United States was “working to find a framework that will allow for timely, impartial OSCE reporting during emergencies like those that had taken place in Georgia and Kyrgyzstan.”

Secretary Clinton added that an “even more essential task is to strengthen the OSCE’s role in preventing conflict from erupting or reigniting. There is no other regional organization,” she said, “as well positioned to do so.” The Astana Declaration, however, was silent on Kyrgyzstan and intoned only vaguely that “new crises must be prevented.”

A third challenge in 2010 was the continued Russian-Georgian tension arising from Russia’s military occupation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and areas further into Georgia. In January 2010, in Paris, Secretary Clinton said the United States had “repeatedly called on Russia to honor the terms of its ceasefire agreement with Georgia,” and Washington refused “to recognize Russia’s claims of independence for Abkhazia and South Ossetia.”

Further, she said, the 2008 war had “created a further obstacle to moving ahead on the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty.” In Astana, in remarks evidently aimed at Russia, Secretary Clinton called for allowing the OSCE to do its job and restore a meaningful OSCE presence to Georgia. The Astana declaration, however, failed to mention Georgia or the Russian military occupation.

A fourth challenge last year was the impasse over the other two frozen conflicts: Nagorno-Karabakh and Trans-Dniestr. In Astana, Secretary Clinton expressed hope that the summit’s framework for action would “call for the resumption without delay of formal five-plus-two talks to resolve the conflict in Moldova and identify specific steps to promote transparency and demilitarization.”

She said the OSCE must renew “efforts toward a settlement in Nagorno-Karabakh based on basic principles elaborated under the auspices of the Minsk group.” The Astana summit,

however, failed to approve a framework for action. The summit declaration said only that “increased efforts should be made to resolve existing conflicts.”

A fifth challenge last year related to the war in Afghanistan and the implications for OSCE participating states. Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, all vulnerable states, have long and porous borders with Afghanistan. In Astana, Secretary Clinton voiced an expectation of “OSCE efforts to improve border security, counter illicit trafficking, boost legitimate trade, and promote economic development.”

Rivalries and restrictions by Central Asian states, Russian vetoes, and perceptions by Central Asian dictators that the OSCE mainly criticizes them – all three have impeded the OSCE’s potential to play a more beneficial role related to Afghanistan. OSCE endeavors in Central Asia have helped at the margin to facilitate the operation of a Northern Distribution Network through which are shipped vital supplies for U.S. and ISAF troops in Afghanistan.

Finally, a sixth main OSCE challenge last year was to improve respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Dictatorships in Central Asia and Azerbaijan and the rollback of freedoms in Belarus, Russia and Ukraine pose rising threats to freedom in the OSCE area and the ability of the organization to be effective, particularly in the face of so many potential vetoes to effective action.

In Astana, Secretary Clinton said the OSCE participating states “must address serious shortcomings in implementing our commitments.” She rightly said it was “not enough for governments to empower only civil-society organizations with which they agree” or for constitutions “to guarantee freedom of the press if, in reality, journalists” were pressured or assaulted, or for elections to be held which were not free and fair or monitored by the OSCE.

On these points, the Astana declaration offered only mellifluous words of reassurance. It reaffirmed commitments on human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law.

Addressing the future of the OSCE, Secretary Clinton candidly said it could be effective “only if participating states back its institutions and missions with political will.” She understandably warned that the consensus principle must not be “an impediment to effective action.”

In fact, however, it is already enfeebling the OSCE. One only has to read the bland Astana declaration or note the near-absence of international media attention to the summit. Another problem, to be truthful, is the reluctance of some OSCE participating states, including America and many European Union members, to engage in the OSCE on institutions which might jeopardize other important interests. Thus, for example, in Astana, Secretary Clinton did not mention the North Caucasus crisis or the rollback of freedoms in Belarus, Russia and Ukraine.

Upon reflection, the Astana summit shined a brighter light on the OSCE’s weaknesses than on its strengths. Wholly new diplomatic strategies will be necessary if the OSCE’s principles are to be advanced in more effective ways. New strategies must address the constraint of consensus decision-making, a lodestone that is growing heavier with adverse political trends in Belarus, Russia and Ukraine.

If this problem is not resolved, Washington and Brussels will fill more of the void in that – more of the void in Vienna. This will not serve the interests of building stakeholder support for OSCE principles throughout the entire OSCE region, from Vancouver to Vladivostok. Thank you.

MR. BUGAJSKI: Okay, thank you, Bill. A lot of food for thought, and I'm sure a lot of people have questions and discussion. I have one in particular that I'll save till later. Let's go straight on to "Military Security: Vienna Document and the CFE", Jeffrey McCausland. I think you have a PowerPoint. Here we go.

JEFFREY MCCAUSLAND: Yeah. Thanks a lot.

MR. BUGAJSKI: Vlad, we know you're famous, but – (laughter) – if you could move to the side so – (off mic).

MR. MCCAUSLAND: Well, thank you, Chairman. My apologies for using the PowerPoint. I find it useful when talking about CFE because of all the maps and stuff. And I apologize if I've inconvenienced our chairman, but I hope you will make a judge whether it's useful or not.

Let me move on very quickly. And I always like my talk – to begin my talks about arms control right now by saying, first of all, I think that we're about to see a return to arms control as a useful tool of diplomacy. I think it's the way – may well have been established by some of the efforts over the last year by President Obama in terms of the – of course, the new START agreement, the Washington conference and successful completion of the NPT review. But that doesn't mean that the road ahead will not be difficult.

It's also, I think, important to emphasize what arms control is and is not. It is, of course, a tool of policy, and it's very different from disarmament, though oftentimes one will use these terms interchangeably. And you'll see here the definitions that are formally adopted.

Now, arms control requires a harmony of interest between states-parties on their national interests where they find convergence, and therefore can come to an agreement, whereas disarmament oftentimes is imposed, such as we saw at the end of the Second World War, or perhaps at the end of the war with Iraq.

There are a number of conventional arms-control agreements that are still in effect across the European landmass. I'm going to focus my attention primarily on CFE, with some comments about the Vienna Document. There's an important, though, point I think to be made of differentiation.

The Vienna Document is a political agreement. It does not have the standing of a formal treaty under international law, and that has caused some difficulties in the past when efforts were made by states-parties to use the observations under the Vienna Document during such times as the wars in the Balkans as well as the conflict in Chechnya or the war in Kosovo. We can talk about that during the Q&A.

But I'm going to talk mostly about CFE today, though what happens to CFE I think will have a direct bearing on whether or not we make changes of character for the Vienna Document. I think it's important to go back to where the original CFE treaty began, and it was due to these objectives. These were the objectives in 1990 when we were negotiating this, during the Cold War still going on: stable balance of forces between the two groups, Warsaw Pact at the time and NATO, reduced the disparity of forces and reduced the capability for surprise attack. That focus then drives how the treaty came out in terms of elements.

And here are the elements, really, of the treaty. First of all is a disclosure of holdings. What do you have in terms of the character – particular piece of equipment? I'll talk about that more in a second. And the exchange of information of notifications of moving large numbers of those equipment around. Ceilings, limitations on what you can have in certain categories of forces. Identification of exactly what a particular weapons system is. And a dynamic process whereby you continue to bring in a new piece of equipment, you have to announce that if you're a signatory. And the JCG, Joint Consultant Group, can continue to look that over and redefine as necessary what equipment is, in fact, restrained by the treaty. Actual reductions, which actually include destruction of equipment. One of the key aspects of the treaty at the time, because over 70,000 pieces of treaty-limited equipment were destroyed, was that it would be destroyed, because obviously, we did not want an agreement in Europe to end up causing problems elsewhere if all this equipment then was just exported to other parts of the world that might have security challenges. And last, not least, and very important, of course, compliance inspections to, in fact, verify that states-parties did comply with their requirements.

Now, a quick overview. You'll see, there were 30 signatories, four Warsaw Pact members as well as NATO. It was a bloc-to-bloc agreement. Negotiating national limits were done within the framework of each of those respective alliances. There again is a very important component of host-nation consent, the restrictions on what force levels that one country – let's say the United States, for example – could have on the territory of another – let's say, for example, Germany, where there's been a long U.S. force presence.

Number four, nested zones – I'll talk more about that in a second – to ensure, again, that the concentration of forces, particularly along the fault line that existed between the Warsaw Pact and NATO, were limited to the maximum extent possible.

And last but not least, when the Soviet Union ended, the emerging states in the Soviet Union then derived their national totals against what had been the total allocated to the Soviet Union. And I hasten to add those are the successor states from the area of application. That includes only the Atlantic to the Euro. So those states-parties – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan – that are east of that were not part of the agreement.

Also at that time, very interestingly enough, the Baltic States, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia, announced that they were not successor states of the Soviet Union, that they had in fact been occupied territory. So they are not in any way currently restrained by the CFE treaty.

This is the – the equipment that is restrained by the agreement, basically battle tanks, combat aircraft, armored combat vehicles, attack helicopters and artillery. And there are other

piece of equipment you see across the bottom that are subject to being discussed in the treaty but are not limited in their number. There were a lot of concerns, for example, during the days of the Warsaw Pact, perhaps, on how to restrain armored-vehicle launch bridges, which were considered very important in offensive military operations.

Here are those four nested zones of application you see moving across for – across from the Atlantic to the Ural Mountains. I also hasten to add, if you see, in the lower right-hand corner, a portion of Turkey is displayed in white. That's because this portion of Turkey is the so-called exclusion zone. That portion of Turkey is not restricted by the treaty. Turkish forces in that particular part of the country are not restrained in number, nor are they subject to inspection under the treaty. And this was a very important point to Turkey, because at the time, it argued that it had security challenges outside the NATO requirements, particularly with those countries along its southern border. And that, of course, has been a point of great contention.

Let me break these down real quick, and as you can see, these nested zones, not like one of those – not unlike one of those Russian stacking dolls, begin with the so-called central region, which was a – such a big focal point during the Cold War – those of you who are old enough to remember the Cold War – and as you move out from there, you can see the total number allocated to each alliance goes up in total that they can have in those respective zones. The final zone is the entire ATU – Atlantic to the Ural region – with the exception of that part in the lower right-hand corner for Turkey. What's probably most important is this part down here, which is the so-called flank area.

In addition to limitations by those nested zones, an additional flank zone was created because of particular security challenges in the north, if you're Norwegian, if you're on the NATO side; or in the south, if you are Turkey or Greece at the time. And so separate restrictions were there on the so-called flank zone. This required limitations on Russian forces in the north in the Leningrad Military Districts, as well as those Russian forces down here in the North Caucasus. And this has been a bone – though the Russians did, in fact, accept this at the time, this has been a bone of great contention by the Russian Federation ever since, they being the only state party that actually has internal restrictions on where they can put their individual forces.

Okay. What are some of the contributions that I would argue this particular treaty made? I would say all of these are part and parcel of that. Following the crisis in the Balkans, the Dayton Accords includes an Article IV, which is a series of agreements which are really CFE-like: same sort of restrictions, same definitions, with one slight variation for artillery. And the countries in that particular conflict, most notably Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, have expressed an interest to accede to the CFE treaty, to be part of that larger European framework at some point in the future.

I think it's also important to keep in mind that really, in doing this particular agreement and beginning to routinize this over time, what was extraordinary has now become routine. One can only imagine going back to the middle 1980s and getting a Soviet and a NATO officer together and describing to them the kind of inspections you were going to be making in about 10 years' time or the amount of equipment you were going to destroy. And I daresay they all would think you were crazy.

This is the adapted treaty. Then, beginning in 1998 and 1999, we began negotiations on a so-called adapted treaty, which would now include individual states and get rid of the old bloc-to-bloc totals because, in reality, not only had one of the blocs, the Warsaw Pact, disappeared, but a lot of the members of the Warsaw Pact – countries like Poland and the Czech Republic and whatever, or Romania down here in the south – had joined the other bloc. So the new treaty is based on each country's national totals. Obviously, the countries of the Baltic and the Balkans, again, are not part of that particular discussion, because it was an adaptation of the original agreement.

Here are the objectives of the adapted treaty: Again, replacement of an east-west balance by, again, sub-regional stability, looking at national totals, abolition of the groups, allow accession for new members. The original treaty did not allow, because it was a group-to-group agreement, the accession of a new state. And this is very important if you're going to bring in the Baltic states, perhaps, or the Balkans. Again, an effort to prevent destabilizing concentrations, not unlike the original treatment – treaty, and also some improvement in verification.

Well, what are some of the factors bearing on the problem as we sit here right now? This treaty, though signed by all of the states-parties at the Istanbul summit in November of 1999, has never been ratified by any of the NATO parties. It has been ratified by the Russian Federation.

The reason NATO has never ratified is at that time, in November, 1999, frankly, hearkening back to what the ambassador said a moment ago, the Russian Federation signed an – a communiqué in which it agreed to remove its forces from Moldova and its forces from Georgia, and NATO said at the time, until that is done, we will not ratify. Well, we all know sitting here, that has not occurred.

In 2007, the situation worsened. Russian Federation announced their suspension of compliance with the original treaty in terms of allowing inspections or providing data. And they argued the reason for that was NATO had never moved forward to ratify this new adapted agreement.

And then finally again, hearkening back to ambassador – the ambassador's remarks, this problem was further exacerbated by the war in 2008 between Russia and Georgia and the subsequent not only announcement of the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia but the Russian force recognition.

There have been numerous efforts to resolve, over the last several years, as was discussed, of course, at the Lisbon summit. And, of course, part of that communiqué called for finding a resolution to this particular problem. There will be some further effort, I know, in the current – in the current year because under the treaty, there has to be a review conference of the CFE treaty sometime in calendar year 2011. I'm not quite sure when that is to be scheduled. Normally it's in the springtime. My guess, it'll be later on.

And lastly, I would say – and I always use this point trying to make European audiences understand this, in terms of its relative importance, I think oftentimes – and though I’m here, I should have said this in the onset – as a member of the Army War College research staff, I’m really speaking as a private citizen in my own capacity – this particular agreement and this aspect of security may have less resonance in terms of U.S. policy in 2011 than it had in 1991. And I oftentimes summarize that by saying, right now, here in Washington, if you’re trying to find priorities surrounding this particular agreement, you need to know four numbers: two, zero, 4,000 and 91. And it will tell you how high on the priority list this might be.

Two is the number of wars the United States is involved in. Zero is the number of those wars in Europe. Four thousand is the number of tanks under this treaty the United States could legally deploy to Europe if it wanted to, and 91 is the number of tanks the United States actually has in Europe right now. And that might tell you everything you need to know. There are many people who wonder why we still have 91, oh, by the way.

What are the prospects, then, for getting out of this puzzle and getting the adapted treaty perhaps ratified? I think it’s – we’ve painted ourselves into some pretty tight corners, oh, by the way. There seems to be only a couple of possibilities:

One, the Russians compromise on their objections and suddenly announce tomorrow morning that the ratification of South Ossetia and Abkhazia was wrong and they’re going to pull their forces out. Really kind of doubt that’s going to happen.

Second, that the West decides to just ignore those commitments made in 1999 and move forward on ratification. After watching President Obama struggle to get the new START treaty ratified in the United States Senate, I daresay I don’t think that’s highly likely here in Washington, D.C. And even if it was, this is an agreement that only goes in effect when all states-parties ratify – all 30. That would include ratification by the Georgian parliament. Again, think that’s fairly unlikely.

Third option, some kind of an agreement – we can talk about what that might look like – that is acceptable to those states-parties most directly affected, because one of the beauties, if you will, of a multilateral agreement about this is that it underscores the indivisibility of security. The security of every nation – is equal to that of every other. So if some particular agreement or mechanism could be found that would satisfy the concerns, particularly right now, honestly, of Georgia and Moldova, we might work – move ahead.

What would failure look like? There is a very real possibility, I think, this particular agreement could end up falling apart. Inability of the Balkans and the Baltics to accede, failure to expand transparency in light of NATO enlargement, which is a major Russian concern, remove a valuable tool for crisis management and of course, damage this as an instrument.

I think it’s going to be very difficult. It would open the way, perhaps – back to Vienna Document – for some alterations to the Vienna Document that might to some degree compensate. And some people think that is possible. I’d have to say, though, those would have to be meaningful, consistent with current situation. And there is always the caveat that the

Vienna Document is a political document and therefore does not have quite the weight that a legal obligation like CFE does.

Finally, I would also argue that absolute failure of this particular mechanism might damage our ability to use conventional arms control in other particular areas that it might have application. And I suggest there are three: the Golan Heights, the Korean Peninsula, and perhaps between India and Pakistan.

Curiously enough, if you look at all three of those places, what do you find? Large force concentrations staring at each other over pretty precise pieces of border, each side at heightened alert, and on both sides having nuclear weapons or having a nuclear patron. And it sounds like our situation back in 1989. And though each of them is culturally and politically unique, it might be a place where you could apply those. However, if this all falls apart, that might reduce the probability.

Well, in looking around, trying to figure out a solution, one, I think, has to – can't do much better than my good friend Hans Morgenthau, and reminding us that arms control and CFE is certainly part of that. It is a means and not an ends of policy. More arms control is not necessarily better. More security is what is better, and you can see for yourself what Hans suggested in terms of thinking about that.

Mr. Chairman, I'll conclude my remarks and turn the baton back over to you.

MR. BUGAJSKI: Excellent. Thank you very much, Jeff. We have a choice now. Ertan, would you like to go before Simonas to talk about Kazakhstan first? Or –

AMBASSADOR ERLAN IDRISOV: I would prefer – everyone has already –

MR. BUGAJSKI: Not everyone yet. You want to – you want to stay at the end?

AMB. IDRISOV: Yeah.

MR. BUGAJSKI: Okay. Okay, then over to Simonas to tell us a little bit about priorities of the incoming Lithuanian chair.

SIMONAS SATUNAS: Many thanks. Thank you so much, CSIS, and thank you our Kazakh friends. So many good words are coming from Vienna and Vilnius to you, and it was a great year for us to work in you – with you in troika, and I hope that we will continue. And especially, many good words to ambassador who is with us today from Vienna and ambassador here in Washington.

Just beginning a little bit about our priorities. I will not be very detailed. I will encourage you to look at the – our websites, where you can find the precise priorities, what we will do, and events in all three dimensions. But starting in just – starting how we were thinking about our priorities and how Astana influenced our thinking, it's necessary to say that Astana Commemorative Declaration really envisioned a security community in the Euro-Atlantic area.

And our chairmanship were – was tasked with organizing a follow-up process. At the same time, we – and we were – there was a discussion about the action plan, which actually failed.

And we can see clear, still, division lines in the outcome of Astana as we understand that, still, OSCE community is not ready to agree or to go further with the comprehensive package on the further measures within OSCE. And we can see the most divided lines on the resolution of the protected conflicts and implementation of some commitments in all dimensions.

So our thinking is that rather small steps, concrete steps in all three dimensions than a comprehensive package, try to agree, will be our logic to go through this year. And the small package that – the small steps, that means in all three dimensions, and I will maybe later on a little bit talk on the specific in any – in every dimension.

Also, another principle, what we will be looking, and we will – we started already doing, we will definitely rely on the OSCE institutions, on the professional and experts working for ODF (ph), working for the representative, freedom of media, ACNM (ph) and others. And we have already started doing this, working closely, because of the crisis that we got when we started our chairmanship – naming Belarus, naming Albania.

And as well, missions. We think that missions is critically important, and we will – we will pretty much rely on the missions, extending any other support to the missions.

Speaking about our particular priorities, conflict resolution is – like our minister presenting our priorities in Vienna mentioned it is a top priority for us, and we will definitely spear new efforts to make even the slightest progress in every sensitive area in all the protracted conflicts. But saying this, we will definitely rely on the existing formats, and we expect these formats to bring small – even small progress.

Our special envoy for protracted conflict, the – (inaudible) – of Ambassador Nurgaliyev, Ambassador Chikolias (ph) is very much involved in all the talks and negotiations, and I think today he is somewhere in the Caucasus while our delegation today is in Albania.

So the existing form is five-plus-two. Formal resumption would be our priority as well. In Geneva, our discussions, Minsk group – so that will be our principle working on the protracted conflict. Again, like I am saying, it's a big – I think a big challenge for us all. Support for us from all the participating states is critically important, and we'll try to do our best.

We have seen last year a crisis in Kyrgyzstan, Kyrgyz Republic, and we are thinking that – and like it was very correctly pointed in the Astana meetings, with the reference to the speech by the secretary of state, that we need to think about how to strengthen the capabilities of the OSCE while tackling all the phases of a conflict cycle – the preventing, early warning, crisis mediation, conflict resolution, post-conflict. So we hope that we could work in Vienna with all participating states about finding some good measures or means to improve that or increase the capabilities.

Now, maybe speaking about the three dimensions. We – in the first dimension, yes, there are a lot of challenges. But from the other side, would we see emerging some consensus on some small and practical issues, like transnational threats. And we think that we could go on working together with the participating states about the small and concrete steps in fighting – (inaudible) – illicit drug or human trafficking or border security on control, like cyber threat as well. So we will be making a range of events in Vienna and Vilnius, trying to field a consensus on the particular topics.

Speaking about the second dimension, there is to some extent continuation and to some extent some new. We are very thankful for our Kazakh colleagues and our former Kazakh chairmanship. We had a Lithuanian special envoy working for our Kazakh friends, like a special envoy on transport issues, I understand.

So transport issues and energy security we see like priorities for our chairmanship in the second dimension. We'll make several preparatory meetings, and the one on the energy security is just coming up in Vienna in the beginning of February, where we will be looking how we can better use OSCE to think about energy security and think about, let's say, efficiency, transparency, sustainable development and energy security.

We remember the Vilnius energy expert's meeting last year in Vilnius. We understand there was a conclusion made that OSCE might have a complementary role in energy security. And we think we can use this platform to look for some kind of a small consensus in some small, specific areas in energy security.

Now, speaking about the human dimension, priority will be media freedom, will be prevention of hate crimes, racism and discrimination while using education. And we'll be looking in trying to strengthen and debating how we can strengthen the national human rights institutions.

So speaking about media freedom, it's a big priority for us. We'll try to make – to make some progress, we hope. We'll be setting some events in Vilnius in June. But speaking about media freedom, we'll be looking on the two specific questions that this – safety of journalists. We have to admit there are a lot of challenges still in the area.

And we'll be looking at the other topic, which is pluralism and the new media. So I understand that we'll have a range of events – supplementary human dimension events. One of them will be for media freedom in particular.

In generally speaking about the human dimension – third dimension – we think that there is a – there was a good language from the Astana Declaration where all the participating states agreed that we need to promote and safeguard to mutual agreed political commitments in all three dimension – in the human dimension as well. So we'll try to work with the participating states to try to continue implementing the political commitments in the human dimension.

Basically would be this – the priorities, I would not like to go into details. I will really encourage you to go into the websites – our embassy, our chairmanship – where you can find –

where you are able to find the – every detail of – in every dimension in particular events that are coming. And our minister of foreign affairs, the chairman of OSCE now, he'll be coming to Washington for Helsinki Commission hearing. He will present his vision as well to the challenges and to our priorities.

But on the same time I hope that – and people in Vilnius, we hope that we could build a consensus on the small and practical steps. That's why the commitment for all the participant states in all the areas is really necessary.

So our message would be, we really rely on the existing structures of the OSCE, professionals who work here for – in the missions, and we really rely on our partners where we can find even the slightest consensus in every area or on every issue.

So that would be my, maybe, introductory remarks. And I will be happy to answer to other questions, if there are.

MR. WEITZ: Okay. Thanks very much, Simonas. And the material is available, you said, on the embassy website, yeah?

MR. SATUNAS: Yes.

MR. WEITZ: Okay, great. Thanks very much. Also for those of you who want copies of Jeffrey's presentation – I certainly want a copy – is it available, Jeff?

MR. MCCAUSLAND: I can – I can leave a copy – a PDF copy.

MR. WEITZ: Can you? Okay, great. Great. Okay. Okay, we'll go straight on to Vlad.

VLADIMIR SOCOR: Kazakhstan's chairmanship of the OSCE can be rated as a successful chairmanship of a failing organization. (Laughter.)

Kazakhstan has succeeded against tremendous odds, especially through high motivation and by demonstrating that it has built a skillful ministry of foreign affairs and a sophisticated diplomatic corps. I am confident that Lithuania will be able to duplicate this performance, demonstrate the same kind of capabilities and assessments despite the failing nature of the OSCE as an institution.

In my remarks I will provide factual overview of the current state of play in the protracted, unresolved conflicts. And after providing conflict-by-conflict review I will conclude by suggesting what the Lithuanian chairmanship might accomplish during its year in office.

The Lithuanian chairmanship has identified the resolution – the efforts to resolve the frozen conflicts through peaceful means and in the existing negotiating formats as one of the top priorities – perhaps the top priority – of the Lithuanian chairmanship. The focus in conflict resolution efforts has moved, already a year or two ago, from resolving the conflicts to building confidence among the parties to the conflict.

This is a recipe for perpetuating the unresolved conflicts in their frozen state. The earlier ambitions to actually resolve the conflicts and to have a result-oriented negotiating process have given way to a new emphasis on stability at the expense of results. Lithuania as a chair of the OSCE will be captive to this situation which Lithuania has itself not created.

Let me move to the review of the protracted conflicts in a west-to-east order and start with the conflicts in Moldova. The international accepted negotiating formats known as “five-plus-two” and involving Russia, Ukraine, the OSCE as full-fledged parties and the United States and the European Union as observers, plus Chisinau and Tiraspol, is a format that has stopped operating in March 2006, five years ago.

It stopped operating when Russia and Tiraspol objected to the deployment of the European Union’s Border Assistance Mission – EUBAM – or the Transnistria segment of the Moldova-Ukraine border. Russia and Tiraspol misrepresented the deployment as an economic blockade of Transnistria, notwithstanding the fact that Moldova offered to register and did in fact register all Transnistria enterprises willing to register – eventually most of the them – to conduct their export-import operations under the official aegis of Moldova, which has been done since 2006.

Yet the format remains inoperative. Moldova is undergoing a constitutional and political crisis since the spring of 2009. For two years Moscow has taken the position that it cannot resume the negotiations because it does not have an interlocutor in Chisinau in the absence of a predictable, legitimate power. And indeed, Moldova experienced during two years – during two calendar years – Moldova experienced three parliamentary elections – all three resulting in hung parliaments – five unsuccessful attempts to elect a president and a failed constitutional referendum.

This is the result of the premature introduction of a parliamentary system of government in a country lacking the requisite institutions. This has played very well into Moscow’s hands by enabling President Medvedev and Foreign Minister Lavrov and thousand (ph) Russian officials to argue that they could not negotiate because they had no valid interlocutor in Chisinau.

Now the crisis seems to have been resolved provisorily. This is not entirely sure, but it seems to have been resolved. The three-party alliance for European integration has constituted a government at the very end of December 2010. And the new government, relying on a narrow parliamentary majority – unstable – nevertheless insists to resume the negotiations. Lithuania will undoubtedly promote that goal.

Moldova’s position on the withdrawal of the Russian troops on Moldova’s territory is practically a duplication of the position taken by the Communist government during its pro-Western phase between 2004 and 2008. And that is the withdrawal of Russian troops and the replacement of the existing peace-keeping operation controlled completely by Russia with an international operation of a civilian character – basically police – and there’s a mandate of an international organization, preferably the European Union.

That is the position of both the current government of the Alliance for European Integration, as well as of the former Communist government.

What has changed, however, is the negotiating tactics. For many years, Moldovan governments – both the Communist one and the predecessor and the interim government – sought an agreement with Moscow directly, hoping that Moscow would then force Tiraspol's hand to come to a settlement with Chisinau. In the last two years, approximately, the position has shifted. Moldova is seeking a direct rapprochement with Tiraspol, trying to bypass Moscow, a complete change of tactics or, you can say, even of strategy.

Moldova is trying to reach out to the Tiraspol authorities over Moscow's head, as well as to such elements of the private sector – business and civil society – that are allowed or tolerated to exist in Transnistria. Again, Lithuania proposes to encourage this sort of confidence-building activity.

In June 2009 – 2010 German Chancellor Angela Merkel took an initiative in a national capacity, uncoordinated with the European Union but subsequently promoted within the European Union, to encourage Russia to come to a settlement on Transnistria as proof of Russia's capacity to cooperate with the EU in settling a European security issue. In return for Russian constructive behavior, Chancellor Merkel proposes to create a EU-Russia committee on foreign policy and security which could serve as an incipient channel for Russian participation in a consultative role in EU decision-making on European foreign policy and security.

The Germany – the German initiative embedded in the so-called Meseberg Memorandum signed by Chancellor Merkel and President Dmitry Medvedev at Meseberg Castle near Berlin in June 2010. Initially this has met with great skepticism within the European Union regarding the potential implications in terms of the institutional integrity of the European Union decision-making processes.

The remaining question is, what exactly is Russia expected to deliver under the Meseberg Memorandum? Until the text of the memorandum, Russia is expected to deliver a settlement, not immediately but visible process toward a settlement. More recent German statements, however, seem to indicate implicitly that Russia would – could deliver just the resumption of the five-plus-two negotiations short of an actual result of that process.

Let me move to the East and review the current state of play in the conflicts on Georgia's territory.

The only meaningful negotiating process at the moment is the Geneva negotiating process involving Georgia, Abkhazia, Ossetia and international organizations, as well as the United States and the European Union, the goal of which is, as I mentioned in the introductory remarks, stability rather than delivering a settlement. The overwhelming emphasis is avoiding resumption of conflict. Lithuania, of course, will encourage this confidence-building process.

We have a challenge in Abkhazia and South Ossetia in terms of militarization of both territories, violating both the original CFE Treaty and the 1999 Adapted CFE Treaty with regard

to force ceilings, as well as with regards to the principle of host-nation consent, which is embodied in both CFE treaties.

Russia claims that it has obtained host-nation consent for the stationing of its troops by recognizing Abkhazia and Ossetia as states. So the challenge is to conduct talks about the renewal or the implementation of CFE Treaty obligations without prejudice to Georgia's territorial integrity.

On the contrary, using such negotiations or such consultations to reaffirm Georgia's territorial integrity without accepting the pretense that the presence of Ossetia have provided host-nation consent. This is an issue that will come up for discussion, as it always does in the joint consultative group – JCG in Vienna – a forum of the three state parties signatory to the CFE treaty.

Again, Lithuania will have an important task in this regard as chair of the organization, although the JCG is not chaired by the OSCE-chairing country. The OSCE has its own chairmanship. But obviously, the OSCE-chairing country has an important role to play in JCG deliberations.

“Lithuania will seek to restore” – and this is a quote – “to restore a meaningful presence of the OSCE in Georgia.” I think this is a marginally relevant goal. It's not fundamental; it's marginally relevant. And as a – it's – the value of this goal is actually questionable because Russia has demonstrated over almost 20 years since 1992 – almost 20 years – that it can cripple any OSCE mission in Georgia by micromanaging that mission on the ground from the permanent council in Vienna using Russia's veto power.

I have been personally a witness to Russia's micromanagement of the OSCE mission in Georgia while it existed from the 1990s until 2008 by denying it any meaningful capability to observe the situation on the ground, and even by deciding staffing issues at the middle level in that mission from the permanent council in Vienna using Russia's veto power.

But above all, we have seen Russia forcing the discontinuation of another OSCE mission in Georgia, the border-monitoring mission – BMO – which was disbanded practically overnight in 2005 when Russia vetoed its renewal.

So any OSCE mission in Georgia would remain hostage to a Russian veto. Therefore, this goal is questionable. The only value in restoring a meaningful OSCE presence in Georgia would be if that mission would be allowed to operate throughout the internationally recognized Georgian territory – that is to say, in the Georgian territory under Tbilisi's control and in the Georgian territories that is not under Tbilisi's control in South Ossetia.

If that were the case, then it would be worthwhile reestablishing some sort of OSCE presence in Georgia. Thus far, the Russian position is that any OSCE or any international presence on territory controlled by Russia and South Ossetia will have to be negotiated with the South Ossetian authorities. Such negotiations would implicitly translate into a recognition of the South Ossetian authorities by that international organization.

Moving further to the conflict in Karabakh. The Lithuanian chairman proposes to reenergize the negotiations within the Minsk Group. By the way, I never use the term “Nagorno-Karabakh.” Only the United States uses that term. I think it’s inappropriate. It is a Soviet colonial term. Nagorno-Karabakh has no Russian population whatsoever.

The French usage is Haut-Karabagh – that is, upper Karabakh – Haut-Karabagh. The German usage is Bergkarabach – that is, “mountain” Karabakh. And I see no reason for us to use Nagorno-Karabakh. It’s Karabakh.

We can, of course, differentiate between the upper Karabakh which is mostly Armenian-populated, and the lower Karabakh which is totally – as it was, totally Azeri-populated before the ethnic-cleansing operation.

And Minsk Group, of course, is another infelicitous designation which has stuck with us since 1994, which is ancient history by now. But anyway, we have this Minsk Group with three co-chairs. And Lithuania proposes to reenergize the negotiations within the Minsk Group.

What is the current situation? The current situation is that the Russian co-chairmanship – as you know, there are three co-chairs of the Minsk group – the Russian co-chairmanship has taken by far and away the lead in bringing together Armenia and Azerbaijan if not to negotiate a settlement, then at least to discuss stabilization measures and the principle of a settlement.

The United States takes very much of a backseat. United States’ representation is a medium rank of the – of the diplomatic scale, whereas Russia is represented by none other than President Dmitri Medvedev constantly and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov – far, far higher level of commitments, far, maybe, more meetings of the Russian president with the two parties to the conflict.

So Russia is in the lead. The United States takes very much of a backseat. And the third co-chair, France, acts in a national capacity. It does not represent the European Union. And nobody in the European Union thus far proposes to replace France with a European Union representation in that third co-chair.

The talks are proceeding in the framework of the so-called Madrid Principles, six of them adopted – let’s see, Madrid – OSCE summit in Madrid in 2007. Azerbaijan has accepted those principles. Armenia is reserving its position.

The principles involve as a basis for negotiations territorial integrity of states, rights of people to self-determination and non-use of force. In fact, the principle of non-use of force is playing into the hands of Armenia. The current situation is the result – thank you – the current situation is the result of Armenia’s use of force which has involved mass ethnic cleansing, one of the largest ethnic-cleansing operations since 1991 – in fact, by far, the largest ethnic-cleansing operation since 1991 in Europe and in the former Soviet Union.

Some documents during the – adopted during the negotiation process also make reference to the United Nations charter. There is a reference to the U.N. charter also in the documents adopted in Astana in December 2010. And the U.N. charter does include the right of self-defense, which Azerbaijan can, at least theoretically, avail itself of.

There are four United Nations General Assembly resolutions upholding Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. That, too, is an implicit reference to United Nations documents, including the charter and including the charter chapter on the right of self-defense.

The Lithuanian chairmanship has very little room for maneuver, but it does have some room for creativity and for a new approach by raising the humanitarian aspect of the Karabakh conflict. And that is 800,000 refugees from the lower Karabakh – rather, internally displaced persons – from the lower Karabakh to the interior of Azerbaijan. That is one of the largest refugee burdens in the world.

There is almost no international attention to this humanitarian problem. So Lithuania can approach this issue also from a humanitarian point of view in addition to the security point of view and the conflict-resolution process point of view.

And finally, to conclude, what can Lithuania achieve in this very challenging situation? It can achieve, actually, very little. And the expectation should be kept low. Lithuania cannot revolutionize the OSCE and cannot revolutionize the conflict-settlement processes.

Being a chairing country, Lithuania cannot be a player, cannot be an advocate, can only be a mediator and a consensus-builder. Lithuania faces internal political pressure from political parties and from Lithuanian public opinion to do something, to stand up for principles, to criticize somebody, to condemn somebody. And that somebody will often be Russia. Lithuania cannot do that. The Lithuanian government cannot afford to go that way.

And it would be difficult for the Lithuanian government to explain this to its own public opinion, to its own parliament and to its – to its own political parties. The Lithuanian foreign ministry and government have already starting, providing such explanations for internal public opinion.

What Lithuania can achieve – can attempt to achieve is to adopt the OSCE action – to have the OSCE action plan adopted at the year-end ministerial conference in Vilnius in December 2011. This action plan could not be signed in Astana in December 2010 largely because of the deadlock over the protracted unresolved conflicts.

Some progress on those conflicts – even symbolic, even at the margins – might lead to the adoption of the OSCE action plan in Vilnius in December 2011. And this could be a successful Lithuanian chairmanship and its legacy to the next chairmanship. Thank you.

MR. BUGAJSKI: Great. Thanks very much, Vlad. Next, we have Mike Haltzel who is going to look at the human dimension.

MICHAEL HALTZEL: Well, thank you very much. Being fifth as a speaker after four distinguished, well-informed panelists reminds me of the old conference adage that everything has been said, but not everyone's had a chance to say it. So I'm afraid I'm either going to have to repeat some things, or just – you'll have to take on faith that I agree with a lot of what's said.

And with regard, I will concentrate on the human dimension, but I'll try to put it into the context of the OSCE as a whole. I tend to concur with Vlad Socor about the – about Kazakhstan's chairmanship and office. I think it was successful, but the organization is not in good shape. I don't want to use the old – the old medical joke that the operation was a success, but the patient died. We're not quite there yet.

But rather than that, I'll give a sort of – a bad news, good news judgment. The bad news is that overall, the OSCE is weaker and less relevant than it was, for example, at the time of the last summit in 1999 in Istanbul, not to mention 1990 in Copenhagen followed by the Peace of Paris later that year.

I'm a little biased because I was a junior member of the U.S. delegation at Copenhagen, which was perhaps the high point of the whole – the whole Helsinki process.

My friend Erika Schlager of the Helsinki Commission reminded me, however, we shouldn't retrospectively glorify all previous OSCE summits. She reminded me that in Budapest, for example, in 1994, Yeltsin screamed about a new cold war. And a, shall we say, a large Western European country forced the Bosnians, who were at the time undergoing genocide, to accept a watered-down resolution. So there had been ups and downs. But I still think the trend line is decidedly negative.

The Astana summit – I would submit that the major part of the first dimension, politico-military dimension – essentially, the "S" in OSCE – continues to be hamstrung by Russia, as we've just heard in great detail.

The exceptions were a few of the so-called new 21st-century threats such as trafficking and narcotics, which the Kremlin sees as a – as a current problem for itself. And it obviously is. But the silence in Astana was deafening on the most important current politico-military issues, which are a clear and present threat to the security of the OSCE region: namely, Georgia, Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh. I still use the colonial term, Vlad. I can't help myself. Bergkarabach, incidentally, is a direct translation from the Russian – but be that as it may.

There wasn't a word of the – about the OSCE military observers having been booted out of South Ossetia – certainly, not a word about Russian's being in violation both of its 1999 Istanbul commitments and of its August 2008 ceasefire commitments: zilch.

Moreover, before the summit last February and March, very sensible and moderate American proposals on crisis-prevention mechanisms were vetoed by Russia. There were glimmerings of relevance for the economic and environmental dimension. The Kazakh chairmanship put out some interesting ideas on transportation, energy security.

But I think to be fair, the OSCE is generally regarded in this area – economic and environmental – as a niche player. It simply doesn't have the staff, the clout to basically play the – at the – in the big leagues in this area.

So is there any good news? Yeah, I think there is some good news. That leaves the human dimension, the old “basket three” of CSCE days which in my opinion is still the most vibrant part of OSCE activity. It's true that several – close to 10 of the 56 participating states have absolutely appalling human-rights records.

Nonetheless, some progress is evident. And the basic human-dimension structures of the OSCE continue to do extremely valuable work. I'm talking, of course, about ODIHR, the representative on freedom of the media, the high commissioner on national minorities, and certainly, work of some of the field missions especially in combatting trafficking in humans.

There's also been an increased focus on Central Asia thanks to the Kazakh chairmanship, and that's obviously a very positive development. There has been a somewhat enhanced role of NGOs in civil society. I'll get back to that in a few minutes.

Now, as we know there was an Astana commemorative declaration towards the security community. Certainly not a bad thing, but it strikes me as a bit like a grumpy old couple who no longer can agree on much getting together for a formal restatement of their vows and their 50th wedding anniversary. The OSCE shouldn't have to do things like this. It shouldn't have to go through such an exercise because the participating states have all agreed to this before.

But since the OSCE, the participating states couldn't agree on an action plan – the much-advertised number one goal of Astana – there had to be some kind of deliverable from the summit. Now, I don't want to minimize the achievement; it's not easy to come up with such a declaration. I've been involved in such negotiations where you stay up half the night talking about semicolons. It's not easy. It was an achievement.

But let's be honest. It was – it was a substitute – I would say a poor substitute for an action plan that the organization desperately needs.

Substantively in the human-dimension area, the commemorative declaration was fine. The principles underpinning the human dimension were recognized as an essential part of comprehensive security. And that, as Article 6 in the declaration says, and I quote, “we reaffirm categorically and irrevocably that the commitments undertaken in the field of the human dimension are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating states and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the state concerned.”

Well, this is – this is important, obviously, for two reasons. First is the basic idea that countries that abuse their own citizens don't have much credibility when they pledge not to abuse other countries. And second, non-democratic regimes cannot conjure up the boogeyman of foreign intervention – since it's not intervention – in order to abridge basic and civil – basic human and civil rights at home.

In addition, the declaration – Article 5 – says that signatories stress the importance of the work carried out by the OSCE secretariat, high commissioner of national minorities, office of democratic institutions and human rights – ODIHR – and the representative on freedom and the media, as well as the field operations.

These institutions in fact represent the core of what remains of the OSCE's value, in my opinion, largely because of the world-class caliber of the individuals that lead them. Janez Lenarčič, a talented and highly professional Slovenian diplomat, runs ODIHR. Former Norwegian foreign minister and later ambassador to the United States Knut Vollebaek is the high commissioner on national minorities. He commands universal respect for his efforts.

The new representative on the freedom of the media, Dunja Mijatovic – a Bosnian Serb, incidentally – in her first year in office has become something of an international superstar fearlessly criticizing abuses of media freedom from one end of the OSCE area to the other.

Now, here again, I'll give praise to Kazakhstan. I'm told on very good authority that it deserves a lot of the credit for apparently having convinced Russia to acquiesce in her appointment. For what it's worth, she was by far the most qualified candidate, but that doesn't necessarily mean she would have gotten the job. So I congratulate Kazakhstan on that, also.

Of course, the big kahuna is the secretary general of the OSCE. That's up for grabs because the incumbent, the French diplomat Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, is ineligible for a third term. And we'll have to see what happens. There are all sorts of backstage jockeying right now, and I haven't been able to get straight that was in the lead – if anybody.

Very important in the human dimension remains the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, which usually lasts for two weeks. Known as HDIM and held in Warsaw, Poland, it's Europe's largest human rights gathering, bringing together government delegations – if they all choose to come; Turkmenistan often doesn't – from the 56 OSCE participating states plus dozens of NGO representatives.

It's supposed to assess each state's compliance with OSCE norms in the human dimension, an opportunity for candid self-appraisal for some countries and that includes the United States. I had the honor of heading our delegation there in 2009 and we certainly got into some samokritika, as the Russians would say. But for others, it's a name-and-shame exercise – that is to say, there's no enforcement mechanism so you basically bring out in public what the failings of other states are.

The role of the NGOs in this meeting is really terrific. I have to say I was initially very skeptical when I was appointed and then heard about the fact that the NGOs, essentially, all have pretty close to equal status at the meeting. My experience is that it's worked very, very well and their experience in the HDIM provided the impetus for the parallel civil society conference which occurred in Astana just before the summit – more about that in a few minutes.

Let me just say a few words about the role of the European Union at the HDIM. This is, perhaps, inside baseball and since I'm not a full-time government employee, I won't be diplomatic – I'll be more open, I guess.

Before the September-October 2009 HDIM, the agenda was hammered out the previous summer and there were seven – two – there were two – there were two plenary sessions, opening and closing; 17 other sessions dealing with 12 discrete topics – the usual ones for human dimension: freedom media (sic), freedom of religion, journalism, trafficking – just a whole – Sinti and Roma – there're just a whole lot of topics.

The European Union actually organized itself in a very rational way. It assigned each of the 12 topics – that is to say, assigned writing the statement for the session on each of the 12 topics – to one of the member states of the European Union. Very rational.

The problem is that after – and so they, let's say they assigned freedom of the media – this is not exactly the way it was but let's say they assigned that to France and they assigned the statement on the Sinti and Roma to Slovenia, et cetera, et cetera. Anyway, 12 countries got the opportunity to write the statement – so far, so good.

But then in keeping with EU practice – I mean, I'm told this by friendly ambassadors of EU countries – they had to – they circulated their statement, their draft statements to the other 26 capitals. Well, you don't have to be a wizard to figure out what happened: obviously, lowest common denominator. And the result, to be quite frank, was Pablum – whatever term one would like to use: completely nonintrusive, non-objectionable generalities.

The opening plenary in Warsaw in 2009 came only six weeks, for example, after the brutal murder of Natalya Estemirova in the Caucasus. You would have thought that that would have been mentioned. Well, we mentioned it – I mentioned it in my opening statement. Obviously, the Russians didn't mention it and the EU didn't mention it. The EU just talked about, we support the declaration of this and that from 1991 to 1994 – you know, sort of back the same old stuff. To the everlasting credit of the Canadians and the Norwegians, they did bring it up.

Interestingly enough, after the session, I met with the representative – they had a delegation for the EU and the current – that was in the presidency at the time – and you know, she said, quite frankly, that was a great statement you gave. I get no credit for it; I mean, it was obviously drafted elsewhere and I just played with it. But anyway, she said, it was a great statement you gave; I wish I could have given something like that.

Well, I mean, that's sad, I would say. Now, the EU, even though it has the lowest-common-denominator principle for things like the HDIM, is not always united and here – again, I was not in Astana; I was head of delegation at the review conference in Vienna; there were some, obviously, people here who were in Astana – but I'm told on absolutely the best authority that there was division within the EU in the negotiations over the declaration.

Sweden and the United Kingdom pushed very, very hard for strong language and for an action plan. France and Germany, I'm told, pushed back, both against the Swedes and the Brits and also against the United States. They had their own reasons but I only would say that there was certainly not a – the kind of unanimity that's often advertised.

I alluded earlier to the parallel civil society conference which preceded the actual summit by a day or two. I think, from all I gather, it exceeded expectations. It made more than a hundred recommendations to try to solidify the implementation of human-dimension commitments, including strengthening the OSCE's effectiveness in crisis response, strengthening ties with civil society.

One interesting thing they said which I think is really worth pondering is creation of a mechanism for NGOs to participate in sessions of the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna. In all fairness, the Permanent Council does have special expert meetings where they call upon people, but this would be a more regular one, presumably.

It's highly unlikely that Russia and other non-democratic participating states will agree. At the Vienna review conference, for example, we had to go to the mat just to get a previously-approved NGO representative from Turkmenistan into the meeting; the same thing happened at Warsaw a few weeks before that. And the Russians continually bring up a demand that the government of the country in which an NGO is based should have veto right over its participation. We say that's absolutely out of the question – as long as an NGO does not advocate violence, it has every right to be represented.

One very important point brought up at the parallel civil society conference was, and I quote, “the growing tendency of using the legitimate goal of fighting terrorism as a pretext for laws that seek to curb legitimate speech.” It's very clever; everybody's against terrorism so you use that to – (chuckles) – to curb criticism of the government.

Another valuable part that remains, although somewhat circumscribed in the OSCE toolkit, is the ODIHR election monitoring. I had the opportunity to be an OSCE election supervisor in the first election that it ran: the national elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina 15 years ago, September of '96. It had many, many problems. I mean, the first time: You can only imagine the problems – if anybody's interested, I'll be happy to elaborate in the Q&A – but it struggled through. Since then, the ODIHR has become much more sophisticated and efficient, a development which non-democratic participating states, first and foremost, Russia, absolutely abhor.

ODIHR, of course, as I said, is a particular irritant to Russia. Mr. Putin constantly, endlessly complained about an alleged institutional bias towards investigating alleged abuses, quote unquote, “east of Vienna.” Well, that's true: Most of the abuses that are investigated are east of Vienna. I would – and here I'm going to slip into something that probably only Americans over 45 or 50 in the audience will understand what I'm talking about – I'd like to invoke what I call the Willie Sutton principle. You see? (Chuckles.) Willie Sutton –

Willie Sutton was the greatest bank robber in the United States in the mid-1950s and when he was arrested finally, they asked him, Willie, why do you rob banks? And his answer was, because that's where the money is! And I would say, for people who want to know why ODIHR is investigating phony elections east of Vienna, that's where the money is.

The EU and the U.S. have brought up a concern similar to the one of a country's abusing counterterrorism measures to curb legitimate speech that I just alluded to and that is, namely, the Internet and associated technologies should not be held accountable for misuse like hate speech and promotion of intolerance.

Nondemocratic governments would like to use this as a pretext to curb access to the Internet: that is to say, you tell your citizens you can't watch the Internet because there's porno on the Internet. Well, fine. We maintain and I think we all should maintain the free flow of information has to remain sacrosanct.

Now I turn to freedom of religion and belief. My friend Kathy Kosman, who's sitting here on the left, from the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, has brought to my attention the anti-extremism laws in former Soviet countries which are specifically framed in a religious context and unfortunately, often misapplied.

There are some OSCE states which have highly restrictive laws on religion, per se – Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, recently Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, also Belarus and Russia come to mind. There are also administrative codes which may provide a legal pretext for official actions, including police raids particularly against unregistered religious groups.

Kazakhstan, and recently, Azerbaijan have such articles. But more broadly, there's a danger that freedom of religion or belief is being sidelined within the OSCE from the human-rights prism through which it should be viewed to a safer, quote-unquote "tolerance perspective." You know, again, everybody is for tolerance. But as you know, if it's – if it's used to sideline, this is not a good thing.

And Cathy reminded me there's a most useful current resource, the OSCE-ODIHR panel of experts on freedom of religion or belief. It needs more support from the permanent council and from ODIHR.

Okay. Finally, how to revitalize the OSCE. And here, I'm going to get beyond just simply the human dimension. I agree with Russia that the politico-military especially, and the economic, environmental dimensions – the first two – should be strengthened, but not at the expense of the human dimension.

President Medvedev's draft treaty on a new European security architecture is a nonstarter. It has absolutely zero chance of adoption. It would undercut NATO. It's not even really being discussed much anymore. But what could be adopted with a serious effort on all sides is the ratification of an adapted CFE treaty, which we heard about today from Jeff.

The United States is serious enough about it that we have – that we have tasked one of our most talented diplomats, Ambassador Victoria Nuland, former ambassador to NATO, to see if this is possible. And she's working 24/7 on it. And we'd like to have an updated Vienna document. Now, such action would instantaneously make the OSCE a relevant factor again in European and trans-Atlantic security.

As I mentioned earlier, increased cooperation to combat the new threats of the 21st century would fall squarely within the mandate of the – of the first dimension, and these should be pursued. And again, our Lithuanian colleague said this will be sort of a policy of small steps. I think he's – I think they're doing the right thing. We certainly can agree with the Russians on stronger measures against trafficking of humans, trafficking in narcotics, terrorism, counterterrorism measures, strengthening of borders.

These are all things that – it's in – squarely in their national interest to cooperate on, and in our national interest. And we ought to do it. If however these agreements prove impossible to reach, and Russia and other non-democratic participant states continue to try to say, if you're going to do that, we have to cut back on the human dimension, then the United States will be faced with the question of what to do with the OSCE.

In Western Europe, at least I've encountered a widespread feeling that once an international organization has been established, even if it becomes – even if it becomes dysfunctional, it should be maintained for the greater cause of peaceful dialogue. I mean, I guess this goes back to Churchill's jaw-jaw is better than war-war. There is some merit in that; I agree.

I have to say, the United States on occasion has shown a willingness to suspend its participation in international organizations that have been run into the ground or are corrupt – or are corrupt – or have seen their stated purposes perverted by their leadership. UNESCO in the 1980s was the textbook case. And I would submit that the long absence of the United States served the cause of reforming that organization.

Now, let me be crystal clear – crystal clear – crystal clear. I am not suggesting such a course for American participation in the OSCE, which is, I hope I've explained, still has valuable units. What I am considering, however – what I think we should consider is how to beef it up. And there aren't – shouldn't be sacred cows. And I think there are moves that could improve the functioning of OSCE bodies.

I've already cited the recommendation of the parallel civil society conference for NGOs to take part in Permanent Council meetings. I think that's a great idea.

If Russia and others block this, then the U.S. and its like-minded European partners, with Canada, might form something like a democracy caucus within the OSCE, which could invite civil society representatives to present their views.

One last word: Consensus is nice, but holding fast to one's principal is nicer. I give great credit to the Reagan administration in this case. In the mid-1980s on one occasion, the U.S. stood alone in a BASCA (ph) III conference in Switzerland, refusing to agree to a final

communiqué because it omitted reference to the reunification of divided families. That's an issue which seems like ancient history now, thank God, but which was still vitally important at that time. And we were outvoted 34 to 1 but you need consensus and it didn't get passed.

And, I have to say, if that's what it takes, you've got to do it. You know, I've been – it is true that a consensus organization has grave problems, and Bill and Vlad and others have talked, you know, at length about how the Russians have basically undermined a lot of – and I even mentioned American proposals that were vetoed. And that's true but, you know, it's not a question that two can play at this game; it's just a question of sticking up for your principles. So I would hope that we do that.

And, frankly, from what I gather happened at Astana, we did. We made – at the review conference in Vienna, our final statement made it crystal clear – again I use the term, couldn't be clearer – that the United States wanted to have an action plan, but an action plan with real teeth. We outlined what those were and we said if we didn't get something that was worth the name “action plan” then we wouldn't sign on, and we held to our – so we stuck to our guns.

So, the absolute final word, the OSCE still plays a valuable role in a few areas of activity, but unless it is reformed, I fear it will lapse into irrelevance as yet another good idea that was tried but failed. Thanks very much.

MR. BUGAJSKI: Thanks, Mike. On that optimistic note, we'll turn over to Erlan, last but not least. He's going to give us a little bit of an update on developments in Astana but also looking forward to Kazakhstan's role in the OCSE troika.

AMB. IDRISOV: Janusz, thank you very much, and thank you, all the panelists, for giving a very detailed view of the key areas of focus by OSCE. My intervention is titled assessment of performance of Kazakhstan within the OSCE chairmanship, the Troika and other things. I think I will give the opportunity to Kairat Abdrakhmanov. I don't want to take his bread. He came all over from Europe, was lucky enough to get it time to Washington, D.C. not to be stuck –

MR. BUGAJSKI: Last plane, I think.

AMB. IDRISOV: Yes, last plane. Yes. I was yesterday at the airport at Dulles until 2:00 A.M. because we had our 40 minutes stuck on 66, on 495 and, you know – (chuckles) – it was terrible. And my house was completely out of electric power the entire second half of the day yesterday and the entire night, and I suspect until now. (Chuckles.)

But, anyway, my job is a bit ungratifying because to give a performance to yourself is quite a challenging task. At minimum, I will be not fully objective, but I will try to take an interesting position of standing as an observer.

By theory, as ambassador to Washington I had nothing to do to OSCE chairmanship of Kazakhstan – by theory – and I will try to now review and give assessment to the performance of

Kairat Abdrakhmanov and my superiors in Astana. (Laughter.) So we'll see what happens, right?

MR. BUGAJSKI: It's on the record. (Laughter.)

(Cross talk.)

AMB. IDRISOV: Well, when you assess any performance, you usually put simple questions: what, why, how and whether you have achieved your goals, right? So I will do along the same lines.

We of course came up to our chairmanship with quite an energetic kind of prelude story of preparation for the chairmanship, starting from 2007. We were quite active through 2008, 2009 building up our understanding and our friends' understanding for our chairmanship. We drew, we believe, a very robust plan for OSCE activities during our time.

We came up, as you remember, with the four "T's" – trust, transparency, tolerance and tradition. We should clearly explain why they're pertinent to all the dimensions of OSCE. We committed ourselves to keep up and carry on the CORFU process. We also came up with a new idea for Eurasian aspect of Euro-Atlantic security. So this was the overall bulk of our plan with OSCE.

On the delivery side I think we have focused on ensuring that, as any structure, of course, OSCE should have a proper budget, and I think that over the last years we were one of the first successful countries who came up with a budget early, at the end of 2009. And we are very happy that Lithuania has replicated that experience in their organization with an approved budget for 2011.

Of course, we came up with a very full plan of activities, and we cared not only about the quantity of activities but on the quality of activities in all three dimensions. We tried to make sure that the principal of consensus is prevailed during our time for chairmanship. We tried to make sure that we use valid and workable tools and resources to deliver on those goals which we declared.

We worked with individual countries on a fair, equal basis. We didn't go only to big place to seek their advice. We were equally fair and attentive to the opinions of big and small, alike. We did not ignore, I think, institutions within OSCE. We particularly reached out to the key institutions like the security forum, like, of course, ODIHR. And we did so with clear understanding how much skepticism there was with regard to our chairmanship, particularly with regard to the future of ODIHR.

We tried to be fair and we tried to develop a cultural dialogue. Some of the panelists mentioned a few examples of clear success in building that approach. Of course, we could not ignore key issues within OSCE, which were so eloquently explained and described by Vladimir – the so-called frozen conflicts.

Our special representative, a very professional diplomat, Ambassador Bolat Nurgaliyev, was quite active and proactive with the existing structures which address those issues. And we hope that, even, dialogue helped. Of course, we're not that ambitious and naïve to believe that we will be able to resolve any of the frozen conflicts.

But our task was to help keep the balls rolling. And Ambassador Nurgaliyev was specifically tasked with this mission. And we hope that, of course, with the support of our partners, there was a good year where we could keep up the dialogue and review both the advantages and disadvantages of each and every – or tools and approaches in each and every frozen conflict.

Unfortunately, this could not be culminated in an action plan, but again, that is realpolitik and I think everyone understands why this didn't happen. And actually, when we were coming up to the Astana summit, there was a lot of skepticism whether we will be able to come up with the action plan which everyone dreamed of.

We made sure that the economic agenda was also on the panel. Unfortunately, the least we have – or the least-practical results we saw was this economic and environmental dimension, although we tried to bring out an important element of energy security and transit – freedom of transit, et cetera, et cetera. We, of course, carried out a number of events during our chairmanship in this area. And our hope is that, that momentum will be uptaken by the Lithuanian and ongoing chairmanship because this is a very important area for the success of OSCE goals.

The human dimension was one of the most important in our chairmanship because we understood that we are under enormous scrutiny with all those skepticisms with regard to Kazakhstan's democratic record. We tried to make sure that suspicion does not prove true. We focused on our cooperation with ODIHR. We deepened our dialogue with ODIHR on a number of areas of our cooperation. We continued to concentrate on our internal political reforming.

Madrid commitments were misunderstood, that important things of nation-building and democracy-building can be up into artificial timeframes. We explained that we will persevere and we will continue to do our things on the ground, and we did so. Of course, assessments about what we have been able to do are different, but I think no one can deny that we were trying to come up and continue with our own internal goals for political growth.

And I want to mention here the national action plan for human rights and legal reform until 2012 and until 2020. We continue on a planned, measured basis to implement those documents, which we have approved with the support of our internal civil society and our friends from the international civil society.

So overall, I think we tried to come up as fair performers and implementers of the goals, which we laid down before the membership of the OSCE in January, 2004. I think the results speak for themselves. We hope that we have delivered on promoting better understanding of the importance of the four T's on OSCE's agenda, irrespective who is the chair of the organization,

because we believe that if we are truly successful in building these four tiers into the structure and fabric of OSCE, that will be the overall success of the organization.

I think we delivered, also, on the keeping up of the Corfu process. And many events, which we had throughout the year, many opportunities for genuine dialogue – they helped to keep up the Corfu process. And the Astana declaration clearly gives good guidance for that. And we hope that the action plan, which we tasked the Lithuanian chairmanship to complete, will be an important step in that direction.

We tried to deliver on the sacred cows – the sacred-cow, equal trinity of the baskets of OSCE. We tried to maintain that balance and ensure that, that trinity is not undermined. Another sacred cow is the human dimension. As I said, we understood the entire importance of this dimension, particularly in our chairmanship, where we were suspected of under-delivering in this dimension. We tried to make sure we do that, and this has been reflected, for example, in the Warsaw discussions, in the pre-summit review events in Astana, with the parallel NGO summit. And I think that a fair account of things, a fair observer, will recognize that Kazakhstan tried to be as fair as possible.

The biggest delivery, of course, is the summit. We declared, at the start of our chairmanship, that the summit is our goal. And the summit took place. You remember the skepticism back in January, 2010, when we announced the summit – the skepticism in the capitals. And only within 11 months of 2010, the summit has become a reality. That is, in itself, a big achievement.

And the absence of the summit of this clear expression of political will by nation-states, member states, the absence within 11 years, is a shame, of course, for the organization. And we are so happy and proud that during our chairmanship, we were able to deliver on that important goal. The summit has taken place.

You can give different assessments to the summit, but the mere fact of summit taking place, particularly east of Vienna, is a great achievement. In fact, our chairmanship and our summit was a turning point in overcoming a certain psychological barrier. You remember the skepticisms right from the beginning, when we came up with the first bid, in 2003, for our chairmanship. This came against a very thick psychological wall of misunderstanding, lack of trust, et cetera, et cetera. So we are happy and proud that the culmination was that we were able, with our chairmanship and with our summit, to start bringing down this wall.

We didn't overcome completely this psychological barrier, but we made an important psychological step. And I think that this is a big delivery in itself. We are happy that the term and phenomenon has been coined as, "Astana spirit." We hope that the Astana spirit and the dialogue in the spirit of Astana will prevail. Of course, we would be happy to see the continuation of better dialogue between key capitals and within the organization, in general.

One aspect, which is not noticed by the observers very often, is the influence of the summit for us, for the nation. I didn't see any accounts of how important it was for the national consolidation of Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan is the only country which declared OSCE

chairmanship as a national project. It took to the level of the head of state, at the very beginning of our chairmanship in the previous year, to declare our chairmanship as the most important national project.

Therefore, we believe that our chairmanship has produced a very important fluid for our national consolidation. And it is all the more important that it help to create the feelings of unity and national consolidation in the country, particularly for the young generation, for the young, emerging institutions in our young society, which is not a small thing in itself. This is how I see the performance of Kazakhstan. I think that this is what – I tried to base my assessment on what I heard during – since the time of our chairmanship. I will now turn to one important element and aspect. I'm sure that you follow the current internal events in Kazakhstan, and I wanted to – I know that there is food over there. I wanted to, in addition to the material food, I wanted to give you another food for discussion: Kazakhstan is now facing a dilemma. At the very end of last year, a group of public representatives initiated a move towards a referendum to extend the powers of the current, incumbent president till 2020. That has snowballed and by the middle of January, you have, now 5.5 million voters who supported the referendum. And this is more than 60 percent of the electorate, which is 9 million in Kazakhstan. And this comes against an international context that we heard from our Western friends that this would be – if referendum takes place, this would be a step back. This is particularly frustrating after the successful chairmanship of Kazakhstan in OSCE. This is not the way to build stability in Kazakhstan. The referendum, if it goes, will be a rather destabilizing fact, that it will be a step back from the constitutional democratic process. And most importantly, our friends who reject this idea of referendum, they say that this will not be a good foundation to base the succession process in Kazakhstan. So we are facing this dilemma, and by constitution, our internal procedural constitutional process, everything is fine. You have the huge, majority support for the referendum. The president vetoed this decision in early January, but the parliament has overcome the presidential veto by the vote in the parliament and they voted for the amendment in the constitution to allow for this referendum and extension of powers. We know that external observers sarcastically questioned all this snowballing campaign for the signatures of support, the overcoming of the veto of the president by the parliament. We know all of this. Therefore, we say that we are facing a very difficult dilemma. What to do? The arguments behind the referendum and those who support referendum are that, basically, in essence, when you put on the scale internal and external factors, the summary would be the following: On the internal aspect, it is that Kazakhstan society is yet still immature. And we do not live in normal circumstances. And if in normal circumstances, things would require normal, natural process, we are not in that situation. Institutions are immature. We have, still, strongly clinging Soviet culture and mentality. Therefore, those things which would go in a normal way in mature societies would not necessarily go that way in our society. And there are examples in the near abroad of Kazakhstan that this is a true scenario, a true case.

Externally, of course, we are in a very complex geopolitical situation. There are security threats stemming from Afghanistan. There are security threats stemming from Kyrgyzstan. There are security threats stemming from the inter-ethnic instability. The south of Kyrgyzstan was a clear example. Recent events in Moscow on the Manezh Square was a clear example when non-ethnic or non-Slav residents were attacked. And the last explosion in Domodedovo, we believe, is a repercussion of those Manezh Square events.

The global economic crisis, the challenges of that, were also put on the scale by the majority of the public in voting, basically, for stability in their own understanding of the stability, where they wanted to make sure that the successes, which we have been able to achieve within the last 20 years, carry on. Of course, this, as I said, is a difficult choice. The choice is not yet done because it is for the leader, now, to decide whether to go for referendum or to reject the parliament and the public opinion for the referendum.

And as I said, it is not an easy decision for him. And in any case, what we wanted to make sure is to affirm that Kazakhstan will continue to go along its path of liberal economic and political development. Whether referendum will take place or will not take place, we will be committed to delivering on our own internal plans for growth. Nothing will be scrapped. The national human rights plan will not be scrapped. The issues of media freedom or other aspects of democratic growth and democracy-building will not be scrapped.

We will persevere on the legal and law enforcement body reform, which is the crucial point of our reform. We simply want to make sure that we are better understood. We are facing dilemma and I, perhaps, will be happy to debate this with you. Of course, the prevailing thought is that this would be a wrong step to do because we will be the losers, not only in terms of, kind of, completely scrapping the achievements and the good standing that Kazakhstan has achieved in these years, but we will kind of destabilize the society in the long term. That is the prevailing thought.

We understand this line – or the philosophy of this thinking, but we have our own understanding of what could be the situation if scenarios will go in different ways. And we always recall that the prevailing international thought – a very good friend thought, in the early years of our independence was, again, skeptical, and many advice turned out to be not exactly as accurate as it was at the time of recommendation – but 20 years ago, there was a lot of skepticism for the ability of Kazakhstan to survive as a nation at all.

We proved, over the last 20 years, with all our mistakes, with all our missteps – but we developed our plan. And we implemented those plans and we delivered on those plans. And the pattern shows that we grow steadily. So I tell you with all my sincerity that it's not as it is being painted, that this is just a mere lust for power – a desire of a leader to stay in power eternally. It's not that easy.

In fact, we are talking about a very complex reality of the transition process in Kazakhstan. We didn't yet overcome a very difficult process of our generation change. We dream to come up with a new, better-educated, differently cultured generation, which will take the reins in the country – a generation which will be free of the Soviet mentality, of that legacy. That is a challenge, how you nurture that. Whether you will achieve that by just conforming to the formal democratic process of the types of Jeffersonian democracy or you take your own path – that is the dilemma we face.

We do not want to err in this, of course. We want to find the best solution so that we ensure our steady and stable growth for our nation and for the better future. I'll throw this on the

floor for our discussion. Of course, that is – I don't know whether it is palatable food for you or not, but Janusz has prepared good food for us to digest during the lunch. Thank you very much.

MR. BUGASKI: Okay. Thank you, Erlan.

(END)