

SESSION I: Regional security - Afghanistan, combating terrorism, drug trafficking, disarmament



Michel Voisin

by the OSCE on Afghanistan does take place, but that it requires further input and drive, and he welcomed the support of the Parliamentary Assembly in this regard.

Michel Voisin, OSCE PA Special Representative on Afghanistan

Mr. Voisin, noting that he had delivered a more comprehensive report during the Assembly's Winter Meeting in February, provided a short update on the situation. Despite serious ongoing problems, he pointed out that there is some cause for optimism.

The political situation remains confused and the government and election administration have not yet been fully formed. It also appears, he said, that Afghan President Hamid Karzai intends to go forward with negotiations with Taliban forces.

The Special Representative reminded participants of the importance of a regional perspective taking in Central Asia when discussing Afghanistan. Strategically, from a military perspective, Central Asian countries provide key bases for forces working in Afghanistan.

From political and humanitarian perspectives, Mr. Voisin also noted the important contributions by countries in the region. All of this work, he said, helps with the overall plan for assisting development in the country.



Dulat Bakishev

Dulat Bakishev, Executive Director of the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)

Mr. Bakishev provided participants a brief overview of the work of CICA, which spans from Turkey to the Korean Peninsula and sets confidence building measures at the base of their work. He noted that CICA had one of the first comprehensive documents in this regard.

While Kazakhstan had acted as Chair of CICA since its founding, it was now embarking upon a new era as Turkey would soon be assuming this Chairmanship, he said.

Debate

In the ensuing wide-ranging discussion, Members were reminded of the real human losses that regularly take place in Afghanistan. Participants stressed that greater effort must be made to work closely with the Afghan people, and to strengthen the political, and particularly, the parliamentary and electoral systems.

Several participants stressed that there is no real military solution to the conflict. There was also a great deal of discussion regarding how to overcome the challenges presented by the drug trade in Afghanistan. Overall, participants urged greater

commonality in the work being conducted by the international community in Afghanistan.

