



# The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia: **FIVE YEARS**



UNITED NATIONS  
REGIONAL CENTRE FOR PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY  
FOR CENTRAL ASIA



UNRCCA

**FIVE YEARS OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
REGIONAL CENTRE FOR PREVENTIVE  
DIPLOMACY FOR CENTRAL ASIA**

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
“NEUTRALITY AND PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY:  
BASES FOR PEACE AND SECURITY”**

*11 December 2012  
Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

The goal of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia is to assist and support the Governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in building their conflict prevention capacities through enhanced dialogue, confidence-building measures and genuine partnership in order to respond to existing threats and emerging challenges in the Central Asian region.







## **Publication**

# **“Five Years of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia”**

*Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, 2013*

### **DISCLAIMER**

*The publication represents a compilation of materials, speeches, presentations and academic papers for the international conference “Neutrality and Preventive Diplomacy: Bases for Peace and Security”, which was co-organized by the Government of Turkmenistan and the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia on 11 December 2012 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. The conference was attended by high-ranking officials from the five Central Asian countries as well as Afghanistan, People’s Republic of China, Hungary, Iran, Latvia, Russia and Turkey; representatives of international organizations and foreign companies; academics and experts from the Central Asian countries; and international experts and political analysts.*

*Speeches and presentations contained in this publication cover a broad range of issues related to preventive diplomacy in Central Asia. This publication is expected to be of interest to diplomats, Government officials, academics and other experts.*

**THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS PUBLICATION ARE THOSE  
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TERMINOLOGY HAVE BEEN CORRECTED.**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The UN Regional Centre would like to express its sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan and the Government of Turkmenistan for co-organizing the international conference “Neutrality and Preventive Diplomacy: Bases for Peace and Security” held on 11 December 2012 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. As a result of the conference **UNRCCA** has produced this publication to raise awareness of the concept of preventive diplomacy around the world.

This publication has been developed as a collaborative effort between the **UNRCCA** staff and the participants of the conference. In the process, many people made important contributions that have added enormous value to the end product.

This is to acknowledge the presence of all participants and invited guests and their dedication to the cause of preventive diplomacy thus supporting peace and stability at the Fifth Anniversary of the Inauguration of the **UNRCCA**.

It was our intention to make all presentations available to the participants and a broader scope of readers interested in preventive diplomacy, its key actors, the practical experience of UN member states, regional and international structures working in this field, and cooperation between them. This would help to make the achievements and challenges of preventive diplomacy and mediation in the world of **UNRCCA** and Regional Offices in Central and West Africa more sustainable and feed into using best practices in the field of preventive diplomacy.

To this end we have published this publication with a compilation of all presentations made by the participants of the conference, including all contributed statements, speeches, papers, photographs and other materials that have been incorporated into the publication. Department of Political Affairs of the UN Secretariat and many more have also provided extremely useful support and feedback throughout the process.

**UNRCCA** would like to express special thanks to the Governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan for their support for the work of **UNRCCA** and its activities aimed at promoting peace and security in the region by the means of preventive diplomacy.

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*“I encourage the countries of Central Asia to continue to deepen cooperation to address the region’s challenges and to seize the many opportunities for shared progress”.*

**BAN Ki-moon**  
Secretary-General  
United Nations





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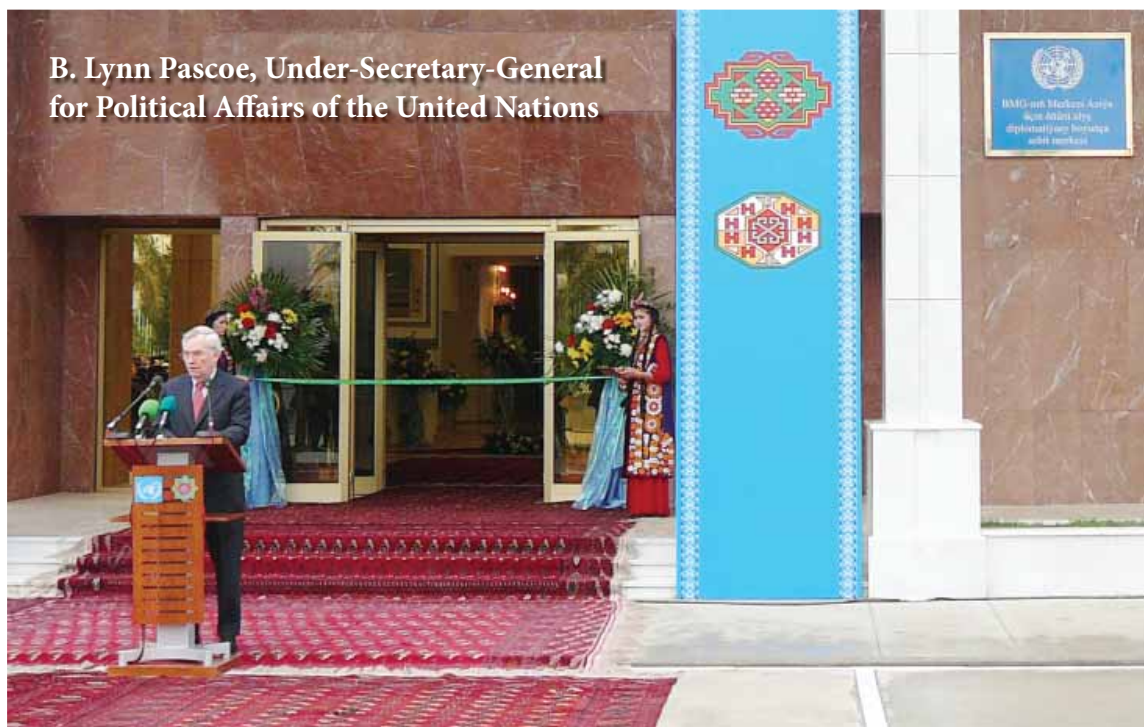
<b>CA</b>	Central Asia
<b>CICA</b>	Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia
<b>CIS</b>	Commonwealth of Independent States
<b>DFM</b>	Deputy Foreign Minister
<b>DPA</b>	Department of Political Affairs
<b>DPI</b>	Department of Public Information
<b>EC-IFAS</b>	Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea
<b>ECO</b>	Economic Cooperation Organization
<b>ECOWAS</b>	Economic Community of West African States
<b>ECPS</b>	Executive Committee on Peace and Security
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>GA</b>	General Assembly
<b>IPI</b>	International Peace Institute
<b>MEWAD</b>	Middle East and West Asia Division
<b>MFA</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>MSU</b>	Mediation Support Unit
<b>OIC</b>	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
<b>OSCE</b>	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
<b>PBF</b>	Peacebuilding Fund
<b>PMD</b>	Policy and Mediation Division
<b>PRIO</b>	International Peace Research Institute of Oslo
<b>RC</b>	Resident Coordinator
<b>SC</b>	Security Council
<b>SCO</b>	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
<b>SG</b>	Secretary-General
<b>SRSG</b>	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNAMA</b>	United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNECE</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNOCA</b>	United Nations Office for Central Africa
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>UNOWA</b>	United Nations Office for West Africa
<b>UNRCCA</b>	United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>USG</b>	Under-Secretary-General



# INTRODUCTION

**The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia** is a Special Political Mission of the United Nations established at the initiative of the Governments of the five Central Asian countries. It is a unique political structure that acts as a platform for dialogue and the exchange of opinions among the States of Central Asia, with a view to supporting them as they seek and develop mutually acceptable solutions to issues facing the region.

**The inauguration of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy took place on 10 December 2007 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.** The ceremony was opened by the President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, the President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs of the United Nations B. Lynn Pascoe, the Secretary General of the OSCE Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, and others. While initiating this proposal, the Governments of the region took into consideration the multiple threats that face Central Asia, including international terrorism and extremism, drug trafficking, organized crime and environmental degradation.



**An International Conference entitled “Neutrality and Preventive Diplomacy: Bases for Peace and Security” was held in Ashgabat on 11 December 2012.** The conference was co-organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan and UNRCCA to mark the fifth anniversary of the Centre’s establishment. This important event also took place on the eve of the celebration of Turkmenistan’s Neutrality Day. The General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution recognizing the Permanent Neutrality of Turkmenistan on 12 December 1995.



The conference was opened by His Excellency Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, President of Turkmenistan, at Ruhyyet Palace in Ashgabat. In his opening remarks, the President said that *“the Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy, based in the capital of Neutral Turkmenistan, Ashgabat, has significantly contributed to strengthening peace and stability in the region, fostering good neighborly relations and cooperation”*.

The presidium of the conference also included Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman, representing UN SG Ban Ki-moon, OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier, CIS Executive Committee President Sergey Lebedev, ECO Secretary General Shamil Aleskerov, SCO Secretary General Muratbek Imanaliev and SRSG and Head of UNRCCA Miroslav Jenča.

The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his message delivered by Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman emphasized that prevention is *“one of the priorities of five-year action agenda”* and added that early warning and early action – focus areas of UNRCCA’s work – *“can advance security and stability, save lives and promote sustainable development.”*

The goal of the conference was to showcase preventive diplomacy as a constructive tool to prevent conflicts and escalation of tensions, including by highlighting vivid examples of its practical application on the ground.

Participants discussed lessons learnt, best practices, prospects and challenges in the field. They emphasized the importance of early warning, mediation and various forms of dialogue facilitation, but also stressed the challenge of timely and unified diplomatic action.



*“The Center has become a recognized partner in the region and beyond, and works to help the countries of Central Asia identify and develop mutually acceptable solutions to existing and emerging problems”.*

Miroslav JENČA  
Special Representative of the Secretary-General  
and Head of the UNRCCA

The conference gathered a dedicated group of high-ranking officials and knowledgeable experts from the region and beyond. In addition to those on the presidium, participants included Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov, Deputy Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Kairat Umarov, Deputy Foreign Minister of Kyrgyzstan Samargul Adamkulova, First Deputy Foreign Minister of Tajikistan Makhmudzhon Sobirov, Deputy Foreign Minister of People's Republic of China Chen Guoping, Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkey Naci Koru, SRSG and Head of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) Ján Kubiš, SRSG and Director of the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA) Said Djinnit, SRSG and Head of the UN Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) Abou Moussa, Executive Director for Secretariat of the UN Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (UNRoD) Vladimir Goryayev, EU Special Representative for Central Asia Patricia Flor, Chairman of the Executive Committee of IFAS Saghit Ibatullin, Deputy Executive Director of CICA Kanat Tumysh, Director General of the UN Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan Muhammad Ayoob Orfani, Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Turkmenistan Javkhar Izamov, Ambassador of the United States to Turkmenistan Robert Patterson, Ambassador of Russia to Turkmenistan Alexander Blokhin, Deputy Director of the Third Department for the CIS of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Vladimir Kandin, as well as UNHCR Regional Representative and Regional Coordinator for Central Asia Saber Azam, Director of the Office and UNESCO Representative to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan Sergey Lazarev, Regional Director of UN Women Damira Sartbaeva, Regional Advisor on Economic Cooperation and Integration for UNECE Marton Krasznai, Representative of UN Women in Kyrgyzstan Sabine Machl and Representative in Kazakhstan of the Department of Public Information of the UN Secretariat Vlastimil Samek. Other participants included international academics and the diplomatic corps in Turkmenistan and Turkmen ambassadors abroad.







Participants' arrival to the MFA of Turkmenistan to participate in the International Conference "Neutrality and Preventive Diplomacy: Bases for Peace and Security"



# Jan Watan





**Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow**

Presidium of the Conference:

- **Gurbanguly BERDIMUHAMEDOV, President of Turkmenistan**
- **Shamil ALESKEROV, Secretary General ECO**
- **Lamberto ZANNIER, Secretary General, OSCE**
- **Jeffrey FELTMAN, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, UN**
- **Miroslav JENČA, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNRCCA**
- **Sergei LEBEDEV, Executive Secretary, CIS**
- **Muratbek IMANALIYEV, Secretary General, SCO**







**GURBANGULY BERDIMUHAMEDOV,  
PRESIDENT OF TURKMENISTAN**





*--Unofficial Translation --*

# STATEMENT

**of His Excellency**

**Gurbanguly BERDIMUHAMEDOV,**

**President of Turkmenistan at the International  
Conference on “Neutrality and Preventive Diplomacy:  
Bases for Peace and Security”**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Dear guests!**

**Dear friends!**

**Ladies and Gentlemen!**

Let me cordially welcome you all in Ashgabat- the capital of Independent and Neutral Turkmenistan!

Please accept our congratulations and sincere gratitude for taking part at this solemn event on the occasion of Neutrality Day – a national holiday, marking the new fate of Turkmen people and its century-long aspiration for peace and trust between them, as well as to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the inauguration of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia.

**Dear friends and colleagues!**

Our gathering today is a very worthy and timely occasion to share the thoughts about humanity’s main concern – its willingness and ability to build a common home, despite the challenges posed

by the objective course of history and the subjective threats that accompany it. But such is life, and if it is not in our power to change its general direction, we are at least obliged to present and future generations to influence it by means of our collective intellect, experience and knowledge.

Our ancestors who laid the Great Silk Road and have left their memory in our hearts were very wise and farsighted. We can step boldly into the future if we approach its problems from the point of view of objective historicism and sound continuity, consistently and gradually, step by step, securing the aims of peace, security and development.

There is no other way, no other approach exists! Only resilience, only patience, only a desire to impart irreversible humanistic order onto global processes!

It is significant that we are discussing this during the celebration of our neutrality, in the sense that it evokes a unique experiment enforced by law in the affairs of the international community. With each passing year, as we address one or another issue in our multilateral interaction with the international community, we become increasingly convinced of the durability, flexibility and genetic self-reproducing capacity of our model of neutrality.

Arising during the global shifts on the geopolitical map of the world, bearing witness to and participating in contemporary global processes and at the same time incorporating the legacy and inheritance of history and the people, Turkmen neutrality, as the status quo of our foreign policy, has every reason to go forward as a self-evident factor in the latest international practices.

Its very history– from the adoption of a special United Nations resolution calling on the world community to ‘respect and support’ Turkmenistan’s neutrality, to the realization of independent initiatives in the legal field of international politics – is evidence of our inherent loyalty to our chosen path of neutrality, which we have declared to the entire world as being ‘recognized in its origin, permanent in its form, and constructive in its content’.

Immensely appreciative and proud of the trust the United Nations showed in us in December 1995 on behalf of 185 countries of the world, we have not forgotten for a minute our own responsibility to the international community and consider it an honor to further creatively propagate permanent positive neutrality, in conformity to the strategic sovereign goals of our state, in the recent, in many ways critical, period of world history.

### **Distinguished conference participants,**

You, policymakers and diplomats, experts and political scientists, academics and social actors, know very well the axiom about a point of reference. Whatever is taken as the initial aim of an action determines the nature and quality of that action.

On 12 December 1995, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution that secured for Turkmenistan the international legal status of a neutral state. This, without



exaggeration, historical event became the point of reference for all of our subsequent activities in the international arena and defined the principles of interaction with other peoples and states.

By prompting us to take responsibility, neutrality compels us to act in accordance with the point of reference where national interests intersect with the interests of global security. Everything that we have done and are now doing follows from this general rule of interdependent development.

The neutrality that we have chosen is precisely the model that most organically corresponds to the mentality of the people of Turkmenistan, their historical and cultural traditions, as well as the objective realities our country faces due to its geographic position and resource potential. The neutral course and the principles upon which it is based enable us to successfully follow such basic criteria as peacefulness, respect for other peoples, their culture and traditions, and religious and other forms of tolerance. These criteria are also transferred to the practical field of Turkmenistan's foreign policy and diplomacy.

Time has shown that Turkmenistan's neutral status is in keeping with the long-term goals of the United Nations and the interests of the development of the planet's states and peoples in peace and security.

Turkmen neutrality has become a weighty factor in the international peacekeeping efforts in our region. Let us recall that it was in Ashgabat under the aegis of the UN that several rounds of talks were held that played an important role in achieving peace and harmony in Tajikistan. The capital of our neutral state became a place for conducting dialogue towards the settlement of the conflict inside Afghanistan at the end of the 1990s. Turkmenistan has become a reliable ally and effective partner of the UN in maintaining and supporting political stability in the region, as well as in developing good neighborly relations, friendship and cooperation. This was also confirmed by the decision to open the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia in Ashgabat.

We were guided by two fundamental motivations when we stepped forward with the initiative to establish this kind of structure in our region and offering Ashgabat as the place for its headquarters.

The first was the need to give the international community's peacekeeping efforts in Central Asia a systemic nature and institutionally strengthen them at the level of the UN. It was obvious to us that the region needed an active and effective, international mechanism with the corresponding status and powers to prevent and neutralize conflicts.

The second was the awareness that the neutral model of foreign policy correlates universally with the aims of international preventive diplomacy and that they complement each other as vital factors in preserving peace and security at the regional and global levels.

In this way, the logic of the course of Turkmenistan's foreign policy as a neutral state objectively coincides both with the aims of the United Nations in the region and with the world community's

recognition of the ever-growing role of preventive diplomacy as an effective tool in contemporary international politics. From this point of view, I would like to emphasize something important: the decision of the United Nations to establish the Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia with its headquarters in Ashgabat, supported by all of the neighboring countries, has been proven to be correct, timely, and strategically justified. Taking advantage of this opportunity, I would like to express my gratitude to the Presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, members of the Security Council and all of the UN Member States for their wisdom, foresight, and political will.

This decision has confirmed our unity in striving to create an conditions for the peaceful, conflict-free and harmonious development of regional processes, long-term cooperation and partnership among the Central Asian countries and the world community represented by the UN and other authoritative international structures.

And, of course, it is a great honor for Turkmenistan that Ashgabat was chosen as the site for the Regional Centre's headquarters. We take this as a sign of great trust and respect for our country and evidence of the recognition of Turkmenistan's constructive role in international affairs. We have undertaken, with great responsibility, to ensure the functioning of the Centre by creating the political and organizational conditions for the effective work of its leadership and staff. And we will continue to do this in the future.

#### **Distinguished conference participants,**

All of these years, the Regional Centre has acted in strict accordance with its stated goals and objectives, based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The main work is naturally aimed at preventing the threats and challenges the region faces and maintaining a solid basis of peace, security and strategic stability here. It is no coincidence that during its meeting this August the UN Security Council, having noted the importance of preventive diplomacy and early settlement of disputes, supported the efforts of the Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia in this connection. I think that both the Centre's staff and its partners are fully justified to be proud of this support from the Security Council.

We welcome the Centre's cooperation with other international structures and regional organizations – the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the European Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Economic Cooperation Organization and others. In the course of this partnership, common approaches are being developed to deal with such urgent problems as the fight against terrorism, extremism, organized crime and drug trafficking, the management of transboundary hydropower resources, and regional security in the context of the situation in Afghanistan.



We believe that in the context of its mandate, the Centre today is the optimal platform for the interaction of our countries and for the active involvement of international organizations in regional problems. Turkmenistan welcomes and fully supports the activities of the Centre.

I believe that at present and in the future, the Centre's potential will be in demand in such vital areas as energy security, transport and communications, environmental security, the problems in Afghanistan, and many others.

Today it is already obvious that the stable development of the global economy, the conflict-free and safe progress of regional processes and the predictable foreign policies of both individual states and groups of countries are impossible without solid international guarantees of raw energy deliveries. In other words, energy security is now, and will be in the foreseeable future, one of the key factors in the stable and consistent development of the entire system of international relations.

In this respect, we call on the world community represented by the UN to begin drawing up a universal international legal instrument aimed at ensuring the functioning of the energy delivery system, taking into account the interests of producers, transporters and consumers of hydrocarbon resources.

In the context of inter-governmental relations, establishing interregional cooperation for developing the transport and communications spheres is one of the most promising focus areas. Today, politics and the economy are inseparable and, as practice has shown, joint economic, trade and investment projects are capable of smoothing over and neutralizing the most acute foreign policy contradictions and of acting as effective means of preventive diplomacy.

And so we propose consideration of convening a special international conference next year in Ashgabat under the aegis of the Regional Centre dedicated to the prospects for the development of transport and communications infrastructure as a factor in strengthening regional stability and security. In turn, we are willing to provide all the necessary arrangements for holding this meeting.

Environmental security is one of the most urgent issues affecting the vital interests of all of the Central Asian states and neighboring regions. Ecology should not be a bone of contention or a hostage of different states' divergent production and economic interests.

On the contrary, we see today that it is precisely cooperation in the ecological sphere, through the introduction of advanced "green technology," that is the key to resolving many issues of Central Asia's sustainable development and to improving the socio-economic conditions of people's lives. In this regard, Turkmenistan has several specific proposals that it put forward last summer at the United Nations Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development. These primarily concern preserving the unique natural wealth of the Caspian Sea and saving the Aral Sea. We are convinced of the necessity to act on the basis of serious expert evaluations and systemic monitoring of the

situation and begin active diplomatic communication towards the elaboration of joint solutions, including those of a political and legal nature. We propose that the Centre's leadership think about taking part in this process in its official United Nations capacity.

As I already mentioned, the problems in Afghanistan are one of the focuses of the activities of the Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia. I would like to emphasize in particular that extremely concerted efforts will be required in the coming years to ensure long-term peace, stability and security in this country, as well as even closer international coordination aimed at settling the inter-Afghan disputes using peaceful, political, means, restoring the economic and social spheres and resolving humanitarian issues.

In this context, the role and responsibility of preventive diplomacy is growing, which means that the role and responsibility of the Regional Centre is growing as well. Turkmenistan is ready to provide the United Nations and all interested parties the most comprehensive and efficient support in this work, as well as to offer the necessary political and organizational conditions for holding talks under the aegis of the UN in various formats on particular aspects of the problems of Afghanistan. We also believe that it is necessary to emphasize in this respect that our country will continue to extend assistance to Afghanistan in the building of social infrastructure, supply of electricity, training personnel and other areas. We are strongly confident that one of the key components in the peaceful and constructive development of Afghanistan and the maintenance of regional stability and cooperation will be the realization of the project of building the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline; the agreements on this are already being put into practice.

Peace and stability in Afghanistan is a guarantee of peace and stability throughout the entire region and is the most important condition for good neighborly relations and cooperation. Our country is urging the world community, the United Nations and its agencies to do everything possible to achieve this goal. Here we count on the active and efficient efforts of the Regional Centre.

Strengthening security in the region is directly related to building up our joint efforts in the sphere of disarmament. Here we need systemic multilateral cooperation among states and authoritative international organizations in order to make the disarmament processes consistent and irreversible. In essence, this means forming a fundamentally new political and psychological environment in this part of the world, which will facilitate the establishment and consolidation of relations between states with non-confrontational world views and the conscious rejection of military force as a tool for solving existing problems or disputes.

In this context, we believe that the disarmament issue should also remain among the top priorities of the Regional Centre's activities.



**Distinguished conference participants,**

**Dear friends,**

We are celebrating our anniversary at a complicated time. The events taking place in various parts of the world are rapidly changing the geopolitical picture and transforming views on the course and contents of regional and global processes. Under these circumstances, preventive diplomacy is becoming a vital, and in some cases a decisive, factor in conflict prevention and the timely transfer of arguments and disputes to the negotiating table.

The accomplishments of the past five years in this direction have shown that we are on the right track. The Centre for Preventive Diplomacy, established in the capital of neutral Turkmenistan, has made and continues to make a great contribution to strengthening peace and stability in the region and to creating an environment of good neighborliness and cooperation. This deserves the highest appreciation.

I would like to mention the professionalism of the Centre's leadership and staff, which has rightly won them respect and high standing in Turkmenistan and beyond its borders. And today I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to Ambassador Miroslav Jenča and all of the Centre's staff for their work.

**Distinguished conference participants,**

**Dear friends,**

I congratulate all of you again on the upcoming celebration – Turkmenistan Neutrality Day – and also on the fifth anniversary of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and wish you all good health, prosperity, and successful and fruitful work at this forum.



**BAN Ki-moon**  
**Secretary-General**  
**United Nations**



## Message to the Anniversary Event of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA)

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

*Delivered by Mr. Jeffrey Feltman*  
*Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs*

It is a pleasure to convey my warm greetings as you mark the fifth anniversary of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia. I am grateful to Turkmenistan and to President Berdimuhamedov for hosting today's meeting and for providing such strong support for the Centre.

I also take this opportunity to congratulate the people and Government of Turkmenistan on the occasion of their Day of Neutrality. Through its policy of "open doors" and its support for "positive neutrality," Turkmenistan has contributed to stability in Central Asia.

The focus of the Regional Centre -- prevention -- is one of the priorities of my five-year action agenda. Early warning and early action can advance security and stability, save lives and promote sustainable development. Prevention is one of the best investments we can make.

Regional cooperation is critical. The challenges of climate change, drug-trafficking, terrorism and extremism cannot be tackled by any one country alone. Joint action will also help countries of the region better manage natural resources, expand trade and improve transport.

UNRCCA was established to support the governments and people of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in their joint efforts to reach these goals. I have been closely following developments in the region and fondly remember visiting all five Central Asian countries, including the Regional Centre, in April 2010.



The United Nations has established regional offices with political mandates in West and Central Africa as well as in Central Asia. These three offices continue to prove the importance of strong partnerships, not just among countries of a region but also with and among regional organizations.

I encourage the countries of Central Asia to continue to deepen your cooperation to address the region's challenges and to seize the many opportunities for shared progress.

I look forward to our continued excellent cooperation. The UN Regional Centre and the entire United Nations team remain committed to supporting your joint efforts to advance the values of the United Nations through the power of partnership and prevention.

Please accept my best wishes for a successful conference.





**Lamberto ZANNIER**  
**Secretary General**  
**Organization for Security and**  
**Co-operation in Europe**



## **“International Conference to mark the Fifth Anniversary of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy”**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Your Excellency President of Turkmenistan Berdimuhamedov,**

**Your Excellency Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Meredov,**

**Excellencies,**

**Distinguished Participants,**

It is a privilege to be here today and to address the Conference marking the 5th anniversary of the UNRCCA. Let me begin by extending my congratulations to you, your Excellency President Berdimuhamedov, and to the people of Turkmenistan on the celebration of the Neutrality Day tomorrow, 12 December. The decision by Turkmenistan to acquire the status of permanent neutrality made its foreign policy predictable for all actors in the wider region of Central Asia and beyond, and thus - I would maintain – provided a sound contribution to peace and stability in the region. Being neutral however does not mean being passive and Turkmenistan has demonstrated what an active neutral foreign policy can achieve. And its policy aimed at promoting peace, stability and cooperation has been greatly appreciated by the international community.

Indeed Turkmenistan is making a significant effort to foster regional co-operation through numerous bilateral and multilateral initiatives, which have been well received and therefore effective. Here in Ashgabat, the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia is an active catalyst of exchanges in many areas. Today's Conference is thus an important opportunity also for a structured policy-level dialogue with partners from Central Asia. Cooperation, within the region, with external actors and among external actors is imperative for a democratic, prosperous and stable Central Asian region.



## **On Central Asia**

Central Asia continues to remain high on the OSCE agenda. Over the past several years, in a number of fields, the thrust of attention has shifted towards Central Asia. It is likely that the trend will not only continue but intensify during the next years also in view of the 2014 transition in neighboring Afghanistan, related transnational threats, economic and human dimension issues. In this context, I welcome the increasingly proactive role of Central Asian States in the OSCE, as well as in other international organizations.

The OSCE remains committed to supporting, in co-operation with UNRCCA and other international and regional actors, the promotion of a comprehensive approach to security and stability. This includes the political-military, the economic and environmental and, importantly, the human dimension of security with strong focus on human rights and fundamental freedoms.

This comprehensive approach, which has served the OSCE well over the decades, is taking us an important step further – that is, toward the emergence of a genuine Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian Security Community. And we have just adopted, at the OSCE Ministerial Council in Dublin last week, an important decision to begin discussing the building blocks of a process which should lead to an updated agenda for the organization in 2015, the fortieth anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act. An OSCE Security Community needs to encompass preventive diplomacy and wider conflict prevention as essential pillars for peace and security. The OSCE has already an impressive conflict prevention toolbox, including instruments and mechanisms that are available for preventive action.

One of the OSCE instruments relying on preventive diplomacy and promoting security through the protection of human rights, including minority rights, is the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM). It is an instrument that illustrates well the OSCE's comprehensive and cross-dimensional approach to security. All successive High Commissioners have closely co-operated with the Central Asian States in reducing tensions and addressing issues that could have a conflict generating potential. The HCNM's engagement in the Central Asian States has aimed at promoting long-term stability through means of preventive diplomacy as well as promotion of structural reforms with the aim of assisting the States in fulfilling their obligations towards their citizens and commitments towards the international community.

### **Mr. Chairman,**

When it comes to tackling transnational threats, promoting border security and management is another key element of OSCE's support to stability in the region. As the OSCE participating States stated upon the adoption of a *Border Security and Management Concept* in 2005, the Organization's primary objective in this area remains to keep borders secure, while facilitating friendly relations between States.

At the same time, OSCE engagement in border security and management can also be seen as a preventive measure, directed toward building confidence among states that face common challenges and concerns. In the third session of today's event I will elaborate more on confidence building measures specifically in this field.

I would also like to underline our role as a facilitator of the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in this regard. I welcome, in particular, the OSCE's involvement, together with the UNRCCA and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), in assisting the Central



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Asian States. A CTITF Joint Plan of Action for Central Asia was adopted by a high-level meeting on 30 November 2011, here in Ashgabat. I can only reiterate the readiness of the OSCE to further support and contribute to this important process.

Preventing conflicts in central Asia means also great attention to water and energy-related issues. The OSCE is following closely current developments in Central Asia in these fields. While political dialogue on water and energy issues in the region continues to be elusive, the international community should persist in drawing close attention to them. For instance, the OSCE stands ready to increase its practical cross-border water sharing and capacity building activities. Elements of the OSCE CBM regime could be replicated to include water management and cooperation

### **On support to Afghanistan**

The situation in Afghanistan has a direct impact on security in Central Asia. The Istanbul Process has been an important step in the promotion of security and stability in Afghanistan and in the region.

The progressive withdrawal of international forces from Afghanistan poses additional challenges in particular on border management in the region. Our Central Asian participating States play an important role in the OSCE's engagement with Afghanistan. This engagement has materialized through a significant reliance on our Central Asian partners to host important training and capacity building projects, which also include participation of Afghan officials.



OSCE's capacity building efforts focus directly on further strengthening the domestic capabilities of each country and providing platforms to facilitate cross-border cooperation, including with Afghanistan. Some of our larger efforts have addressed green border patrolling and surveillance, customs issues, export control and national border strategy development. Many of these projects also contain elements to encourage inter-agency and cross-border cooperation.

The OSCE's current efforts to support Afghanistan include a set of 32 projects, across all three dimensions of security, developed in close co-operation with our Central Asian participating States and Afghanistan. For 2012-2013, we have established nine priority projects, mainly focused on areas such as border management, police training and counter-narcotics.

As the drawdown of international forces progresses and Afghanistan prepares to take over the full responsibility for its own security, pursuing a regional approach to address common challenges and foster co-operation is essential. And I would like to underscore the fact that this should take place in a context where the interaction with the countries of the region must at the forefront of the coordinated effort of the international community. After all, greater ownership by the regional community of States is also a key principle in the Istanbul process.

I look forward to addressing more specifically issues of interaction with other key international partner organizations under Session Three of the Conference.

**Thank you for your attention.**



**Sergei LEBEDEV**  
**Executive Secretary**  
**Commonwealth**  
**of Independent States**



*-- Unofficial Translation --*

## HIGHLIGHTS

**of the Statement of Executive Committee Chair and CIS Executive Secretary, Mr. Sergei Lebedev, “Turkmenistan’s Neutrality and Preventive Diplomacy as factors of confidence-building and cooperation in Central Asia” at the International Conference on occasion of the Fifth Anniversary of the Opening of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Your Excellency, President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov,**

**Distinguished Conference Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am sincerely grateful to the leadership of Turkmenistan, as well as to the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General and Head of the Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, for inviting me to participate in this prestigious international forum.

Tomorrow, the people of Turkmenistan will celebrate Neutrality Day. Please allow me, on behalf of the CIS Executive Committee, to heartily congratulate the country’s President, who is with us here today, and all of the citizens of Turkmenistan on this grand State holiday and wish this wonderful country peace, stability and prosperity.

Holding this conference on such a holiday is very symbolic and significant. In line with its status of permanent neutrality, which has been reinforced at the level of the UN, Turkmenistan conducts an active foreign policy and makes a weighty contribution to open and engaged international dialogue.

The CIS Heads of State in 2005 took note of the Basic Principles of the Participation of Neutral Turkmenistan in the Commonwealth of Independent States and accepted the country as an Associate



Member. As practice has shown, this status has not prevented Turkmenistan from actively participating in most of the CIS integration processes.

President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov formulated Turkmenistan's policy in the CIS as follows: **“Partnership in the framework of the CIS coincides with the priorities of Turkmenistan's foreign-policy strategy aimed at the unwavering development of constructive dialogue in the interests of universal peace, prosperity and progress.”**

Broad international support has been garnered for initiatives that President Gurbanguly Mialikgulievich Berdimuhamedov has put forward from the rostrum of the UN General Assembly, on strengthening stability and security, peaceful settlement of the situation in Afghanistan, resolving the serious environmental challenges of the Aral Sea and preserving the unique natural resources of the Caspian, guaranteeing reliable delivery of energy resources and creating a permanent active platform for political dialogue on disarmament issues in Central Asia and the Caspian region.

**Opening the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia in Ashgabat five years ago was the logical consequence of the effective foreign policy of Turkmenistan and evidence of its high prestige in the world community.**

It is no exaggeration to say that today Ashgabat has become a widely recognized venue for negotiations on the most significant and urgent problems of the modern world. Here, regional and international forums are regularly held under the UN aegis, as are major events within the framework of the Commonwealth. This is also a practical embodiment of the idea that the United Nations and regional organizations should complement each other in our globalizing world.

The complementary nature of these relations is fully in line with the task of jointly creating efficient mechanisms of preventive diplomacy aimed at preventing conflicts and ensuring sustainable stability and security at the regional and international levels.

It was this, in particular, that led the **CIS Executive Committee to focus its attention on cooperation with the UN Regional Centre from its first day of operation.** I had the opportunity to participate in the Centre's inaugural ceremony, which is when our working contacts began. Later, working meetings with the Centre's leadership took on a systematic character. We actively exchange opinions and mutually beneficial information, clarify positions and share possible ways to increase the efficacy of our partnership in resolving the problems shared by the Central Asian and Commonwealth countries. And this stands to reason, since making use of the Centre's potential as a dedicated UN body in the region meets the long-term interests of both the Commonwealth and also the international community.

#### **Distinguished Conference Participants,**

The constructive foreign and domestic policies conducted by Turkmenistan's leadership are in harmony with the aspirations of all the Commonwealth countries.

As Chair of the CIS Executive Committee, **I consider it my duty to particularly underline the engaged and active role of Turkmenistan as the chair of the Commonwealth this year.**

On 5 December, a meeting of the Council of CIS Heads of State was held in Ashgabat, which like previous meeting of Heads of Government and other major activities held during Turkmenistan's chairmanship was organized and conducted at the highest level of quality.



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We would like to express our particular gratitude to Turkmenistan's leadership and to the highly respected Gurbanguly Mialikgulievich Berdimuhamedov personally for the fact that this productive chairmanship has resulted in the adoption of a number of documents that are fundamentally to the further expansion of interstate cooperation.

**The Declaration of CIS Heads of State on the Further Development of Comprehensive Cooperation**, adopted at the Ashgabat summit on the initiative of Turkmenistan, holds a special place amongst these documents. The Presidents of our countries stated in particular: **“We acknowledge the Commonwealth’s efforts in strengthening comprehensive security and stability, viewing it as an important instrument for early warning, prevention and settlement of conflict situations, and we also consider it necessary to continue building up the capacity of the CIS to utilize of means of preventive diplomacy and confidence-building measures.”**

In order to put this fundamental principle into practice, the CIS Executive Committee and competent authorities of the Commonwealth are prepared to further develop our constructive partnership with the UN Regional Centre.

**Thank you for your attention.**





**Shamil ALESKEROV**  
**Secretary General**  
**Economic Cooperation Organization**



## STATEMENT

**of Ambassador Shamil Aleskerov, ECO Secretary General,  
at the International Conference on the Fifth Anniversary  
of the Opening of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive  
Diplomacy for Central Asia**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Your Excellency, Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, Honourable President of Turkmenistan,**

**Your Excellencies, Honorable Foreign Ministers,**

**Your Excellency, Ambassador Miroslav Jenča, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General  
and Head of UNRCCA,**

**Excellencies,**

**Distinguished Colleagues,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a great privilege for me to address this important International Conference held on the occasion the Fifth Anniversary of the Opening of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia.

At the very outset, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Government of Turkmenistan for inviting ECO to this important forum and for the excellent arrangements made and the warm hospitality extended to us in the beautiful city of Ashgabat.

Also allow me to express my warm felicitations on the occasion of the 5th Anniversary of the establishment of the UNRCCA. I would also like to take this opportunity to offer my cordial felicitations on the Neutrality Day of Turkmenistan which will be marked tomorrow.

**Honorable Mr. President,**

**Distinguished Participants,**

Preventive diplomacy has been considered as an effective tool for early conflict prevention and peaceful settlement of disputes in different regions of the world, promotion of good relations between countries. It provides and fosters a very strong ground for regional and global development and facilitation of economic cooperation in the face of current challenges in achieving peace and prosperity.

In this context, regional economic cooperation under the auspices of the ECO, SCO and other organizations can play a key role in advancing international and regional efforts for preventive policy dialogue as they create a momentum for collective action of countries toward sustainable development in different fields such as trade, energy, environment, and transport. Therefore we consider the aims and activities of the UNRCCA and ECO as mutually reinforcing and complementary, serving the same objectives and goals.

**Excellencies,**

The ECO Member states, five of which belong to the Central Asia, share strong commonalities of culture, history and geography. They have common development goals. They pursue convergent objectives and face common challenges. The region has more than 400 million people; its area is more than 8 million square kilometers. It provides a huge market and bright trading prospects. The economy in this region is becoming vibrant and performing well, even in the difficult times of the recent economic crises in the world, showing resilience to the external shocks.

**Distinguished Participants,**

ECO is becoming the primary vehicle for realizing the common vision of regional economic cooperation and integration. Frequent interaction among member states promotes understanding and cooperation. Events held at various levels – from Summit to Ministerial to expert level meetings as well as seminars and workshops – help to get better picture of the challenges and issues to be given attention and identify possible actions.

Successful regional economic cooperation has a stabilizing impact on the region. A region that is stable is a region better able to concentrate on development.

It is my distinct honor to present to this august forum a concise updated review of ECO's activities in most important fields of cooperation, which we believe, are relevant to the aims of the preventive diplomacy.

**Distinguished participants,**

Cognizant of the powerful role of trade, the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) has been initiated for trade liberalization in the ECO region through reducing tariffs and elimination of non-tariff measures. The Contracting Parties are going to start trade liberalization under the Agreement from January 2013.

The ECO Trade and Development Bank, established in 2005, continues to expand its operations to meet the growing demand for finance for promoting trade and development of the ECO region.



Enhancing regional cooperation in transport is an essential driver of economic growth. A comprehensive ECO Railway Network Development Plan, worth of US\$43 billion, has been approved and several regional rail infrastructure projects are already being followed up vigorously. The ECO Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA) has come into force since 2006 with ratification of the parliaments of eight member states.

Concrete measures are afoot to streamline the freight service of the ECO Container Trains on Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul, Istanbul-Almaty and Bandar Abbas-Almaty routes. In the road sector, several corridors have been established or are under study with the assistance of the relevant international organizations.

The first Meeting of the ECO Ministers of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), held in Tehran in November 2012 opened a new area of cooperation in the field of ICT.

#### **Excellencies,**

The ECO Plan of Action for Energy/Petroleum Cooperation (2011-2015) was adopted in October 2010 and is being implemented. The objective is to increase energy security and enhance energy supply and efficiency, connectivity between the power systems.

The Framework Plan of Action on Environmental Cooperation and Global Warming in ECO region (2011–2015) has been initiated, along with concrete projects for environmental protection and sustainable development, aimed at addressing environmental problems and improving ecology.

ECO Regional Programme for Food Security (RPFS), worth of about US\$60 million, has been prepared with the technical assistance of FAO is the main area of concentration for ECO agricultural cooperation. The Regional Coordination Centre on the Implementation of the RPFS was inaugurated last month in Ankara.

#### **Excellencies,**

We are implementing a joint regional strategy on combating drugs, terrorism and trans-national organized crime, approved by our Interior Ministers. The implementation of the European Union-funded project on Fight against Trafficking from/to Afghanistan into other ECO Member States is progressing well. We are also in the process of establishing ECOPOL for coordination against transnational crime.

Since the reconstruction in Afghanistan is indispensable to peace, stability and development of the region, ECO has been paying special attention to it. The Afghan Reconstruction Fund has been established to facilitate rebuilding efforts in the country and is financing several projects in the country.

#### **Distinguished Participants,**

With the rapid expansion of ECO's activities in various fields, several specialized and affiliated institutions have been established or are under the process of establishment. Those include the ECO Cultural Institute, the ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the ECO Science Foundation, the ECO Educational Institute, the ECO Veterinary Commission, the ECO Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters, the ECO Water Management Center, the ECO Reinsurance Company.

A recent important development has been the establishment of the ECO Parliamentary Forum, which will help to promote our cooperation and contribute to the development of relations between our member states.

**Excellencies,**

The ECO is an outward looking organization, open for cooperation with different partners. We have been enjoying cooperation with the United Nations and its different agencies as well as other international organizations, trying to achieve synergy in our efforts. We have signed more than 40 MOUs with the UN system as well as other regional/international organizations.

**Excellencies,**

We at the ECO attach a high importance to supporting the aims and activities of the UNRCCA. All member countries of the UNRCCA are also members of the ECO. Therefore, we regard the success of the UNRCCA as the success of the ECO.

I take this opportunity to express the ECO's readiness to enhance cooperation with UNRCCA on matters of common interest especially Energy, Water Management, cross-border organized crime, and drugs control.

Before I conclude, I would like to once again thank the Government of Turkmenistan, in particular the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for the invitation of ECO to this event and wish the Conference a great success.

**Thank you.**





**Muratbek IMANALIYEV**  
**Secretary General**  
**Shanghai Cooperation**  
**Organization**



*--Unofficial Translation--*

## STATEMENT

**of SCO Secretary-General Muratbek Imanaliyev at the  
International Conference on the occasion of the 17th anniversary  
of the recognition by the UN of Turkmenistan's status of  
Permanent Neutrality and the Fifth Anniversary of the Opening of  
the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Dear Mr. Chairman,**

**Distinguished Conference Participants,**

First, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Rashid Meredov, and Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General and Head of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, Mr. Miroslav Jenča, for inviting me to participate in this conference and I would also like to thank our Turkmen friends for their traditional hospitality, warm welcome and excellent arrangements for today's event.

Please allow me on behalf of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to welcome all of the participants of the conference, as well as to congratulate the people and leaders of Turkmenistan on the upcoming national holiday –the 17th anniversary of the adoption of the status of permanent neutrality – and wish them continued prosperity and development.

The year 2012 marks the fifth anniversary of the opening of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia in Ashgabat. The broad international representation at today's event, without doubt, is evidence of Turkmenistan's high prestige and recognition of its active foreign policy, which is based on the principles of positive neutrality, peacefulness, good-neighborly relations and equal and mutually beneficial cooperation.



Interview for Turkmenistan Television Channel  
MFA of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat

### **Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The constant maintenance of stability and security is one of the main conditions for peace and sustainable development. The current circumstances make it imperative to take a sufficiently broad look at ways to counter new challenges and threats. The SCO is guided by such an approach in its practical activities in this area.

At the SCO summit held in Beijing on 6 and 7 June 2012, the Heads of State acknowledged the rising trend of threats such as terrorism, separatism, extremism, drug trafficking and organized crime, as well as problems connected to the destabilization of situations in various regions of the world. Against this background, it remains urgently necessary to intensify political and diplomatic efforts to prevent crisis situations and to jointly respond to them.

In this context, the summit approved a new version of the Regulations on Political and Diplomatic Measures and Response Mechanisms of the SCO to situations that threaten peace, security and stability in the region, as well as a Program of Cooperation among SCO Member States in the fight against terrorism, separatism and extremism for 2013-2015, both of which have reinforced the legal framework of Member States' cooperation in the security sphere.

As is known, the SCO's area of responsibility encompasses, first of all, Central Asia, a region that has a vital significance in issues of peace, security and stability across Eurasia. In this respect, it is necessary to underline the importance of strengthening relations among the SCO Member States and Turkmenistan in the work of ensuring regional stability and security. Collaboration between our Organization and Turkmenistan is natural. One manifestation of this is the participation of Turkmenistan's leadership in SCO summits as guests of our Organization's chair.



## **Distinguished Conference Participants,**

The SCO, being an open organization, is striving to actively develop mutually beneficial cooperation with a variety of States, international structures and regional associations.

SCO Member States are firmly convinced that a central role in the system of international relations belongs to the UN, being a universal and largely irreplaceable mechanism of multilateral cooperation. In the context of ensuring regional security and stability, our Organization is focusing its efforts on implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, relevant UN Security Council resolutions and provisions of the SCO Convention against Terrorism.

Close cooperation has been established between the SCO and the UN and its bodies dealing with security issues, in accordance with the Joint Declaration on Cooperation between the Secretariats of the United Nations and of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization that was signed in April 2010 in Tashkent. In June 2011, the Memorandum of Understanding between the SCO Secretariat and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) was approved in Astana.

Great value is placed on developing collaboration with the UN Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Ashgabat, the efforts of which are among the key elements in the work of ensuring regional security.

The SCO's extensive system of external ties includes practical collaboration with Observers (Afghanistan, India, Iran, Mongolia and Pakistan) and Dialogue Partners (Belarus, Turkey and Sri Lanka); holding regular consultations with executive bodies of the CIS, EurAsEC and the CSTO; and developing contacts with such international institutions as the European Union, ASEAN, ECO, the Asian Development Bank, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, UNESCO, the International Committee of the Red Cross and others. Areas of cooperation range from dealing traditional challenges and threats to cooperating in the economic and humanitarian spheres.

## **Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,**

In conclusion, I would like to mention that only through joint efforts based on the principles of the indivisibility of security and a system of adequate measures, acting in a spirit of equality, mutual respect of one another's interests and looking for shared views on the key problems of the present day can we eliminate existing threats and ensure the peaceful and stable development of our region.

I hope that the contacts and cooperation between the SCO and Turkmenistan will continue to grow and develop in various areas.

Please allow me once again to congratulate all those present on this occasion and wish this conference success.

**Thank you for your attention.**



ZHANG  
BENYAN



Working session of the Conference  
MFA of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat





**Jeffrey FELTMAN**  
**Under-Secretary-General**  
**for Political Affairs**  
**United Nations**



## **UNRCCA Fifth Anniversary Celebration** **“Neutrality and Preventive Diplomacy:** **Bases for Peace and Security”**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Dear colleagues,**

Let me begin on a personal note. This is my first visit to Ashgabat, and indeed to Central Asia.

There are two reasons why I am particularly glad to be here today. The first is that the United Nations attaches great importance to its partnership with Central Asia to promote peace and prosperity throughout the region.

Five years ago, the establishment of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Ashgabat signaled the deepening of this partnership, and it is remarkable how much has been achieved since then, through your leadership and the dedication of SRSG Jenča and his team.

The second reason is that, as someone who has spent many years as a diplomat at the bilateral level and is now serving in a multilateral role, I firmly believe that preventive diplomacy is not an optional tool in international relations – it is a necessary approach. I have seen firsthand how it can make a difference to people's lives.

The evolving experience of preventive diplomacy here in Central Asia is, without doubt, of great relevance for other parts of the world that are seeking to institutionalize dialogue and cooperate for peace.

I am very pleased that present amongst us today, in addition to SRSG Jenča, are two senior United Nations officials who are leading our preventive diplomacy efforts in West and Central Africa as well as the head of our Mission in Afghanistan. It will be extremely interesting to exchange ideas and share observations across continents.



Allow me thus to express my deep appreciation to our host, the Government of Turkmenistan, for providing us with the opportunity to discuss in this unique setting a set of issues that occupies us intensely, here in the region, in New York and indeed around the globe.

On the same occasion I would like to congratulate His Excellency President Berdimuhamedov and the people of Turkmenistan on the eve of their Neutrality Day celebrations tomorrow, the twelfth of December.

Finally, I would like to thank the Governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan for their trust and confidence in the United Nations. It is an honor to be here with you today.

### **Excellencies,**

Across the globe – and recently in places like Yemen, Iraq, Somalia, Malawi, Kenya, Guinea and Niger, though unfortunately not in Syria – we have seen the potential of preventive diplomacy to defuse tensions in escalating crises and to assist parties in resolving disputes peacefully.

When I arrived at the United Nations a little over five months ago, it struck me to what extent conflict prevention is enjoying growing political support across the spectrum.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has made it a core priority to enhance the ability of the United Nations to act earlier and preventively. He was convinced that too often in the past not enough had been done to ensure that emerging crises did not become bigger and costlier for all concerned. And Member States themselves are placing greater emphasis on prevention and see a key role for the Organization in supporting and complementing their efforts.

This said, preventive diplomacy will not work in every case, or even close. It will always be hostage to multiple factors, many of which beyond our control. But common sense and hard-won experience tells us that if we are present when it matters, with early and skillful diplomatic interventions, we may succeed in resolving differences, finding workable solutions, preventing conflict or keeping it in check. And it is not as though we can afford not to try.

Allow me to share with you very briefly a few of the observations we have gathered so far on maximizing preventive diplomacy's chances of success.

In our experience, the single biggest challenge is not to improve early warning, but to mobilize early action – rapid and unified diplomatic action – as soon as opportunities open up. Nobody predicted the upheavals in the Arab World, but we have been able to mobilize quickly to contribute to their resolution, at least in some cases, through electoral support to countries such as Tunisia and Egypt, and through mediation and the deployment of UN political missions in Libya and Yemen.

Recognizing that preventive diplomacy is a complex field, we have also worked hard to professionalize our practice. We have come a long way in building up our expertise and are now able to put mediation specialists on a plane to anywhere in the world with 72 hours' notice. This kind of mobile assistance is in increasingly high demand from Member States: we have deployed our experts 65 times this year, including to Afghanistan, Nepal, Libya, Chad, Somalia, Yemen and Iraq.

A further component of preventive diplomacy is getting the international community to speak with one voice. This was instrumental in supporting the transition in Yemen, as well as the independence

**Speech by Mr. Feltman**  
**MFA of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat**



referendum in South Sudan. In Syria, as we know, this convergence of views has proved elusive so far: positions remain divided. It is when the envoy can speak on behalf of the key international and regional actors that her words are listened to most attentively.

A closely related point is on partnerships with regional organizations. It is the rare exception for the United Nations to be involved in preventive diplomacy and not be working closely with a regional organization. While working together is not always easy, we have made progress together with our regional partners to deepen our strategic dialogue and to forge common approaches to emerging crises. We have a strong partnership, for example, with the African Union in Somalia, and with ECOWAS in West Africa. The UN-EU-OSCE Troika worked together to support Kyrgyzstan.

Proximity – being close to the action and having a finger on the pulse – is also critical. The UN currently deploys fifteen peacekeeping operations as well as twelve political missions which allow us to better accompany political or peace consolidation processes. But it is particularly our three regional offices in West Africa, in Central Africa and in Central Asia that have become important platforms for preventive diplomacy.

In West Africa, our office has worked with the African Union and regional partners to prevent and contain a number of crises over the past ten years, related to elections, military coups and delicate political transitions. It also supports the region in tackling cross-border threats such as drugs and organized crime. A major focus for the office at present is the situation in the Sahel, particularly Mali.

Our Central Africa office is much newer than its West African cousin, established in early 2011. But it is already beginning to make a similar contribution to preventive diplomacy in the sub-region. A primary concern is to address the presence of armed groups, in particular the Lord's Resistance Army.

In Central Asia, the ability of the United Nations to support you as you strive to address important regional peace and security issues has increased exponentially through the establishment of the UN Regional Centre in Ashgabat. The Centre's Programme of Action, defined in consultation with you, bears testimony to this.



Prior to the establishment of the Centre, there were only a handful of experts in New York on whom the region could draw when needed, and deploying them took time and money. The Centre has also, in no small measure, brought Central Asia to New York: We now have a greater appreciation there of the important opportunities and challenges faced by your region, and a better knowledge of the many different initiatives you have undertaken to promote dialogue in search of sustainable solutions.

In that context, I have been briefed that the annual meeting of Deputy Foreign Ministers which was held in Bishkek in October provided an excellent forum for open and constructive exchanges on a number of key issues before the region today. Often, these kinds of structures are what make up the very essence of preventive diplomacy.

I was pleased to learn that during the Bishkek meeting concrete proposals were put forward to further strengthen channels of communication and create new opportunities for dialogue. I also heard that concerns were raised in relation to the future of Afghanistan and the security implications for the wider region. I would like you to know that the United Nations will be a reliable partner to you as you work to address these challenges.

On a lighter note, I noted with interest the outcome of the first Preventive Diplomacy football tournament that took place in Ashgabat just a few days prior to the Bishkek meeting, and I salute your diplomats for their skills on the pitch: those are good to have on your side too.

#### **Excellencies,**

Advancing preventive diplomacy is by no means easy, as we all know. It takes vision, leadership, dedication, and a willingness to be creative in resolving problems and working out solutions. Let me finish by warmly congratulating you on the achievements of the past five years, of which I believe we can collectively be proud. We look forward to working together in the years that lie ahead.

**Thank you.**



**Miroslav JENČA**  
**Special Representative**  
**of the Secretary-General**  
**United Nations Regional Centre**  
**for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia**



*-- Unofficial Translation --*

## **Plenary session of the Conference** **“Five years of activities of UNRCCA – outcomes, challenges and possible responses”**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Dear Mr. President,**

First of all I would like to thank you for your warm congratulations on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the official opening of the Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, and likewise for the high appreciation you gave to our work, and for the tangible proposals for further development of preventive diplomacy mechanisms in the region.

I am also grateful to the leaders of regional organizations present here, in particular OSCE, CIS, ECO and SCO, for their congratulations to the address of the Regional Centre. We highly appreciate the achieved level of cooperation with regional structures which provides a non-yielding basis for the further development of our partnership in the interests of strengthening peace and stability in Central Asia.

**Distinguished guests, Excellencies,**

Our anniversary coincides with the celebration of the 17th anniversary of the recognition of the status of permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan by the UN General Assembly. In this regard, let me join the statements of others and express my sincere congratulations to the people and the Government of Turkmenistan on this memorable occasion.

It is not a coincidence that we are celebrating our 5th anniversary on the eve of the Neutrality Day. The neutral status of Turkmenistan was one of the key factors to place the Headquarters of the Regional Centre in Ashgabat. And now we all can see increased efforts of neutral Turkmenistan to find durable solutions for many challenges facing the region and the world.

The Regional Centre was established on the basis of a consensus reached among the countries of Central Asia to strive to jointly tackle the multiple threats in their region, including international terrorism and extremism, drug trafficking, organized crime and environmental degradation. This is the first UN structure focused exclusively on regional preventive actions and it can serve as an example for similar efforts in other parts of the world.

Over the past five years the Centre, working in close cooperation with the governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and other partners has established itself as a platform for dialogue and a tool for enhanced cooperation for the countries of Central Asia. The Centre has become a recognized partner in the region and beyond, and works to help the countries of Central Asia identify and develop mutually acceptable solutions to existing and emerging problems that can pose a threat to peace and security in the region.

One guiding principle of UNRCCA's work is described best with one word: impartiality. In finding solutions to the region's challenges, the Centre has been taking the interests and concerns of all parties fully into account.

Another guiding principle is innovation. UNRCCA does not and will not insist on pushing blueprint solutions, but rather tries to facilitate local, targeted and tailored solutions through dialogue and negotiations with the countries of the region on issues of concern.

Only these principles can assist in finding durable and mutually acceptable solutions that would ensure long-term peace and security throughout the region. To this end, the Centre also maintains close co-operation with international and regional organizations as well as with UN structures operating in the region. I'm pleased that leaders and senior representatives of many of these organizations are here today.

In the five years since its establishment, UNRCCA has been actively involved in preventive diplomacy efforts across a range of issues of high importance to the region, with the aim of building trust and strengthening cooperation between the Central Asian countries, thus reducing the risk of conflict or, in some cases, the relapse into violence. Together we have been working on the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy; exploring best possible ways to address the water/energy nexus; working closely with the UN Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA) in efforts to stabilize the situation the country; and equipping a new generation of diplomats and state employees with necessary skills in the area of preventive diplomacy. Today's conference will provide us with an opportunity to take stock of the Centre's main achievements and progress made in dealing with some of the challenges to peace and security in Central Asia.

But we will go beyond this as well, as it is important to look at preventive diplomacy from a conceptual point of view, to assess the lessons learnt and best practices, challenges and prospects in the field of preventive diplomacy in general. The UN is trying to do more to prevent conflicts. The Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has placed a special emphasis on preventive diplomacy, including it in its key priorities for the second term in office. From that prospective the role that regional structures such as UNRCCA, UNOCA and UNOWA play as part of the international community's response to existing and emerging threats to peace and stability at the regional level is particularly important.

In this spirit I look forward to interesting and fruitful discussions in an atmosphere that is characterized by the hospitality of our Turkmen hosts, and wish our conference success.





**RASHID  
MEREDOV**

Deputy Chair of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister  
of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov  
and SRSG Miroslav Jenča at the working session of the  
Conference  
*MFA of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat*



# Presentation of Miroslav JENČA, SRSG and Head of UNRCCA, at the working session of the Conference

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Excellencies, dear guests, ladies and gentlemen,**

It is a great pleasure to celebrate UNRCCA's fifth anniversary together with you. I am grateful to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan for the hard work they have done to help us put together this conference.

Let me at this place congratulate you, Rashid Ovezgeldyevich, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under your leadership on the occasion of the 17th anniversary of Turkmenistan's Neutrality. Tomorrow it will be 17 years ago that the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution A/50/80, recognizing and supporting the permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan.

In addition to my opening remarks during the first plenary session of the Conference I would like to focus on our activities.

Following the implementation of UNRCCA's first Programme of Action (2009-2011), we developed a follow up Programme (2012-2014) in close consultations with all Central Asian countries. Based on the views received from the countries during these consultations, the Centre is now implementing activities focused on mainly three broad areas 1) the impact of trans-boundary threats facing the region, 2) implications of national developments on regional stability, and 3) management of common natural resources and environmental degradation.

Only through this approach can durable and mutually acceptable solutions be found that will help ensure long-term peace and security throughout the region. To this end, the Centre also maintains close co-operation with bilateral partners, international and regional organizations as well as with UN structures operating in the region.

In the five years since its establishment, UNRCCA has been actively involved in preventive diplomacy efforts across a range of issues of high importance to the region, with the aim of building trust and strengthening cooperation between the Central Asian countries, thus reducing the risk of conflict or, in some cases, the relapse into violence. Today's conference provides us with an opportunity to take stock of the Centre's achievements and progress made in dealing with some of the challenges to peace and security in Central Asia.

Let me highlight a few specific examples of our work in the region in the past five years.

The Centre works to identify targeted and sustainable solutions to cross-border threats such as terrorism, extremism and drug-trafficking. As you know, one year ago in Ashgabat, a Joint Plan of Action (JPoA) aimed at the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in the context of Central



Asia was presented; the first such regional plan of its kind. We are now about to commence to the next stage, with a set of projects focused on implementing the deliverables in the JPoA. The projects focus on addressing conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and on enhancing counter-terrorism capacity-building in the region; aiming to implement the Joint Plan of Action in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. For this undertaking to be successful, close cooperation with the Governments of Central Asia and relevant regional and international organizations is of key importance.

Counter-terrorism efforts in Central Asia also complement activities that form part of the Istanbul Process, which aims to strengthen security by promoting cooperation among the countries of the “Heart of Asia” region, including Afghanistan. In this context, UNRCCA is acting as a supporting partner in the implementation of confidence-building measures related to counter-terrorism, as identified in the Kabul Ministerial Conference Declaration.

Connected to this and in line with its mandate, throughout the past five years, UNRCCA has been closely liaising with the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) to ensure a comprehensive and integrated analysis of the situation in the region and to support strengthened links between the countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan; which could help efforts to stabilize the situation both within Afghanistan and across the broader region. Representatives of the Afghan Government and UNAMA are regularly invited to attend relevant events organized by UNRCCA.

Another complex issue that the Regional Centre has been dealing with is the management of trans-boundary water and energy resources in Central Asia, which poses one of the most difficult challenges for the region. While positive developments have taken place in bilateral negotiations between some Central Asian States, serious disagreements remain in particular between upstream and downstream countries over the construction of major hydropower installations on cross-border waterways. Against this backdrop, the Centre provides a political platform for consultations among the Governments of Central Asia so as to promote dialogue, build trust and identify elements that could ultimately form a sustainable solution for water-sharing in the region; based on international law and taking into account the interests and needs of all the countries affected. A specific example of the work of the Centre is its active promotion of discussions on the establishment of an early warning system related to potential trans-boundary water problems in the region. In this connection, a first regional early warning bulletin was produced this year, in cooperation with the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea. Further, to promote cooperation between the countries of Central Asia on water-dependent sectors of their economies, the Centre in cooperation with FAO has convened a number of workshops in which a set of scenarios concerning the integrated use of water-resources in the region have been elaborated; thus demonstrating how certain actions may affect different situations over time. We hope that this approach can help parties to generate alternative options regarding their use of water; thus improving planning for the future and reducing the risk of exacerbation of disputes.

Most recently, we have shared with the Governments of Central Asia a “Proposal for Modernizing the Legal Framework for Transboundary Water Management in the Aral Sea Basin”. The proposal based on norms and principles of international law, constitutes a framework of principles and procedures that would allow for a fair and balanced use of the shared waters of the basin. Consultations with Central Asian Governments and experts regarding this proposal will take place in the first half of 2013.

The Centre has also played a role in preventing the relapse into violence in the region. In Kyrgyzstan, UNRCCA's presence on the ground allowed it to engage actively from the very beginning of the crisis

that took place in the country in the spring and summer of 2010. I visited the country several times both during and after the immediate crisis for talks with high-ranking national authorities, other political actors, civil society and representatives of ethnic minorities both in Bishkek and Osh.

Joint visits and interventions by the so called “Troika”, consisting of the Special Envoys of the EU, the OSCE and myself, helped prevent a relapse into violence in Kyrgyzstan; thus demonstrating the value of cooperation between regional and international organizations in crisis situations. I should like to stress that eventually it was the peoples of Kyrgyzstan who decided to go for peace and not war. The UN also worked closely with international organizations like SCO and CSTO as well as with bilateral partners. UN agencies constructed shelters and implemented projects to improve the daily lives of the population affected by the violence.

Another important aspect of UNRCCA’s work is capacity building. The Centre aims to provide future generations of diplomats and political practitioners in Central Asia with the necessary skills to successfully address the challenges the region faces through the use of preventive diplomacy. Through this work, we aim to contribute to long-term efforts to maintain peace and stability in the region.

Looking forward, Central Asia is likely to continue to face cross-border threats and challenges emanating from the water and energy nexus. This will require our continued focus and improvement.

To discuss such existing and potential threats, we convened the fourth annual meeting of Central Asian Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Bishkek in October this year. One of the key messages coming out of that meeting was the need for political will amongst the governments of the region to engage in a meaningful bilateral and/or multilateral dialogue. The governments of Central Asia demonstrated such political will when the Regional Centre was established. I believe that our efforts to increase trust between the countries of Central Asia can in turn help to reinforce their political will and strengthen their resolve to jointly tackle the challenges before them.

Another precondition for success is the cooperation and coordination with regional organizations such as the OSCE, SCO, CIS, EU, CSTO, CICA, ECO, NATO, and IFIs to name just a few, to ensure durable peace and create conditions conducive to sustainable economic growth and prosperity in the region. Cooperation with International Financial Institutions is particularly important to jointly advance approaches on how to engage the countries in regional cooperation. I would also like to stress the importance of UN Resolution 1325 which among other things stipulates the importance of involvement of women in peace-building and conflict prevention. We strive to enhance this among other through a regular dialogue with women organizations across the region.

UNRCCA as the only UN political body with a Central Asia-wide mandate is uniquely positioned to assist the Central Asian countries in finding solutions to the most pressing problems in the region. I would like to repeat a point I made in the beginning of my presentation: We do not insist on pushing blueprint solutions, but facilitate tailored, targeted solutions that suit the needs and interests of all sides involved, and we do that through means of dialogue facilitation and negotiations. To this end, I look forward to continuing our cooperation with the governments of Central Asia and our colleagues in regional and international organizations and bilateral partners.

## **Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen!**

Let me finish my presentation by once again expressing my heartfelt gratitude to you for joining us for the celebration of the fifth anniversary of our Regional Centre. I can assure you that my team and I, in joint efforts with our partners in regional and international organizations and within the United Nations Country Teams in Central Asia, will continue to support the countries of Central Asia in their efforts to achieve a prosperous future in peace and stability.

**Thank you!**





**Kairat UMAROV**  
**Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs**  
**Kazakhstan**



*--Unofficial Translation--*

## STATEMENT

### of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kairat Umarov at the International Conference on the Fifth Anniversary of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Your Excellency, Mr. Berdimuhamedov, President of Turkmenistan,**

**Your Excellency, Mr. Jenča, Special Representative,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First I would like to congratulate President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov together with the Turkmen people on the 17th anniversary of the neutrality of Turkmenistan.

Today, after seventeen years, we can talk about the obvious positive results of Turkmenistan's neutral status and its practical application.

Turkmenistan's neutral status, which carries a minimal level of foreign policy risk, along with the country's rich resource potential and internal stability, has predetermined the international community's immense interest in your country and makes it an important partner in international relations.

Turkmenistan is one of the first newly independent states to join all of the international conventions and treaties on the non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and bacteriological weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Furthermore, Turkmenistan through concrete actions has confirmed its commitment to a policy of peace, making constructive contributions to the stabilization of the situation in the region and to interregional cooperation.

Kazakhstan immensely values its confident and mutually beneficial relations with fraternal Turkmenistan, which have been developing dynamically on the basis of strategic partnership principles. I am confident that Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan relations have a great future, guaranteed by mutual understanding and a mutual striving for closer cooperation.

The ongoing high-level dialogue between the leaders of our countries serves as convincing and vibrant confirmation of this. We would like to thank the Turkmen side for its understanding and support of Kazakhstan's initiatives aimed at enhancing cooperation and providing conditions for the safe and progressive development of the entire region.

The systematic implementation of joint projects is enhancing our bilateral cooperation even further, while also working for the benefit of the peoples of Central Asia.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the President of Turkmenistan, the Honorable Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, as well as to the Government of Turkmenistan, for their warm welcome and the hospitality they have extended to us on Turkmen soil.

**Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Today we are celebrating the Fifth Anniversary of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia. This event is of immense political significance, both for our region and the world as a whole. This is because the world community's experience in preventive diplomacy is being focused for the first time in history through a UN institution especially created for this purpose.

The decision to establish the Centre came from the innovative approach taken by the United Nations and its Member States to address urgent interstate and transboundary issues. By adopting this consensus decision in 2007, the Central Asian countries fully acknowledged the leading role of the United Nations in developing the theory and practice of preventive diplomacy.

From the report of the former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali "An Agenda for Peace" to the most recent UN General Assembly resolution on the subject, it is possible to trace the development of the concept of preventive diplomacy and the creation of a broad legal framework for its application. The UN has essentially gathered and summed up the experience of international and regional organizations that have contributed to the development and implementation of the principles of preventive diplomacy.

**Distinguished colleagues,**

The Centre's activities are playing an important role in developing a political dialogue among the Central Asian countries. This is evident from the specific recommendations drawn up by the Centre for the region's Governments for implementing preventive measures aimed at establishing constructive cooperation and building an atmosphere of trust among our countries in different spheres of collaboration.

The Centre is successfully implementing a set of policies focused on identifying possible conflicts and the tackling emerging threats at the earliest stage. The political will of our states is a decisive factor in the Centre's performance of this important mission.

The Centre has visibly reinforced the UN's presence in the region by enhancing cooperation between the Central Asian countries and the Organization. We believe that we need to continue to redouble our efforts in the search for joint solutions to the region's current issues.

We approve the Centre's priority objectives of enhancing regional cooperation in the area of joint use of water and energy resources, the fight against terrorism and organized crime, the development of the Istanbul Process and extending the regional platform for dialogue. We are also interested in fully tapping the potential of a nuclear-free zone in Central Asia.

We support the Centre's intention to draw more extensively on the expert community in its activities. We also think that it is also important to supplement the Centre with experts on conflict management who know well the cultural, historical and political realities of Central Asia.

We are certain that one priority of the Centre should be activities in support of integration processes in the Central Asian region, as this is one of the basic prerequisites for achieving sustainable development in our countries.

As before, the Centre's activities should be focused on promoting a dialogue among the Central Asian Governments to find solutions to the emerging problems and deal with potential threats.

It is doubtless that the Centre and its services will remain in demand for the foreseeable future.

#### **Distinguished Chair,**

On the occasion of this jubilee, I would again like to mention Turkmenistan's unique status as the host country.

Thanks to Turkmenistan's commitment to the principles of neutrality, peace and stability, all countries of the region unanimously supported the proposal to establish the Centre in Ashgabat.

Today Turkmenistan has become an active participant in international processes, occupying an important place in the system of contemporary multilateral relations. It is advancing various initiatives aimed at strengthening peace and stability in the region. As is apparent, we today can confidently state that the decision of the Governments to open the Centre in Ashgabat was fully justified.

In conclusion, allow me to once again warmly thank the Turkmen side for the invitation, its excellent hosting of the conference and its generous hospitality.

**Thank you.**





**Samargul ADAMKULOVA**  
**Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs**  
**Kyrgyz Republic**



*--Unofficial Translation--*

## STATEMENT

### of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic Samargul Adamkulova at the International Conference in celebration of Turkmenistan's Neutrality Day and the Fifth Anniversary of the Opening of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Distinguished Chair,**

**Dear Mr. Meredov,**

**Dear Mr. Jenča, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First of all, allow me to join the others who have already expressed their congratulations on the coming occasion of Turkmenistan's Neutrality Day and to express my gratitude to the Government and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan for their warm welcome and for the excellent arrangements for today's International Conference. I am certain that this auspicious gathering will give an additional positive boost to the development of partnerships and mutually beneficial cooperation in Central Asia.

**Distinguished Colleagues,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Today, after almost two decades, we can confidently state that Turkmenistan has made a worthy contribution to stabilizing the challenging situation in the region, as well as to the sustainable economic

K. Umarov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, S. Adamkulova, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyz Republic, M. Sobirov, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan at the working session of the Conference MFA of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat



development of Central Asia, having initiated a host of important, large-scale projects of international significance.

Turkmenistan's election as vice-president of the UN General Assembly, its active participation in the work of several key bodies of this universal Organization, the establishment in Ashgabat of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy and the country's election to the UN Economic and Social Council show the steady development of the country's international image.

On this positive note, I would also like to mention Turkmenistan's direct participation in addressing urgent international challenges by strengthening stability and security in the region, initiating platforms for dialogue to discuss pressing socio-economic issues, implementing large energy projects and supporting the activity of our UN Regional Centre.

We highly value the close friendship and cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan and place great importance on deepening the multi-faceted collaboration between our countries both on a bilateral basis and in the regional format.

#### **Distinguished Chair,**

Today we have also gathered to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the establishment of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy.

Five years ago, the Governments of our countries unanimously agreed with the proposal of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to found the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) in Ashgabat. This initiative was put forward for objective reasons – first of all to strengthen regional dialogue and also to create a single platform for dealing with today's threats and challenges.

Today, the Regional Centre is actively searching for solutions to the problems that arise and addressing potential threats, supporting regular contacts with international organizations active in the region, encouraging their peacekeeping efforts, ensuring sustainable development and preventing conflicts.

Special mention should be made of the assistance the Regional Centre is rendering to the countries of the region in implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We are hoping that this Strategy, in addition to expanding the international counter-terrorism legal framework, will also help to reinforce national legislation and design preventive measures.

The Regional Centre is making a major effort to invigorate dialogue on water-energy and the environment among the Central Asian countries in order to find mutually beneficial approaches to resolving these issues, as well as to devise measures aimed at counteracting the threats to the region's environmental security.

Another effort that we think is no less important concerns the stabilization of the situation in Afghanistan. While developing bilateral cooperation with the Government of this country, we are also counting on the active participation of the other States of the region in the process of reconstruction in Afghanistan and the possible participation in international projects and programmes on Afghanistan, including the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA), the Istanbul Process and others. In this context, we welcome the joint activities of UNRCCA and UNAMA to support the regional efforts aimed at stabilizing the situation in this country.

#### **Distinguished colleagues,**

Today, serious qualitative changes are taking place in the world. A multi-polar international system is forming, in which Central Asia occupies a special place. This brings with it a number of challenges and threats. The threats of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, drug trafficking, environmental degradation and food shortages are not disappearing.

Unfortunately, many of the above-mentioned global problems have a particular urgency for the countries of our region. These problems are complex and multifaceted, require close coordination among all those interested in resolving them and depend on the political will of each country of the region. Today we have the opportunity through common efforts to try to find mutually acceptable ways and means, based on partnership and equitable relations.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my particular gratitude to the UN Regional Centre and the Government of Turkmenistan for the support shown to Kyrgyzstan in 2010, in that historic period in our development, as well as to the UN agencies and other international partners who provided humanitarian assistance.

Allow me to finish by saying that the potential of regional cooperation in all areas, including with the UN Centre for Preventive Diplomacy, remains considerable. It is in our common interests to strengthen the security and the stability of the peoples of Central Asia and to raise the levels of economic and social development of our countries. In this respect, I would like to wish the Government of Turkmenistan and the UN Regional Centre further successes in their endeavors. I also wish all of us fruitful and effective cooperation.

**Thank you.**





**Makhmudzon SOBIROV**  
**First Deputy Minister**  
**of Foreign Affairs**  
**Tajikistan**



*--Unofficial Translation--*

## STATEMENT

### of First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan Mr. Makhmudzhon Sobirov at the International Conference on the occasion of the Fifth Anniversary of the Opening of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan and the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for inviting me to participate in this meeting to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the Centre's activity and for the warm welcome and traditional hospitality.

I am confident that today's meeting will allow us to sum up the Centre's accomplishments and help us to identify new areas for coordinating joint efforts aimed at strengthening security and stability in the region of Central Asia. The countries of the region make use of every opportunity, including those offered by the international community, to address our common problems.

We see the activities of the UN Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia as mechanisms enabling the strengthening of regional dialogue, and it has our constant attention. I would like to note that the Centre, since it opened, has made a significant contribution to identifying the current challenges that are threatening political and social stability in the countries of our region. With satisfaction, we note that since the Centre opened it has done a huge amount of work. The Regional Centre, utilizing the vast experience the United Nations has accumulated over many decades, makes an important contribution to confronting the threats and challenges before our region. By making use of the monitoring capacities in its arsenal, the Regional Centre offers acceptable solutions for responding in a timely manner to threats that emerge in the region of Central Asia.

We believe that the future vector of the Centre's activity should be aimed at resolving and preventing the disputes that arise in our region related to the development of the hydropower industry and transport links, the problems of border delimitation and demarcation, inter-ethnic tensions, natural disasters, the influence

of radical Islam, and transnational threats. By way of example, I would like to note the Centre's latest initiative, the draft proposal for modernizing the regulatory legal framework for transboundary water resource management in the Aral Sea basin. Keeping in mind the fact that the use of water resources is becoming a bone of contention among our countries, the creation of such a framework could help identify acceptable ways to resolve the differences in this sphere.

Climate change and environmental disasters more and more frequently are impacting on the economic development, as well as on energy and regional security. Unfortunately, it has been ascertained that in recent years, due to ineffective agricultural methods, average water consumption in the countries of Central Asia has remained extremely high. According to the World Bank, around 79% of the water used for irrigation is irretrievably lost. Per capita water use in the region is significantly higher than in most other regions of the world, which significantly slows the pace of socioeconomic development.

Hydropower and renewable energy are an important sector of the economy, on which sustainable development will depend in the future. Tajikistan, which has enormous hydroresources but lacks other types of energy resources, continues to experience a chronic shortage of electricity in the wintertime that causes the population, social infrastructure and industrial production to suffer.

Unfortunately, at present, the existing hydropower issues and problems in the region, which are essentially of an economic nature, are strongly politicized and seriously hinder the development of regional cooperation. Only through the collective efforts of all of the countries of the region is it possible to achieve appreciable success in this area. It was with this goal in mind that President Emomali Rahmon came forward with the initiative to create an international hydropower consortium for building the Rogun hydropower station (HPS). In conditions of the most severe wintertime electricity shortages, Tajikistan, which does not have significant hydrocarbon reserves, is banking on the development of hydropower as a priority national task over the coming years. Tajikistan's national hydropower projects, including the construction of the Rogun HPS, will be implemented openly and bearing in mind the interests of all the countries of the region, as shown by our initiative to invite the World Bank to carry out an integrated technical, economic and ecological examination of the Rogun project. Along with this, we think it necessary and expedient to carry out an integrated assessment of the environmental influence of the absolutely outdated and ineffective systems of water use in the region, as well as the enormous number of reservoirs on the lower reaches of rivers.

We see a key role for the Regional Centre in assisting a political dialogue in Central Asia aimed at overcoming the differences over the entire range of hydropower issues, the creation of an integrated system of water use and rendering assistance to the countries of the region to reach compromises for the long-term settlement of this issue.

We are convinced that it is necessary for the Centre to continue to use opportunities to boost intraregional integration processes and promote cooperation, seeking and attaining common positions on issues of military and economic security.

Despite certain progress, the threat of landmines still exists in Central Asia and causes the deaths of peaceful and innocent people. This is a serious concern for us. More than 800 people have fallen victim to antipersonnel land mines in Tajikistan since 1992. I would like to note that whereas in the central part of the country mines are a reminder of the civil war, mines installed along the Tajik-Uzbek border must be viewed as a deliberate act. This initiative was undertaken under the far-fetched pretext of preventing the possible penetration of terrorists from the territory of Tajikistan. I can assure you that in all the years since the borders were mined only peaceful citizens, many of whom are children, have suffered. We are faced with the enormous task of demining vast areas; in the next 8 years, we must clear mines and

other explosive devices from 43 minefields covering 11 million square meters. We are in favor of further strengthening and expanding the activities of the Regional Centre in this area. Adopting initiatives to declare Central Asia a mine-free zone would also help attain certain goals in this direction.

We see a role for the Centre, in cooperation with the countries of Central Asia, in resolving current problems and eliminating potential threats. In this respect, we hope that the future activities of the Centre will be focused on more effective measures to design and implement projects that respond to the interests of the Governments of the region. We are certain that a priority of the Centre should continue to be activities in support of integration processes in the region of Central Asia, which is one of the main prerequisites for achieving the sustainable development of our countries.

We welcome the Centre's efforts to strengthen cooperation with regional organizations, such as the OSCE, NATO, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Economic Cooperation Organization, the European Union, and the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea. In our view, this cooperation has immense potential.

In order to discuss ways to address the problems before us, a special mechanism should, in our opinion, be created to maintain an ongoing high-level dialogue among the countries of the region. To this end, at the annual meeting of deputy foreign ministers recently held in Bishkek, we proposed that the Centre review the possibility of creating a consultative forum at the level of Foreign Ministers.

At present, our region is facing challenges that seriously threaten the stability and security of our countries. The Republic of Tajikistan is therefore seriously paying attention to confronting the existing challenges and preventing the appearance of new threats to security. We highly appreciate the Centre's activities in responding to both traditional and also new threats to our common security. We believe that these threats will remain a focus of the Centre's activities in the future.

With regard to the threats emanating from Afghanistan, particularly after 2014, we believe it is expedient to step up the Centre's efforts to create capacity for enhanced cooperation among the Central Asian countries on border management.

In conclusion, I would like once again to confirm our support for the continued activities of the Regional Centre, which represent a unique opportunity for the countries of the region to streamline and expand measures aimed at strengthening cooperation and trust.





**CHENG Guoping**  
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs  
People's Republic of China



*--Unofficial Translation--*

## **SPEECH**

### **of Deputy Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China Cheng Guoping at the International Conference on the Fifth Anniversary of the Inauguration of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and the Neutrality Day of Turkmenistan**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Dear Mr. Meredov, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs,**

**Dear Mr. Jenča,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is my great pleasure to participate in this international conference on the fifth anniversary of the inauguration of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and the Permanent Neutrality Day of Turkmenistan. On behalf of the Chinese Government, I heartily congratulate conference participants on these auspicious occasions.

Five years ago, severe challenges stood before Central Asia. Where Central Asia would go next was the big question to be answered by the States of the region and the international community. Against the backdrop of these difficult circumstances, President Berdimuhamedov, showing political wisdom and strategic foresight for the sake of the main objective – to secure peace and stability in the region of Central Asia – came forward, together with the other States of the region, with the initiative to establish a Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia with its headquarters in Turkmenistan. The opening of the Centre created a new model of cooperation between the Governments of Central Asia and the international community and also launched a new international platform for ensuring security and stability in Central Asia based on the application of means of preventive diplomacy.

For five years, with the great support of President Berdimuhamedov and the Government of Turkmenistan, the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia headed by Mr. Jenča has been actively engaged in preventive diplomacy and has been playing a big role in helping the region's countries implement the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, stabilize the situation in Afghanistan, promote dialogue and cooperation among the States of the region and also prevent conflicts in the region. The Centre is vigorously promoting the implementation of the Global Counterterrorism Strategy and other important UN resolutions, helping the Central Asian states in the fight against terrorism and drugs and with the training of border and counter-narcotics personnel and peacekeepers, as well as actively implementing projects that render assistance to the Central Asian countries through the UN and its subdivisions.

On the Centre's initiative, such mechanisms as the forum of Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Central Asian countries, regular meetings of the ambassadors of the Central Asian countries and a mechanism of cooperation among the leading think tanks of the countries of the region have been created, which are helping reinforce and promote harmonious coexistence among the countries of the region. By adhering to a policy of aiding peace and cooperation, the Centre has been actively responding to regime changes, inter-ethnic conflicts, border disputes and other exceptional events in the region. Good cooperation is maintained between the Centre and the SCO, CIS and other regional organisations with the aim of aiding development and regional integration. The Centre focuses great attention on environmental degradation in Central Asia and the drying up of the Aral Sea, drawing up constructive recommendations for the Governments of the region to solve these problems. In close cooperation with the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, the Centre has made great strides in aiding the stabilisation of the situation in Afghanistan, regularly reporting to the UN Secretary-General on countering threats and developing cooperation in Central Asia. Thanks to its practical and effective activities, the Centre has won universal recognition and the appreciation of the international community.

Speech by Cheng Guoping, Deputy Minister  
of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China  
*MFA of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat*



Over the course of the past five years, under the guidance of President Berdimuhamedov a Turkmen model of development has been established: political stability has been consistently maintained in Turkmenistan, the economy has been developing dynamically, the standard of living has been continuously improving and harmony and understanding have been preserved in society. Based on the principle of permanent neutrality, President Berdimuhamedov has put forward a new idea of promoting peace through development. This idea has enabled Turkmenistan to create a miracle of economic development in the region of Central Asia. Average GDP growth exceeds 11%. Prosperous, tempestuously developing Turkmenistan is not only greatly benefiting its own citizens but has also become an important positive factor in ensuring security and stability throughout Central Asia. It is also worthwhile to mention that in the past few years, President Berdimuhamedov has put forward a number of initiatives of worldwide significance, including establishing a security forum for Central Asia and the Caspian, launching an interregional energy dialogue within the framework of the UN, forming a contemporary international transport infrastructure system and founding in Turkmenistan a UN Interregional Centre on Climate Change. All of these important initiatives in essence build on his idea of opening the UN Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Turkmenistan and are visible evidence of Turkmenistan's striving to maintain permanent neutrality and ensure peace in the region.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Governments of Central Asia have their own specific history and reality. During their 21 years of independence, the countries of the region have progressed along the difficult path of development and achieved noticeable successes in ensuring stability, developing their economies, improving their populations' well-being and expanding international cooperation. Central Asia occupies an important place in the world's security and energy architecture. At the same time, under the pressure of international and regional circumstances, as well as events taking place in nearby countries, new factors of instability and uncertainty are arising in the development of Central Asia. The intensification of the "Three Evils" and the increasing frequency of terrorist acts and violence are posing severe challenges to stability and development in the Central Asian countries. In today's world, which is highly interdependent in security issues, the security and stability of Central Asia extend far beyond the borders of the region and have a wide and deep influence on the situation across Eurasia. Not only the joint efforts of the region's States, but also the overall support of the international community, including the UN, are needed to ensure peace and stability in Central Asia.

As a friendly neighbour and partner in cooperation, China consistently pursues a policy of good-neighbourliness and partnership with regard to the countries of Central Asia. In twenty short years, we and the Central Asian States have decisively resolved our border issues, achieved a leap in the development of political relations, comprehensively advanced practical cooperation and set a good example for the world of how to establish good-neighbourly, friendly, cooperative and mutually advantageous relations. At the recent 18th Congress of the Communist Party of China, a decision was taken to continue the on the course of developing relations based on good-neighbourliness, friendship, and partnership with the neighbouring countries. Life shows that peace, prosperity and harmony in Central Asia meet the common interests of both the Central Asian countries and also China. The Chinese Government will continue to unswervingly enhance cooperation with the States of Central Asia, consistently support these countries' efforts to ensure stability and economic development and consistently support the constructive activities of the UN Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia.

In conclusion, I would like to wish friendly Turkmenistan prosperity, its people – happiness, and the UN Centre for Preventive Diplomacy – continued success.





**Naci KORU**  
**Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs**  
**Turkey**



## **SPEECH**

### **of Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkey Naci Koru at the International Conference on the Fifth Anniversary of the Inauguration of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and the Neutrality Day of Turkmenistan**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**His Excellency President Berdimuhamedov**

**Distinguished Speakers,**

**Dear Guests,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is an honor for me to address such a distinguished audience on this special occasion.

On the one hand, we are pleased to see that the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia (UNRCCA), in its fifth year of existence, has now become an indispensable actor by making increasing contributions to the stability of the region.

On the other hand, it is a source of true pride and privilege for me to share with our Turkmen brothers and sisters the seventeenth anniversary of the adoption of their Permanent Neutrality Status.

Therefore, while conveying the best wishes of Minister Davutoğlu who sincerely regret not being able to join you today, I wish to express my heartfelt thanks and appreciations to the organizers of this special conference for giving me the opportunity to be with you today.

Before commencing my remarks, allow me on behalf of the Turkish people to congratulate the people of Turkmenistan for their “Bitaraflyk Günü” and in particular President Berdimuhamedov for his wisdom and able leadership. We also wish the UNRCCA continued success on its fifth anniversary.

In fact both anniversaries deserve particular attention and celebration on their own merits. The UNRCCA, for instance, is playing an important role to prevent conflicts in a vitally strategic region, while Turkmenistan is a beacon of stability in this region not least due to the principled implementation of its permanent neutrality status.

However, I believe addressing them together in a single framework is also very pertinent and meaningful. For, Turkmenistan with its peace-oriented neutrality and open doors policy is the right home for the UNRCCA which in essence helps foster peace and stability in the region.

Indeed, since the early days of its independence, Turkmenistan pursued a successful policy of neutrality. The Turkmen state, with its “active neutrality” approach, made it clear that it intends to become a center of peace and dialogue in Central Asia where everyone can feel safe and welcome. The establishment of the UNRCCA in Ashgabat in 2007 is thus a testimony to the active role Turkmenistan wants to play in its region.

The UNRCCA, on the other hand, serves as a valuable platform for dialogue and cooperation amongst the Central Asian states which are faced with multiple threats and emerging challenges.

We therefore highly appreciate the Center’s efforts in assisting and supporting Central Asian states build their conflict prevention capacities through enhanced dialogue, confidence building measures and genuine partnerships. The successful role of the Center in addressing the challenges in Kyrgyzstan is particularly worth mentioning.

### **Distinguished guests,**

The Central Asian region lies at the economic, geopolitical and strategic crossroads between the East and the West. Given the uniqueness of this geography, it is obvious that Central Asia is a strategically important region for ensuring the security and stability of the Eurasian region. It is also a major hub of communication, energy and trade corridors stretching in all directions, from China to Russia, Europe to the Caucasus and the Indian Ocean.

Although the Central Asian countries have consolidated their independence and successfully built their statehoods within the last 20 years, stability in Central Asia still faces immense challenges stemming from some adverse regional dynamics.

Proximity of the region to Afghanistan, for instance, has a major impact on the stability of Central Asia. Indeed, the situation in Afghanistan and its possible spill-over effects continue to dominate the political and security agenda of the region, especially in view of ISAF’s withdrawal by the end of 2014.

There are of course some other issues endangering the stability of the entire region, ranging from environmental problems to scourge of terrorism. However, what is evident is that the countries of the

region can remain safe and secure only if they effectively and genuinely cooperate among themselves and with the international community. This is indeed a region where common risks require joint efforts.

Therefore, it is incumbent upon us, as members of the international community, to not only engage in an effective and result-oriented cooperation with the countries of the region, but also facilitate the intra-regional collaboration in tackling common challenges.

In this regard, we highly appreciate the unrelenting efforts of Turkmenistan in this direction.

For instance, Turkmenistan actively contributes to the quest of peace and stability in Afghanistan. President Berdimuhamedov's announcement in his speech at the 65th UN General Assembly that Turkmenistan is ready to assist inter-Afghan peace talks under the aegis of the UN reemphasizes the Turkmen commitment to peace, stability and development in Afghanistan.

I would also like to thank Turkmenistan for supporting the Istanbul Process, pioneered by Turkey and dedicated to the enhancement of regional cooperation on issues related to Afghanistan. That reflects the importance Turkmenistan attaches to the regional cooperation and ownership.

Turkmenistan also addresses the humanitarian needs of the Afghan people by undertaking many infrastructure projects, as well as supplying electricity and fuel. As an energy provider, Turkmenistan's support is very important to Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India Pipeline (TAPI) Project. The TAPI project is of global importance in many aspects, but its most crucial contribution, when implemented, will be to the economic development of Afghanistan.

Turkmenistan's position vis-à-vis the east-west transport corridor, the Silk Road Project is also very valuable.

All these endeavors signify another important aspect of Turkmenistan's foreign policy, that of preventive diplomacy, which is the focus of our meeting today. Indeed, by its efforts to promote regional cooperation, Turkmenistan is in fact helping to create a regional environment where risks and threats can either be prevented or resolved through positive interdependence and ownership.

This not only explains why the UN's only preventive diplomacy center is hosted in Turkmenistan, but also brings Turkey and Turkmenistan closer than ever, since our individual approaches to preventive diplomacy through regional cooperation are almost identical.

Indeed, we also believe that close cooperation between regional countries would alleviate the risk of instability and provide an appropriate ground for the settlement of disputes. In other words, regional cooperation and economic interdependence minimizes the risk of conflict and acts as a means of prevention in itself.

Of course this is of particular importance for us in Central Asia where we enjoy special bonds emanating from our common history and values. This is also why we work very closely with Turkmenistan and all



the other countries of the region towards promoting cooperation rather than confrontation and enabling the opportunities to prevail over risks and threats.

For example in Kyrgyzstan, Turkey was among the first to rush to the help of this country when it came to the brink of an ethnic civil war two years ago. We then pioneered the Issyk Kul Forum to bring the conflicting parties around the table and to have them understand that there is more that unites them than those that divide.

To reduce the tension in the country and promote national ownership and cooperation, Turkey prepared Action Plans designed to prepare the groundwork for a peaceful transition through increased dialogue. And today we are extremely proud and happy to see our Kyrgyz brothers and sisters take impressive strides in consolidating their national unity and benefiting from the dividends of peace and development.

That said, Turkey's efforts to prevent conflicts and engage in peace mediation go much beyond Central Asia and its immediate neighborhood. Our endeavors to facilitate reconciliation and cooperation among different parties in various theatres such as Iraq, Lebanon, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Afghanistan, Somalia, Sudan and Iran are just a few other examples of Turkey's mediation attempts.

We are also very active within the UN in raising awareness of the importance of mediation as the most effective means of conflict prevention and building the capacity of the international community for peace mediation. The "Mediation for Peace" initiative we have launched in 2010 together with Finland, for instance, has quickly become the central forum for discussion and coordination on mediation related issues both in the UN and elsewhere.

Thanks to this initiative, the UN General Assembly has last year adopted its first ever resolution on mediation, which was co-drafted by Turkey and Finland. In line with this resolution Turkey actively continues its efforts to build international capacity for mediation, while trying to enhance coordination and cooperation in order to increase the effectiveness of our mediation efforts.

In this regard, we are extremely mindful of the vital role that regional organizations and countries can play in preventing or resolving the conflicts in their regions. This is why we are actively engaged with almost every regional organization to raise awareness and build capacity. This is also why we have led and participated in several trilateral cooperation schemes between parties to conflicts, be it between Afghanistan and Pakistan or Bosnia and Serbia or Sudan and South Sudan.

We also attach great importance to the central role of the UN in promoting and facilitating preventive diplomacy. We believe that it is time for the UN to step up its efforts to better use its legitimacy and disseminate its expertise on a wider scale with a view to helping build peace and stability in areas ridden by multidimensional conflicts.

In this context, the UNRCCA is certainly a uniquely valuable platform in bringing the UN's expertise and commitment to Central Asia. Established with the consensus of all the Central Asian states, the Center is not only addressing specific challenges faced by the region, but also helping to build a common culture of peace mediation and preventive diplomacy in a strategically important part of the world.

However, we need to go beyond this. The UN must establish dedicated centers of excellence to promote mediation and conflict prevention. In this regard, Turkey has volunteered to host such a UN Mediation Center in Istanbul which can serve as a hub for training, capacity-building, coordination and actual mediation itself. We are currently in contact with the UN Secretariat as to how best we can go ahead with this idea and I am confident that we will soon start acting upon it.

**Excellencies,**

**Distinguished guests,**

In concluding, let me come back to the centrality of Central Asia in many respects. Indeed, throughout history many states and civilizations took root in Central Asia. This strong heritage of Central Asia renders it with great potential to influence the international community on a host of issues.

We hope and remain confident that preventive diplomacy and regional cooperation will be among those areas where the Central Asian states will set an example to the international community.

As a brotherly nation with a common history and shared values, Turkey is proud of Turkmenistan's achievements and look forward to further advancing our cooperation in every possible field.

In fact, over the last 20 years we have already built a solid ground for the rapid advancement of our relations. We have diversified the basis of our cooperation and taken particularly impressive steps in enhancing our economic and commercial relations. As a result, today, Turkmenistan is one of the major partners of Turkey in the region and beyond. And we are convinced that the best of our cooperation is yet to come.

Before closing, I once again congratulate the anniversary of the Permanent Neutrality Status of Turkmenistan and thank His Excellency President Berdimuhamedov and the UNRCCA for their kind invitation.

**Thank you.**



**Sagit R. IBATULLIN**  
**Chairman**  
**Executive Committee of the**  
**International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea**



SERVING THE PEOPLE  
OF CENTRAL ASIA

*--Unofficial Translation--*

## **“IFAS and UNRCCA – Steps towards Successful Cooperation”**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

Over the past few years, the Executive Committee of IFAS has established close working relations with the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia in regional water management. The Regional Centre has supported the IFAS Executive Committee's activities by facilitating stronger cooperation in water resource management in the Aral Sea basin, promoting dialogue amongst the region's governments in the search for solutions to emerging problems and intensifying international support for relevant projects and initiatives.

Equitable sharing and protection of the common water resources of transboundary rivers, where the economic and political interests of the states that share the same river basin intersect, are the greatest and most complicated international problems, which require comprehensive analysis and conclusions for producing a single consensus – a mutually acceptable mechanism for the integrated use of water resources and environmental protection in Central Asia that takes into account the interests of all of the states of the region.

The Joint Statement of the Heads of the States-Founders of IFAS at the summit that was held in April 2009 in Almaty significantly boosted the efforts of IFAS and its structural bodies. The Presidents of the IFAS States-Founders focused on the challenges the Central Asian states have faced in recent years. These include climate change, intensive degradation of glaciers and snowfields in the region, land degradation and desertification and increasing water consumption connected to population growth and economic development in the countries of the region.

In the Joint Statement, the Presidents of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan clearly designated several areas of work to be pursued by IFAS, including stepping up activities and developing cooperation with parts of the UN System, including the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), and other international organizations. Close cooperation with the donor community and relevant national and regional institutions, as well as other areas of activity formed the basis of the work of the Executive Committee of IFAS during Kazakhstan's chairpersonship of the International Fund.





Among the challenges and threats present in the past 20 years not only in the Central Asian region but throughout the world include, above all, the increasing scarcity of water resources, the deterioration of their quality and the environmental troubles that have afflicted many regions of the planet. Therefore, the visit of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to the Central Asian countries in April 2010 emphasized that the UN is placing top priority on issues of the Central Asian countries' development and is ready to assist in resolving the current problems of the region. Among the important issues raised during the visit were the problems of the Aral Sea basin. It is encouraging to note that the UN Secretary General expressed support for IFAS as a five-party political regional organization and for the activities of the Executive Committee of IFAS in his speeches in all of the Central Asian countries. Such a positive assessment of our efforts to overcome the Aral basin crisis has been a significant boost to further joint work.

The signing of a memorandum of understanding between the UN and the Executive Committee of IFAS in March 2010 was a concrete step towards implementing the Joint Statement of the 2009 Summit of Central Asian Heads of State. In successful cooperation with IFAS, the Regional Centre has taken active part in addressing the problems of the Aral Sea region, opening up new prospects for collaboration in transboundary water resource management.

This fruitful joint work has also been evidenced in conferences and seminars, as well as a number of useful projects developed for building the capacity and improving the socio-economic conditions of those living in the Aral Sea basin, particularly with respect to designing a mutually acceptable mechanism for the integrated use of water resources in Central Asia that takes into account the interests of all of the states of the region, as well as an early-warning system for crisis situations.

I am certain that in the future the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia will remain one of the key organizations working towards the strengthening of international cooperation and water partnership in the region.

The Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea sincerely congratulates the staff of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia on its fifth anniversary and wishes you further creative successes and prosperity in your noble endeavors for the benefit of the peoples of Central Asia.



**Said DJINNIT**  
**Special Representative**  
**of the Secretary-General**  
**United Nations Office for West Africa**



## **“UNOWA’s experience in partnering with regional organizations in the area of preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention in West Africa”**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Engaging in effective conflict prevention requires an understanding of the realities on the ground, the positions of different actors and the potential entry points of engagement. To do so, it is necessary to be present and build relationships with different stakeholders. This may seem obvious, but less than 10 years ago, all UN political engagement for countries in which no peace mission was present came from HQ. Our capacity to intervene at a regional level was severely constrained. As conflicts do not respect borders, it is necessary to have decentralized conflict prevention capacities that can act across the complex nexus of local, national and regional dynamics.<sup>1</sup>

This is the logic behind the creation of regional political offices, which are described as a “critical innovation as forward platforms for preventive diplomacy”.<sup>2</sup> Although the specific mandates and functions differ widely, the global objective is largely the same: to be able to rapidly respond to potential and emerging threats to international peace and security. At the same time, regional offices were created in order to reinforce national and regional capacities on preventive diplomacy, conflict prevention and mediation. This is a difficult balancing act, between helping to create a regional peace and mediation architecture and reacting to specific crisis, that mobilize a considerable segment of our resources, as demonstrated by the crisis in Mali and the Sahel in 2012. It should be noted here that the recurrent crisis in West Africa

<sup>1</sup> However without necessarily a permanent political presence in individual countries which creates a different political dynamic between the United Nations and the host country.

<sup>2</sup> Report of the Secretary General. *Preventive Diplomacy* S/2011/552, para 22.

also impact the agenda of regional organizations, whose resources are mobilized on crisis management at the expense of long-term conflict prevention and peace consolidation priorities.

Partners oftentimes expect much of our offices, and this meeting is an opportune moment to look at how we have been able to respond to these expectations. Do the objectives that we have set for ourselves correspond to the tools that we have at our disposal? What do our partners expect of us, in particular our immediate interlocutors in our respective sub-regions? And how do these expectations relate to our own priorities and realities at a time where we are pressed to “do more with less”?

This meeting presents us with a rare opportunity to sit and strategize together globally—to learn how the Organization has been able to respond to expectations in different regions, and to explore ways in which we can better to address challenges that we are facing that are at the global level.

For my part, I would like to highlight how the United Nations Office for West Africa has used the tools at its disposal to respond to some of these challenges within the region we work in.

## **UNOWA AND ECOWAS**

The UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA) was established in 2001 by an exchange of letters between the Secretary-General and the Security Council and became fully operational in January 2003, with the goal of promoting an integrated Subregional approach to the peace and security challenges the region faced. Epy Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is our privileged partner, and UNOWA serves as an interface for ECOWAS with the rest of the UN system.

At the core of UNOWA’s mandate is support to reinforce the capacity of ECOWAS. ECOWAS has greatly evolved since 2001. At the time of UNOWA’s founding, it was already the most functional Subregional political body in Africa with peacekeeping operations in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Côte d’Ivoire, although at the time was much less developed in terms of conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy.

However, ECOWAS has demonstrated its strong political will to develop appropriate mechanisms and strategies to effectively prevent conflict. Since the last 10 years, ECOWAS has greatly improved its conflict prevention toolbox, through the adoption of a conflict prevention framework, the creation of an Early Warning Directorate, and an emphasis on preventive diplomacy. They are currently in the stage of creating a Mediation and Facilitation Division. These efforts have started to pay off, as ECOWAS is currently at the forefront of international efforts to address the crisis in Mali in both the political and military fields.

## **REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS IN WEST AFRICA**

In West Africa today, ECOWAS and the UN are currently dedicating a large part of conflict prevention efforts to the crisis in Mali and Guinea Bissau. In that context, ECOWAS has already deployed troops to Guinea Bissau along with high level political demarches aimed at preventing further violence and restoring constitutional order. In Mali, ECOWAS has been engaged in high level demarches to support a negotiated solution to the conflict while being at the core of regional efforts to deploy an African-led international force, as requested by the UN Security Council in its resolution 2071.



At the same time, and beyond the extreme fragility in the Sahel, West Africa also faces complex pre and post-electoral processes that can trigger tensions, such as the ones in Guinea and Togo, and, if not properly managed, could derail into more serious crisis. Furthermore, longstanding patterns of cross-border movements of weapons, combatants, and refugees that have, through the years, been aggravated by the rising phenomenon of drug trafficking, organized crime and terrorism, also constitute areas where the UN, in its efforts to help consolidate peace, and prevent conflicts, has had to deploy significant time and resources.

All the above phenomenon are taking place against the backdrop of structural fragility of the entire sub-region, which includes the youth explosion (over 50% of the population is under 25 and the estimated unemployment is over 80%), conflict over land tenure, the inability of the state to deliver basic services, and a breakdown of dialogue between the population and their authorities.

To better adapt to this situation, UNOWA's strategic approach has evolved over the past ten years of its existence, and is based on the three pillars of stabilization, prevention, and consolidation.

**Stabilization:** Good offices and the SRSG's high level regional meetings have been complemented by technical support from UNOWA as well as DPA, which has included deployment of election, SSR and mediation officers as well as Senior Military Advisor, the DPA desk, Gender officer, MSU stand-by team member. This has provided an almost constant field presence to inform good offices and support conflict prevention.

**Prevention:** Good offices and technical support are deployed to countries marked by political tensions that have not yet erupted into crisis, such as in Togo and Guinea. This provides backstopping to regional conflict prevention efforts [and thus indirect support to our regional partners] in other countries to avoid that they develop into full-fledged crisis

**Consolidation:** Development policies and frameworks to build consensus and mobilize support among key stakeholders to address the root causes of conflicts and instability in West Africa. The objective is to support the development of regional conflict prevention architecture.

*This is an opportunity to highlight the convening power of UNOWA, as well as our focus on what CIC considers the strength of our office- "advocacy analysis": Declarations of Praia and Bamako, implementation of Regional Action Plan for 1325 through training of high level women mediators, support to ECOWAS to set up their mediation facilitation division, support to develop regional SSR strategy, etc...]*

UNOWA alone does not have the means to implement the three pillars at the same time. Especially as is the case right now, with several open crisis taking place at once. The majority of resources are mobilized for urgent actions which are always a priority over long term needs. In order to implement the strategy, UNOWA depends on creating strategic links with other UN agencies, as well as international organizations that bring a specific added value to the realization of our mandate.

**Strategic Partnerships with UN agencies for in-country conflict prevention efforts.** When required to intervene in political crises such as unconstitutional changes of power and electoral violence, we rely

on support of operational UN agencies. This has included for example support by UNDP during the political transition in Guinea to set up a liaison office for a Senior Mediation Advisor, PBSO paid to support the FOSSEPEL, UNWOMEN provided support for training of women leaders in mediation in 16 countries of the sub-region, etc.

One of the strengths of the office is our convening ability to bring together different UN actors with regional stakeholders involved in conflict prevention to join resources. For example, from 10-11 December, UNOWA will host a regional consultative meeting with the PDAs throughout the region, as well as regional organizations, UN peace missions, DPA, and the UN Situation Centre, to develop joint early warning analysis.

In 2013, we will reinforce our links with Peace and Development Advisors in order to: a) link our regional efforts to national programming; b) increase our ability to monitor events in the sub-region. This is in line with the implementation of the joint program of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Department of Political Affairs on building national capacity for conflict prevention.

### **Effective Partnership: the Example of Guinea**

Guinea is a key example that demonstrates the different roles that a regional office can play and how these articulate with our partners. From the period 2009-2010, UNOWA worked with regional actors following

Speech by SRSB Said Djinnit, UNOWA  
*MFA of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat*



a military coup to prevent political tensions from escalating into full-blown conflict. The situation in Guinea was of the utmost concern for regional efforts to consolidate peace, as there was a risk of potential destabilization of Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone. UNOWA had at least three different roles within the crisis-- as co-chair to the International Contact Group, member of the tripartite, and through direct individual good offices. These were initiated at three different levels:

- 1) **Regional:** Consensus building among AU, ECOWAS and individual countries to ensure a common vision among mediation actors. This also included mobilizing PBSO funding for the setting up of the office of the ECOWAS Special Envoy.
- 2) **Track 1 actors:** Consultations between Prime Minister, President, Forces Vives, ECOWAS, and AU to create a power-sharing government, resolve differences between key stakeholders, and support the holding of elections. This included the provision of transportation to AU and ECOWAS when needed [*Thus highlighting the importance of having a dedicated plane to successfully implement the mandate*].
- 3) **Track 2 and 3 Actors:** Using the added value of the UN—our presence in the field—in order to hold regular consultations with local organizations (especially women).

### Cross-Cutting Activities

**ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on Drugs and Crime:** The ability to get a wide range of stakeholders to sit down together at the same table to develop integrated strategies is one of the assets that we draw on the most in the implementation of our mandate. [*You can give an example of challenges of working with different institutional cultures between DPA, INTERPOL, and UNODC*]

**Elections and conflict Prevention:** The period leading up to elections in the sub-region tends to be coupled with a rise in tension. We have seen time and again that the period leading up to elections is often one of the most tense and that what was intended to be a tool to resolve conflicts [through the ballot box] can often incite tensions on ethnic and regional lines. In 2012 alone, 8 elections were scheduled to take place in the sub-region.<sup>3</sup> The challenge is how to move beyond the period immediately surrounding the elections [conflict management] and to work on addressing the underlying conflicts within different societies related to democracy that goes well past the ballot box [regional architecture for conflict prevention].

### CHALLENGES and WAY FORWARD

**1. Policy Harmonization.** In our relations with ECOWAS and the African Union, UNOWA has been discussing with DPA if it is necessary for the United Nations to have its own policy on unconstitutional changes of government. As of now, we support their normative frameworks, although they are very

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<sup>3</sup> Actual: Senegal, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, Ghana Scheduled but not held: Mauritania, Guinea Bissau, Guinea.



much applied on a case by case basis.<sup>4</sup> Given that regional organizations may not always respect their own normative frameworks, it has become necessary to examine if we need to develop our own.

**2.Priorities:** The difficulty of combining short-term stabilization imperatives with longer-term objective of peace consolidation. The nature of the region means oftentimes our resources are dedicated to immediate crisis rather than to the construction of regional conflict prevention architecture.

**3.Planning and Predictability:** While UNOWA's early warning capacities can be improved, there are going to continue to be unforeseen crisis. **Our resources need to have the necessary flexibility to react to potential crisis from their onset.** *[You can talk about how you quickly mobilized PBSO funding in Guinea to pay for FOSSEPEL, when you were with Judy Cheng Hopkins in Freetown during the preparations in Conakry]*

**4.Support to ECOWAS at all levels:** The office has very close **relations with ECOWAS, although these have tended to be at the top level and need to be supplemented** by enhanced working level contacts. **Various initiatives are in course** including UNOWA support to develop a regional SSR strategy, to put into place their mediation facilitation division, and to strengthen their early warning division. However, these initiatives have faced various implementation challenges.

**5.Implementation: UNOWA is not an operational entity.** There is a difficulty in managing the time lag between launching initiatives and implementing them. Unless we manage to speed up our response mechanisms, UNOWA is constrained to manage expectations. *[We may want to use the example of SSR in Guinea, which shows the need for a political arm to stay the course during the operational phase].*

**6.Resources: While there has been a focus on conflict prevention,** this has not corresponded to the allocation of the necessary resources to accomplish our tasks. This is even more so at the regional level. One of the areas that UNOWA has been looking at is the creation of a **strategic partnership with PBSO.**

## CONCLUSION

Regional Offices throughout the world face many of **the same challenges such as violence** related to elections, the rise of religious extremism, breakdown of political dialogue, terrorism, and arms trafficking. While these conflicts have very specific regional specificities, they share a certain number of characteristics and we can learn from each other how to handle these conflicts at a regional level and also how to handle these conflicts in synergy at a global level.

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<sup>4</sup> Take the following examples: 1) In Mali, ECOWAS condemnation for the coup was unequivocal – the coup had replaced a democratically elected leader who was scheduled to relinquish power in less than a month; (2) In Guinea, condemnation was slightly less strong – the “bloodless” military coup was in the context of a temporary vacuum of power and years of authoritarian rule; (3) In Niger, condemnation was the least vocal – the president in power was already acting in direct contravention of the AU and ECOWAS guidelines.

This is already being done at a continental level with UNOCA, with the development of a regional strategy on Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. This is a trial experience that I hope we will be able to showcase to you in a few years as a model. However, I think we need to look at how we can do more to work effectively together and combine the added values of our respective offices.

During the annual Greentree meeting, I would propose that we identify common themes to work together as regional offices. I would like to offer one proposition to look together how to better manage electoral related tensions. In my view, there is a need to develop our capacity to work with Regional Partners to manage Electoral Tensions [you can speak of Praia]. This includes in relation to effective electoral assistance, the integration of cross-cutting priorities pertaining to human rights, and the role of the security sector and the media. Examples of areas we could elaborate on at the Greentree meeting are:

**Harmonization:** How to harmonize standards and principles (neutrality of security agencies, separation of powers, etc.) between regional, national and international partners?

**Regional Responses:** Reinforcing regional capacities to hold free, fair and peaceful elections, such as through the creation of a network of work Electoral Commissions from the Region.

**Electoral Observation:** Managing relations between different electoral observation missions. There are regional organizations that have contested the approach of international electoral observation missions, which they see as “judgmental rather than developmental.” Need to look at different strategies to address this.



At the working session of the Conference  
*MFA of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat*









**Abou MOUSSA**  
**Special Representative**  
**of the Secretary-General**  
**United Nations Office**  
**for Central Africa**



## **STATEMENT**

### **of SRSG Abou Moussa at the Fifth Anniversary of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Dear Colleagues of the United Nations,**

**Distinguished Guests,**

**Special Invitees,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to thank the Government of Turkmenistan, for inviting me to this momentous occasion.

I would also like to stress that I am humbled to participate in this important event.

Indeed, we are here to celebrate the 5th anniversary of UNRCCA, side by side with the United Nations Regional Office for West Africa (UNOWA), which has been in place for more than a decade; while the United Nations Office for central Africa (UNOCA), which I am heading, is just 21 months old.

This afternoon, I would like to share with you some of the experiences that UNOCA, a sister to UNRCCA, has had since its creation.

UNOCA was established in Libreville, Gabon, in March 2011, at the request of the Heads of States of Central Africa.

Since its establishment, UNOCA has played an increasing role in addressing some of the regional challenges to peace and security facing countries of Central Africa.

Most of that support has been through sub-regional organizations, including the main one, which is the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

We have indeed established and pursue fruitful working relations with ECCAS and its member states. Some of the areas we cooperate on include governance, mediation, maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, the fight against the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons and the reinforcement of institutional capacity of regional organizations.

One of our major areas of action is capacity building for regional organizations.

A month ago, with the support of the United Nations Policy and Mediation Division of the Department of Political Affairs, we held an important training workshop for ECCAS staff on enhancing mediation capacity within the organization.

UNOCA also plays the role of Secretariat of the UN Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa (UNSAC), a regional preventive diplomacy mechanism established 20 years ago.

Before coming here, I was in Brazzaville, Congo, where my office, as the Secretariat of UNSAC, facilitated the holding of the 35th Ministerial Meeting of UNSAC, and the celebration of the 20th anniversary of its establishment.

In terms of “delivering as One UN”, UNOCA works closely with the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA). A major project UNOWA and UNOCA are currently facilitating is the implementation of Security Council Resolution 2039 (2012) on piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea. In that resolution, the Security Council has requested the two regional offices to work with regional organizations in the planning of a regional summit on piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea.

UNOWA and UNOCA have brought together regional organizations, notably ECCAS, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission to develop plans for the holding of this Summit.

Our experience shows that a UN regional political office can hardly succeed without the full and strong support and cooperation of UN Country Teams.

UNOCA has cultivated fruitful working relations with all UN Country Teams in Central Africa. We consult frequently as part of our efforts to ensure coherent, coordinated and effective UN support to Member States. In November, we hosted our second meeting of SRSGs and RCs from the sub-region as part of our efforts to promote coordination.

An important aspect of the work of a UN regional office is what we call “special assignments from the Security Council”. In this context, UNOCA was mandated by the Security Council to work with UN system offices and our partners to develop a regional strategy to address the threat posed by an armed group called the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA).



The LRA is a terrorist group that began operating in northern Uganda during the late 1980s but has now spread to the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan.

We are now actively engaged with UN partners to ensure the quick implementation of the strategy. The strategy requires us to work hand in hand with the African Union, the affected states and partners to ensure the capture of the LRA's senior leaders, provide humanitarian assistance, protect civilians from LRA attacks and promote long-term development in the affected regions.

UNOCA remains committed to supporting the sub-region in pursuit of its peace and security objectives.

Our strategic priorities over the coming year include focusing on the following areas:

- Good offices and mediations on behalf of the Secretary-General;
- Regional coordination of initiatives to address the threat posed by piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea, notably in the context of implementation of the Security Council Resolution 2039 (2012).
- Coordination of UN initiatives to address the threat posed by armed groups, including the LRA, in line with the Security Council Presidential Statement PRST/2011/21.
- Strengthening the capacity of national and regional actors, including ECCAS, for peace and preventive action;
- Addressing the challenge of governance and election-related tension and violence;
- Tackling Youth unemployment as a cause of political instability;
- Support to the activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee in charge of Security Issues in Central Africa (UNSAC).

**Dear Colleagues,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Allow me to conclude my statement with two general observations.

First, UNOCA's activities show that the presence of a UN regional Office in Central Africa ensures close and continued interaction between the United Nations and Central African States and regional organizations on peace and security issues.

Second, the establishment of UNOCA has strengthened UN preventive action in Central Africa and we shall continue to pursue our efforts in support of peace in that part of the world.

**I thank you.**



**Patricia FLOR**  
**Special Representative**  
**for Central Asia**  
**European Union**



**SPEECH**  
**on the occasion of the International Conference**  
**“Neutrality and Preventive Diplomacy:**  
**Basis for Peace and Security”**

**“The EU’s role in Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management”**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to thank Turkmenistan and the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia (UNRCCA) for the invitation to be with you today.

The EU-Central Asia Ministerial meeting recently held in Bishkek as well as the visit of the High Representative demonstrated the EU commitment to Central Asia. The EU is ready to engage over the coming years.

Five years ago, the five Central Asian countries reached consensus to establish the UNRCCA. Now I am happy and I feel honored to congratulate the Centre and the Central Asian countries on this farsighted decision.

In the last years, the Centre played a crucial role in facilitating dialogue on sensitive questions and emerging threats and challenges. It has proven to be a platform widely used for strengthening regional stability and for finding solutions for transboundary issues, for instance concerning environment and water.

Turkmenistan’s hospitality helped establishing the Centre and laid the groundwork for five fruitful years of activities. This is a reflection of Turkmenistan’s determination to cooperate with the United Nations, as well as it expresses Turkmenistan’s adherence to UN conventions on many topics, including relevant human rights instruments. Let me also congratulate Turkmenistan on its day of neutrality.

Let me elaborate a bit on the EU's role in conflict prevention and crisis management.

Violent conflict destroys lives and livelihoods, undermines economic and social development, and threatens national, regional and international security. The Member States of the European Union have therefore set as a primary objective for the EU to 'preserve peace, prevent conflicts and strengthen international security' (Lisbon Treaty, Article 21(2c)). The HR/VP has publically stated that conflict prevention and peace-building is at the heart of the European External Action Service (EEAS). It also, by the way, was at the heart of the founding of the EU in the 1950ies - a fact acknowledged by the Nobel Prize Committee.

The work of the EEAS in this area is guided by a number of documents and policies: the 2001 Gothenburg Programme and the Commission Communication on Conflict Prevention; the European Security Strategy and its implementation report; the 2009 Concept on Dialogue and Mediation, and a number of Council Conclusions and Commission Communications.

EU instruments for long and short term prevention have been strengthened, notably through the development of the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), including the rapid deployment and security sector reform pools, and the establishment of the Instrument for Stability, which allows funding for urgent crisis projects.

Conflict prevention calls for a cooperative approach to facilitate peaceful solutions to disputes and implies addressing the root-causes of conflicts. It is an important element of all aspects of the external relations of the EU. The development of European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) has, since the outset, been intended to strengthen the EU's capacity for action in the crucial field of conflict prevention.

In keeping with the primary role of the UN in conflict prevention, EU actions are undertaken in accordance with the principles and purposes of the UN Charter. Recalling that the main responsibility for conflict prevention rests with the parties concerned, assistance to local and regional capacity building according to principles of local ownership is of particular importance to the EU.

The EU follows a comprehensive approach and has an extensive set of instruments for structural long-term and direct short-term preventive actions. The long-term instruments include development cooperation, trade, arms control, human rights and environment policies as well as political dialogue. The European Union also has a broad range of diplomatic and humanitarian instruments for short-term actions. Structures and capabilities for civil and military crisis management, developed within the framework of the European Security and Defense Policy, also contribute to the capabilities of the EU to prevent and/or contain and solve conflict. At the request of the European Parliament, the EEAS commissioned a study to assess costs, benefits and analysis options regarding the initiative to establish a European Institute of Peace.

The EU is keen to build and sustain mutually reinforcing and effective partnerships for prevention with the United Nations, the OSCE and other international and regional organizations as well as with civil society. Increased cooperation is needed at all levels, from early warning and analysis to action and evaluation. Field coordination is particularly important.

An excellent example for such a cooperation guided by the principles of value added and comparative advantage was the crisis management instrument of the 'three special envoys' of UN, EU and OSCE



during the 2010 crisis in Kyrgyzstan. In Kyrgyzstan, the OSCE's special envoy along with the envoys of the EU and UN quickly established shared, broad principles in support of maintenance of security and the rule of law and the restoration of constitutional order. They worked behind the scenes in complementary fashion, and issued joint statements about transition and ethnic violence. One official involved in these efforts indicated that this cooperation was "immaculate" and "could be a model for these sorts of situations." And our cooperation goes deeper; today the EU contributes with financial support to the country's security, for example to initiatives run by OSCE in Osh to address some root causes of conflict. The EU firmly believes that these root causes can only be addressed by democratic means, which have at their core respect for human rights and the rule of law.

But we have more challenges lying ahead of us which need our attention and our good cooperation so that hopefully crisis situations do not manifest themselves.

Afghanistan is one of those topics. The EU engages actively with partners to support strengthened regional political and economic cooperation. The EU is ready to support confidence-building measures where there is both political and financial buy-in from the countries of the region, in particular in areas where the EU has proven competence, such as strengthening capacities in border management, counter-narcotics and supporting collaborative efforts to promote trade, economic cooperation and development.

Engagement of all involved is of paramount importance to prevent and overcome conflict or settle disputes. Often pointed out in this respect is the issue of water. A scientific study on conflicts over freshwater resources published in the journal of the American Water Resources Association, however, has shown that in reality disputes over water more often lead to cooperation than to conflict. Water is a very complex topic in Central Asia, which cannot be looked at without taking into account energy, climate change and also food security. On the positive side, CA has a century old tradition and experience of dealing with water such as for irrigation, drinking and industrial purposes. The EU values highly the excellent cooperation it has with its Central Asian partners in the framework of the National Policy Dialogues, which prepare policy packages that set standards and norms which prevent conflicts over water on a national level. At the same time, the EU appreciates the international dialogue with other organizations to find ways for long-term sustainable solutions which foster socio-economic development for all. Of course, much of the valuable UN work is in the area of international law which is why we call on everyone to adhere to the UN conventions. Turkmenistan just recently ratified the 1992 Helsinki Convention on transboundary watercourses and international lakes.

Coming to the end of my speech, I would like to again congratulate the Centre to its fifth anniversary. I wish this unique political structure of the United Nations success as a platform for the dialogue and exchange of opinions between the states of Central Asia and I hope that we all come together again in good health for the next round anniversary.

**Thank you very much!**



**Kanat TUMYSH**  
**Deputy Executive Director**  
**Conference on Interaction and Confidence**  
**Building Measures in Asia**



*-- Unofficial Translation --*

## **“The UN and CICA in Central Asia”**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Your Excellencies,**

**Distinguished Chairs,**

**Distinguished delegates,**

First of all, I would like to thank the organizers for their warm welcome and excellent hosting of this auspicious occasion in the historical and hospitable land of the Turkmen. These efforts will certainly make a valuable contribution to the further work of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia.

Five years ago, the official opening ceremony of the Centre took place on 10 December 2007 in Ashgabat. At that time, a message from the UN Secretary-General was delivered in which it was emphasized that preventive diplomacy was not an option, but a necessity, in the modern world. This is because the price of dealing with the aftermath of any violent conflict that destroys human lives and people's hopes for a dignified future for their children is too high. The message also stated that “resolving conflicts before violence occurs is one of the smartest investments we can make.”

We all know that the challenges the Central Asian region is facing – from extremism and terrorism to drug trafficking and social and environmental challenges – require collective solutions. Therefore we particularly take note of the Centre's growing cooperation with not only the Governments of the Central Asian states, but also with regional organizations to step up and coordinate efforts to build a stable and prosperous Asia.

In implementing its mandate, the Regional Centre collaborates closely with regional organizations such as the OSCE, NATO, the SCO, the CIS, Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), the CSTO, the EU, the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS) and others.

This is very important for CICA, which currently has 24 Member countries. The tasks before our organizations are closely intertwined and share similar goals. Sharing experiences with a wide range of issues helps us find the most optimal solutions. I would like to note that CICA, like the Centre, emphasizes

the use of so-called “soft measures,” which are indispensable in preventive diplomacy. Only building capacities for the peaceful settlement of disputes and the prevention of conflicts through dialogue and international support will help the entire Asian region in the fight against such threats as terrorism, drug trafficking, organized crime, environmental degradation and others. In these efforts, we both not only make use of practices to resolve armed conflicts but also exert every effort to foster a culture of prevention and to improve measures aimed at addressing the root causes of tensions and wars.

Over the past five years, the Centre has had certain successes – the Program of Action for 2009-2011 has been implemented, and the program for 2012-2014 is currently being implemented. The Centre has organized a number of events with the participation of high-ranking representatives of the Central Asian countries, international and regional organizations, the Executive Committee of IFAS, experts in international law and officials from UN regional agencies and bodies. With the help of presentations, interactive discussions and case studies, participants have had the opportunity to study effective instruments of international law, best practices, dispute-resolution mechanisms and the importance of early warning of potential problem situations in the context of Central Asia.

Together with the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and the European Union, and with active participation of the Central Asian Governments and leading regional organizations, the Centre is carrying out an ambitious and comprehensive project on the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in the Central Asian region. The Centre’s clear definition of the scope and the areas of activity have made it possible to design and implement a Joint Action Plan.

#### **Distinguished delegates,**

We hope that our joint efforts will serve the attainment of the goals we have set, ensuring regional peace, stability and prosperity not only in the Central Asian region but also throughout the Asian region as a whole.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to the Government of Turkmenistan and the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for their fruitful cooperation with all regional organizations, particularly the one I have the honor of representing – CICA, with the goal of strengthening security in our region.

**Thank you for your attention.**





**Ayoob Mohammad ERFANI**  
**General Director of the United Nations and International Conferences Department**  
**Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan**



## STATEMENT

### of Mr. Ayoob M. Erfani at the International Conference on the Fifth Anniversary of the UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA)

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Excellency, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan,**

**Mr. Miroslav Jenča, Secretary-General's Special Representative of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA),**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

I have the honor to join you all to celebrate the Fifth anniversary of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), in the bountiful city of Ashgabat. I extend my sincere appreciation to the brotherly government and people of Turkmenistan for holding this event and for their warm hospitality.

Turkmenistan successfully overcame the various challenges since its independence as a neutral state and has proven to be the most appropriate host for the (UNRCCA). We are happy to witness the close cooperation between the United Nations and Turkmenistan. Turkmenistan is improving its active role within the UN system, in particular through its election to the three authoritative UN commissions, including the Commission on Population and Development, Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and the UN High Commissioner for the Refugees Executive Committee. We congratulate our Turkmen brothers and sisters for their achievements and wish them continued success and prosperity.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Afghanistan appreciates the timely initiative of the UN Secretary General, supported by the UN Security Council and the governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to establish the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy (UNRCCA) in Ashgabat. It has a useful role to play in addressing the multiple global challenges we face, such as international terrorism

and extremism, drug trafficking, organized crime, and environmental degradation. And its work with the Governments in Central Asia contribute to our joint efforts to strengthen the concept of preventive diplomacy in this part of the world, through monitoring and analyzing the situation on the ground and involving the central role of the United Nations to prevent conflicts in our region.

We emphasize and appreciate the leading and central role of the United Nations in maintaining regional and international peace and security, as a neutral organization that creates conditions for negotiation and takes into account the interests of all nations of the region. We welcome the close contact between UNRCCA and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) to ensure a comprehensive and integrated analysis of our region. We believe that the close coordination and the sharing of experiences between UNRCCA and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Regional Economic Cooperation Conference (RECCA), the Istanbul Process, Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and all other relevant regional organizations and processes, are essential to promote a culture of preventive diplomacy in our region.

Since its inception in December 2007, UNRCCA has become a good venue to assist and support the governments in Central Asia to build conflict prevention capacities through advocating partnership, dialogue and confidence-building measures.

We express our support for UNRCCA activities and appreciate its work to enhance bilateral and multilateral cooperation to find sustainable solutions to challenges in our region.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The people of Afghanistan acknowledge better than anyone, the benefits of preventive diplomacy. Afghans suffered from three decades of conflict and were subject to a brutal Taliban group that ruled under the tyranny of poverty, ignorance and backwardness. For the last 11 years, Afghanistan supported by its partners has come a long way in its difficult but successful journey towards democratization and stability and today we are completing our transition to a peaceful, stable and self-reliant society.

Our transition to democracy over the last decade has become a testament to the benefits of multi-lateral cooperation and international solidarity. Just over a decade ago, many countries and partners from across the world, with the coordinating role of United Nations, joined the Afghan people in our struggle for peace and stability in Afghanistan and in our region. Today, our democracy has taken root and democratic institutions have been established. We have created an environment in which all citizens, including women and children, enjoy more basic rights than ever before, and our people are making a contribution to the state-building process in all social, economic and political spheres.

Economically, all the basic institutions of state which had been destroyed in the long years of war have been rebuilt, and our economy is steadily moving forward to integrate with the economies of the region and the world. The implementation of large scale regional infrastructure and energy projects, such as TAPI CASA-1000, railways, and so on, are also crucial for Afghanistan's economic integration with the region.

We are pursuing the Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process to reconcile with those anti-government elements that renounce violence, denounce terrorism, and accept the Afghan constitution and our achievements of the past ten years.

Our security forces have already taken independent control of security in most part of the country as part of transition process, and we are confident that by 2014, Afghan forces will take full and effective charge of defending Afghanistan and securing the lives of our people. As our security forces continue to grow in strength and confidence we look forward to continuing our partnership and cooperation in the security sector with our partners from the region and the international community. No partnership that we forge will be a source of threat to our neighbors or any other country.

These achievements have not come about easily, and the true aspirations of our people for peaceful, prosperous lives are yet to be fully realized, as many challenges still remain. Diplomatically, we in Afghanistan are promoting dialogue, partnership and regional cooperation among the Heart of Asia countries. In this context, the Istanbul Process presents a new and promising agenda for security, confidence-building and cooperation across the region. The objective of the Istanbul process is not to duplicate the crucial role that regional processes are playing, including UNRCCA. The goal is to complement this role and to build synergies where possible. Therefore, we are very much looking forward to UNRCCA's active role to participate in any of the Confidence-Building Measures of Istanbul Process.

The vision we have for Afghanistan is not just to have a better, safer and more prosperous country for the Afghans, but also to be a friendly, constructive and dependable partner for the region. Without the region's goodwill, support and contributions, Afghanistan would not have been able to make the transition toward a successful decade of transformation. We know that, while our friends and partners will come



*At the working session of the Conference  
MFA of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat*



from all corners of the world, our true security and prosperity fundamentally depends on the region that surrounds us.

We all realize well that a stable and prosperous Afghanistan will be a contributing factor for security and prosperity across the region and at the same time Afghanistan's challenges will affect this region more than others. We know that our neighbors today are greatly concerned by the threats they see as emanating from Afghanistan, including the narcotics trade. Afghanistan is greatly suffering from this menace too. This menace, including the global mafia that sustains it, threatens the fabric of our society including our ability to develop our legal economy. The threat of terrorism, which emanates from sanctuaries beyond our borders, is another common challenge. These are our common challenges, with regional dimensions and we have a common responsibility to address them.

We welcome the role of UNRCCA in mobilizing common regional efforts, in particular with regard to the fight against the common enemies of terrorism and narcotics. We also highly value the role of UNRCCA in Afghanistan's vision for constructive, positive and rewarding cooperation at the regional level. We share our neighbor's goals for a secure, stable and economically advanced Central Asian region and we are committed to the objectives of fighting our common challenges, notably extremism, terrorism and the drug trade.

**In conclusion Mr. Chairman,**

Today we all have made tremendous progress toward democracy, economic development and prosperity in our region. There is an abundance of potential in our region, and already significant progress has been made toward realizing the aspirations of our people for a better future. In order to build upon our achievements, we need to coordinate our efforts through every possible preventive and confidence building measure to focus our common efforts for greater cooperation, economic development, and regional stability.

My delegation strongly believes in the importance of preventive diplomacy and early warning mechanisms in the peaceful settlement of disputes, and we extend our full support and cooperation to the work carried out by the United Nations Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia to strengthen this practice in the region.

**Thank you.**



**Robert O. BLAKE Jr.**  
**Assistant Secretary Bureau**  
**for South and Central Asian Affairs**  
**State Department**  
**United States of America**



**Esther BRIMMER**  
**Assistant Secretary Bureau**  
**of International Organization Affairs**  
**State Department**  
**United States of America**



## MESSAGE

**from Robert O. Blake Jr. and Esther Brimmer to the International  
Conference on the Fifth Anniversary of the UN Regional Center for  
Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA)**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Dear Mr. Ambassador:**

On behalf of the people of the United States of America, we congratulate you and your colleagues on the fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia.

Under your leadership, UNRCCA has made great strides in facilitating dialogue and nurturing the growing partnership among Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, fostering a sense of community and taking on some of the most serious challenges the region faces. UNRCCA's efforts over the past five years to encourage common approaches and solutions to combating terrorism and cross-border threats have played a critical role in maintaining regional stability and provided a positive environment for economic and social development in Central Asia. We also commend UNRCCA's vital contribution on important issues such as energy security, the management of common natural resources and environmental degradation in the region.

The United States remains committed to working with UNRCCA to promote a secure and prosperous Central Asia. We see opportunities for bolstering regional trade, strengthening border regimes, and

Robert E. Patterson Jr.,  
US Ambassador to Turkmenistan,  
delivering message  
by R. Blake and E. Brimmer  
MFA of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat



addressing pressing environmental problems. Among recent initiatives, we would highlight the November 2011 Regional Counter-Terrorism Ministerial Meeting in Ashgabat, which adopted an expansive Action Plan based on the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy to strengthen security cooperation in Central Asia. This initiative when fully realized, will allow UNRCCA to play an important role in promoting cooperation across a myriad of regional and international organizations and national governments. The United States looks forward to supporting the concrete program proposals resulting from that meeting's Declaration and Action Plan, and calls upon its regional and international partners to continue to support UNRCCA's efforts to develop the conflict prevention capacities necessary to address the region's challenges.

As we mark this important milestone in your organization's history, the United States wishes UNRCCA continued success and we look forward to advancing our growing and dynamic partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robert O. Blake Jr.".

**Robert O. Blake Jr.**  
*Assistant Secretary Bureau for South  
and Central Asian Affairs*

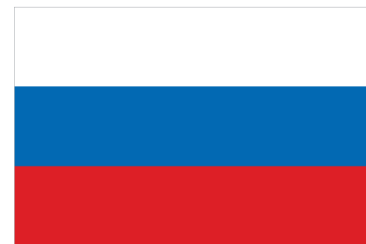
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Esther Brimmer".

**Esther Brimmer**  
*Assistant Secretary Bureau of International  
Organization Affairs*





**Vladimir KANDIN**  
**Deputy Director of the Third**  
**Department of CIS States**  
**Ministry of Foreign Affairs**  
**of Russian Federation**



*-- Unofficial Translation --*

## **Speech of V. Kandin on the occasion of the Fifth Anniversary of UNRCCA**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Mr. Miroslav Jenča,**

This year marks five years since the founding of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and I want to congratulate all present on this occasion.

The activities of the Centre contributing to strengthening regional stability and security through preventive diplomacy are very much in demand. The Centre is efficiently performing intermediary functions in the region, actively promoting regional cooperation and providing important consultative services to the Central Asian states. Much was said on this subject at the consultations of the Security Council of the United Nations on 8 August 2012, which resulted, on the initiative of the Russian side, in the adoption of a Security Council press statement in support of the work of the Centre.

The Russian Federation highly values the level of collaboration with the UN Regional Centre. To no small extent, this has been enabled by Special Representative of the UN Secretary General and Head of the Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy Mr. Miroslav Jenča's experience working in the region and knowledge of the realities of Central Asia.

The UN is a key partner of the Russian Federation in the region, called upon to play a coordinating role in efforts to fight terrorism, extremism and drug trafficking in Central Asia in accordance with the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We are interested in implementing the plan of action adopted in November 2011 to implement the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia. We believe that for the most effective resolution of the issues therein it is necessary to utilize to the greatest extent possible the potential of already established and well recommended regional cooperation structures, namely the CSTO, the SCO, and the CIS.

We place particular significance on the efforts being made under the aegis of the UN to ensure sustainable development in the Central Asian countries, which is a guarantee of political stability.

**Dear Conference Participants,**

In conclusion, allow me to congratulate the staff of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia on this auspicious occasion and express my conviction that the Centre's work will facilitate the further strengthening of stability and security in the region.



**Saber AZAM**  
**Regional Representative/  
Regional Coordinator for Office  
for Central Asia**  
**United Nations**  
**High Commissioner for Refugees**



## **“TURKMENISTAN AND UNRCCA, TWO REALITIES FOR PEACE”**

### **Speech of Mr. Saber Azam, UNHCR Regional Representative/ Regional Coordinator for Central Asia at the Occasion of the Fifth Anniversary of UNRCCA**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is with great pleasure that I would like to convey to H.E. the President of Turkmenistan the warm greetings of Mr. Antonio Guterres, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and refer to the gratifying meetings he had with H.E. the President in Ashgabat and in Geneva respectively in May and October 2012, during which not only strategic issues were discussed, but the High Commissioner learnt a lot about history and culture of Turkmenistan and the wider Central Asian region.

We are also at the eve of the celebration of the Neutrality Day and I would like to take this opportunity and warmly congratulate H.E. the President, the leadership of the country and the entire Turkmen people for the wonderful achievements since becoming a permanent neutral State.

Turkmenistan is a land of peace, security and prosperity, the three essentials that mankind needs to live decently and pave the way for further development. The status of permanent neutrality of the country is the unique asset which will also allow Turkmenistan to serve the world communities who are in need of a right place to discuss their common futures and overcome hurdles. The Turkmen land which is that of hope and aspiration, is therefore and certainly the ideal place to have a United Nations Centre for Preventive Diplomacy.

Five years ago, UNRCCA was established in order to provide the necessary support to governments, other relevant institutions, civil society and population at large to search for innovative means of dialogue in view of forging a peaceful and prosperous common destiny, as progress for all can only be achieved with peace.

## Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

You all know that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is tasked to protect and assist civilian population who are forcibly displaced within or outside their countries in case of crises and conflicts. Therefore, UNHCR is one of the most concerned UN agencies about efforts, processes and undertakings to ensure that peace and security prevail in any given region of the world as it will ultimately lead to protection of civilians. This is, hence, the common denominator between UNRCCA and UNHCR in Central Asia. We are proud of our cooperation and underscore the extra-ordinary value of the UNRCCA in helping to reduce tensions and resolve issues of concern within a country or between/ among countries.

We worked very closely with UNRCCA during the June 2010 crisis in Kyrgyzstan. While UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies were in the southern parts of the country to reach the most needy ones, H.E. Ambassador Miroslav Jenča and other members of the Troika were preparing the ground for us to act effectively and efficiently through his intensive negotiations with political leaders. UNRCCA fulfilled its mandate during this crisis and proved that it is the right tool to be used by all in order to prevent conflict from happening or reduce the intensity and consequences of tensions. We believe the presence of UNRCCA in a beautiful country with permanent neutrality status is the right and reasonable marriage.

Let me also highlight and praise the traditional policy of the Government of Turkmenistan to offer good will and be part of those who provide solutions to the challenges that our World faces nowadays. The World community witnessed Turkmenistan's tireless efforts under the leadership of its esteemed President, H.E. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, in bringing in May 2012, decision makers of Muslim countries as well as other partner States, international entities and non-governmental organizations to discuss and propose solutions to the never ending refugee situation in the Muslim World. The Ashgabat Declaration



*On the sidelines of the Conference  
MFA of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat*



which emanated from this gathering has an extra-ordinary significance for refugees. It should be taken to all corners of the world like an Olympic torch to encourage all concerned, particularly states to join the ideal of a world without forced displacement and to act favourably for a cooperation framework and an action plan which will reduce and eliminate the sufferings of those who did not chose by themselves to be refugees.

Let me point out that UNHCR is also the guardian of the rights of stateless persons who are considered to be the forgotten people of the World. Again, Turkmenistan championed by acceding, between 2011 and 2012, to the two UN Conventions related to the plight of stateless persons within less than a year, by registering all undocumented persons on the territory of Turkmenistan without applying any legal penalty and by granting citizenship to a significant number of them through Presidential decrees.

UNHCR and the entire humanitarian community are thankful to the vision and thoughtful approach of Turkmen leaders to provide solutions to issues that otherwise could become sources of tension and crisis in the region. This is very much appreciated. Turkmenistan paved the way for other states to follow its example, and we strongly encourage them to do so.

#### **Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,**

People often have different perceptions about the United Nations. Some overestimate its capacity and some underestimate it. But, the reality is that nothing can replace the UN as a forum for dialogue and problem solving. Nothing can replace a UN agency that has a mandate to assist innocent civilians, children, mothers, elderly people and those who are marginalized. The success of a UN body, however, depends on the position of States and support received from them. As a UN staff, I can assure you that we can and will work under any difficult circumstance because peace, security and prosperity for all form the bases of our actions. This is precisely the case for UNRCCA staff and we must all be proud of them.

**Thank you for your attention.**



**DAMIRA SARTBAEVA**  
**Regional Programme Director**  
**UN Women Eastern Europe**  
**and Central Asia**  
**Sub-Regional Office**



*-- Unofficial Translation --*

## STATEMENT

### of Damira Sartbaeva at the International Conference to mark the Fifth Anniversary of the Inauguration of the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia

#### “Neutrality and Preventive Diplomacy: Bases for Peace and Stability”

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

Cooperation between UN Women and the UN Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), is based on promoting the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), as well as resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010). These resolutions call on UN Member States to take measures to ensure greater participation of women in conflict prevention and peace building.

During the last decade UN Women (ex-UNIFEM) has provided support to local partners' various initiatives for the full-scale implementation of resolutions and for the promotion of gender equality in conflict resolution, peace building and post-conflict reconstruction. In our region, Mr. Miroslav Jenča, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, the head of the UNRCCA, as well as the Centre itself, are playing a major role in promoting this important mission.

From 2010 the close partnership between UN Women and the UNRCCA concentrated on supporting the initiatives of women activists, which sought to strengthen the accountability of states for the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security. From 2010, Mr. Miroslav Jenča and UNRCCA staff in Central Asian countries have been the direct initiators and participants in the dialogues with women peace activists within the global initiative “Open Days for Women, Peace and Security,” co-

convened by DPA and UN Women in post-conflict countries. Women from Central Asian countries, the North Caucasus, Afghanistan, Russia and Pakistan attended the first regional meeting in June 2010 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. In his message to the participants, Mr. Jenča reiterated his willingness to meet with women to discuss issues related to *“conflict-prevention and peace-building, and to provide an opportunity for them to be heard”*

This commitment was underscored by his regular meetings with women, including ones at the Southern Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan. The aim of such meetings is twofold: firstly, to become acquainted with their position and the proposals on the needs and requirements of women in conflict and post-conflict situations, and, secondly, with their experience of peace-building in the community, region, etc.

The appeal, adopted by women at this meeting and later transmitted to the UN Secretary-General, - among other measures to increase the participation of women in peace-building, -- also included a recommendation for *“establishing a regional ... Women Peace Corps which would include women activists in rapid conflict-response teams, and their deployment in conflict-affected countries to disseminate best practices for gender-responsive conflict resolution.”* This proposal is reflected in the UN Secretary-General report, entitled “Women’s participation in peace building,” which emphasizes the importance of a timely and adequate response to threats to the regional stability and security.

The UNRCCA also supported the initiative of women activists to create a special Advisory Board for the UNRCCA from among the ranks of women leaders with recognized expertise and competence in their respective countries and in the region on the promotion of human rights and gender equality. The advisory body will perform the following functions:

- To contribute to the development of documents on the UNRCCA programme activities, their implementation, monitoring and evaluation from the perspectives of gender sensitivity and enforcement of 7 point commitments by UN to address gender aspects of conflict and post-conflict situations;
- To strengthen partnership and cooperation between civil society and the UNRCCA and to promote the broader participation of women and women’s organizations in peace building processes at the national and regional levels; and
- To undertake a regular dialogue with national and regional partners, jointly with the UNRCCA, on the effective enforcement of UN Security Council’s resolutions on Women, Peace and Security.

We express our appreciation to Mr. Jenča and the UNRCCA for supporting this initiative, and we hope that in the near future it will bring positive results.

Moreover, the UNRCCA supports the implementation of such an important initiative as the UN Agenda on the 7 Commitments to Gender Mainstreaming in Conflict-Prevention and Peace-Building in Kyrgyzstan.

I would also like to mention the initiatives of countries on adopting specific action plans to implement the UN Security Council resolutions on the participation of women in peace-building and conflict-prevention. It is not only conflict-affected countries that have such action plans. Currently, most European countries, including Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, etc., have developed such National Action Plans (NAPs).



The action plans for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in European countries include attaining the following objectives:

- Ensuring that the principles of gender equality in the armed forces (for example, in peace-keeping missions) are observed;
- The integration of gender perspectives into security sector reforms;
- Taking into account the interests of women and men and their equal participation in disarmament, demobilization and re-integration programmes;
- Providing support to countries in post-conflict situations, etc.

Thus, in the Central Asia region, Kyrgyzstan has proposed developing a National Plan of Action for the implementation of UN Resolutions.

In this regard, I would like to draw the attention of the Governments of our region on these positive examples regarding the implementation of international commitments to prevent and resolve conflicts. Thus, during the UN Security Council meeting to mark the 12th anniversary of the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1325, the Executive Director of UN Women Michelle Bachelet, called on decision-makers to find the political will and adequate resources, and to expand opportunities for women to participate in conflict-prevention and conflict-resolution.

At this meeting the annual report (2012) of the UN Secretary-General on “Women, Peace and Security” was also presented to the UN Security Council, in which the UNSG emphasized the progress made, and noted that in countries such as Haiti, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal and South Sudan women were bellwethers in promoting innovative approaches in conflict and violence prevention and in peace-building. He also drew attention to the fact that, overall, current achievements were still far from expected results. In particular:

- In the area of *conflict-prevention* – an ever increasing number of partners are involved in the establishment of a conflict early-warning system. However, the violence and abuse of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict reconstruction is still a serious problem.
- In the sphere of *participation* – special measures are needed to strengthen the participation of women in formal peace-building processes. Of 9 peace treaties signed in 2011 in 8 countries, only 2 countries – Yemen and Somalia – included commitments on gender issues in the peace treaty.
- In the sphere of *protection* – women’s access to justice must be strengthened. Special strategies are needed to protect women and women human rights defenders during conflicts.
- In the field of *reconstruction* – more efforts are urgently needed to achieve a 15% rate in the mandatory allocation of donor funds to support gender-sensitive measures.

In conclusion, I would like to mention that much has been achieved in the region, but much still remains to be done to ensure the sustainability of the results that we enjoy today. And in this regard undoubtedly the role of the UNRCCA in consolidating the efforts of all partners in strengthening security and stability in the region is an important one. For its part, the UN Women Sub-Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia will continue to support countries in the region so that international commitments on women’s participation in peace-building are translated into specific policies, with tangible results, aimed at conflict prevention and resolution, based on gender equality principles and standards.



**Marton KRASZNAI**  
**Regional Advisor**  
**Economic Cooperation and**  
**Integration Division**  
**United Nations Economic**  
**Commission for Europe**



## **“UNECE and UNRCCA *Delivering as One* for the stability and sustainable development of Central Asia”**

**Statement of Mr. Marton Krasznai, Regional Adviser, Economic Cooperation  
and Integration Division of the United Nations Economic Commission for  
Europe at the International Conference dedicated to the Fifth Anniversary  
of official Inauguration of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive  
Diplomacy for Central Asia**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Mr. Chairman,**

**Excellences,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

At the outset, I would like to convey Mr. Sven Alkalaj's appreciation to the Government of Turkmenistan and the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia for inviting the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe to this event. He regrets that he cannot participate in this very important international conference in person due to his prior commitments and sends his best wishes to its participants.

The establishment of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) was prompted by the growing strategic importance of the region. Central Asia is not only an important energy and raw material supplier to world markets and an evolving transport hub between Europe and Asia but also a key partner of the international community in the fight against terrorism, religious extremism, illicit drug trafficking and organized crime. Central Asia is playing an active role in the stabilization and sustainable development of Afghanistan. This role will be particularly important during the “transformation decade” of Afghanistan.

The UNECE and UNRCCA have developed a partnership that could serve as an example of *Delivering as One*. This partnership is based on comparative advantages and a high degree of complementarity. The Centre provides a political framework for, and leadership in the conflict prevention activities of the United Nations system. The UNECE, working closely with UNESCAP in the framework of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), addresses the root causes of conflicts by deploying its normative expertise in various areas. UNECE legal instruments, like the Water Convention, offer effective legal frameworks for the resolution of disputes and the development of mutually beneficial cooperation in such areas as water, energy, environment, trade and border crossing.

The Joint UNECE and UNRCCA activities have been focused on areas with a clear conflict potential where regional cooperation offered the greatest added value: on transboundary issues, environmental pollution and degradation of the Aral Sea, and economic problems stemming from the lack of access to the sea, including transit, transport and border crossing. Their joint work has included capacity building on international water law, strengthening the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea and assistance in the elaboration of the Third Aral Sea basin Programme.

The Turkmen Chairmanship of SPECA in 2010 opened new opportunities for cooperation between UNECE and the Centre. Both supported the Turkmen Government in the organization of the Follow-up Meeting of the 2010 SPECA Economic Forum on “Developing a Plan of Action to Strengthen the Stability and Sustainable Development of Afghanistan through Regional Economic Cooperation in Central Asia”. The latest activity was a special event organized a fortnight ago on the margins of the SPECA Governing Council in Bangkok under the title “Review of Work in the SPECA Framework in Support of Implementation of the Decisions of the Fifth Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan”, held under the chairmanship of Turkmenistan, with the active participation of UNECE, UNRCCA and the Special Representative of the Secretary- General for Afghanistan.

The UNECE highly values its successful cooperation with UNRCCA. It could be made even more substantive in the future through the regular joint assessment of the security challenges faced by Central Asia and the elaboration of coordinated responses.

On behalf of the Executive Secretary of UNECE, I would like to extend congratulations on the five years of successful work carried out by the able staff of the Centre under the leadership of its Head, Ambassador Miroslav Jenča, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Asia. I am confident that with the active support of the Government of Turkmenistan, the Centre will continue to play a crucial role in strengthening the stability and security of Central Asia in the years to come.

**Thank you.**





**Vladimir GORYAYEV**  
**Executive Director**  
**Secretariat of the United Nations Register**  
**of Damage Caused by the Construction of the**  
**Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory**



## **STATEMENT**

### **of Mr. Vladimir Goryayev**

### **at the International Conference**

### **“Fifth Anniversary of UNRCCA”**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

First of all, I would like to thank H.E. Mr. Meredov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, and the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Central Asia, Mr. Jenča, for their kind invitation to attend this important International conference.

I would like to congratulate my colleagues at UNRCCA on the fifth anniversary of the Office and of course, the senior representatives of the five Central Asian countries on this occasion, since this is also their Centre.

Some of the distinguished participants may ask, what is the Executive Director of UNRoD doing at this conference? Certainly, there are many old good friends and colleagues here and they have no questions. I want to humbly inform you that for nearly 18 years I worked on Central Asia and with my Central Asian friends on many issues, and the establishment of UNRCCA was my last project in this regard.

UNRCCA was inaugurated five years ago, but the idea of the Centre was brought about much earlier. It came about not as a scholastic exercise, but as a response to very disturbing (I should say, dangerous) developments in the region. The distinguished Ministers and representatives (particularly from Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan) remember the very brazen incursion of the terrorist group called the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, led by Jumo Namangani, in the Bakten region of Kyrgyzstan in September 2000. The same group undertook another attack against Uzbekistan in 2001.

I had the honor of being very closely involved in organizing the inter-Tajik peace process and the establishment in Tajikistan, first of a political and later of a peace keeping mission. The physical presence of the UN offices in the country was extremely important. I learned this from firsthand experience,

and therefore in October 2000 I suggested to one of the predecessors of USG Feltman – Mr. Kieren Prendergast – the establishment of a regional Centre in Central Asia with a mandate very similar to the one that UNRCCA now has. He said: “Good Lord! Vladimir, it will not be easy, but it is worth trying....”

As you can judge by the chronology of the establishment of the Centre, it was indeed not easy. It took nearly seven years to achieve a result. All those years had been not a time of passive waiting, but rather a time of quiet, but active, diplomacy. There is no need to go through all the intricacies of the process, but just for substantive illustration I will mention two issues that were the most difficult: getting to a consensus on the venue of the Centre, and navigating to the concurrence of the Security Council for authorizing it.

Concerning the venue of the Centre, it is not a coincidence that all five Governments of the region, following consideration of various options, agreed on Ashgabat. Turkmenistan’s status as a permanently neutral country, unanimously recognized by the UN General Assembly in 1995 (the 17th anniversary of which will be celebrated tomorrow) and its consistent policy of positive neutrality has earned it the respect of its immediate neighbors and also of countries that are far away. In addition, and as my very personal observation, I have worked with Turkmen friends and colleagues on several important issues (such as, for example, the Tajikistan peace process) and Turkmenistan’s attitude towards the UN has always been impeccable. Regarding the establishment of the regional Centre, the leadership of the country, including President Berdimuhamedov personally, was extremely helpful and effective in addressing political and practical matters.

Members of the Security Council carefully studied the innovative idea of establishing a UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy through different political lenses, but in the end they unanimously supported this initiative.

Speech by Mr. Goryayev  
*MFA of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat*



It is very difficult for me to be an impartial reviewer of the Centre's work during the past five years, but with all modesty, I can say that UNRCCA under the leadership of SRSG Miroslav Jenča has done an excellent job and has proven the importance of this UN outpost in Central Asia. Five years is the age of a toddler, but the Centre is doing the job of grown-ups. Its importance was particularly clear at the time of the crisis in southern Kyrgyzstan in May and June 2010. SRSG Jenča played an important role in calming down the situation and gradually diffusing it.

Some time ago, a senior diplomat from an important country, who is based in Vienna, asked me: "But why did the regional Centre not prevent the violence and the loss of so many lives during that crisis?" I told him, and I think it would be appropriate to mention at this important conference, that the UN in general and its regional Centre in Central Asia, can do only what it is given the space to do by the Member States and only insofar as they are willing to genuinely cooperate with UN preventive or peacemaking efforts. If these conditions are in place, then you, the Governments of the Member States have all the right to expect, and in fact to demand, from us international civil servants and UN institutions to be creative, to be 100 per cent dedicated and passionate in doing our work and delivering concrete positive results.

This conference, which is an excellent initiative of the Government of Turkmenistan and colleagues from UNRCCA, is a good opportunity to review what has been done, to highlight what has been done well, to fine tune strategies based on experience and most importantly to strengthen cooperation with the five Governments of the region – because UNRCCA is your Centre. At the time of the establishment of the Centre, there was some debate in the Secretariat about what name should be used for the new Office in the Secretary General's letter to the President of Security Council. The discussion was to call it the Regional Centre **in** or **for** Central Asia. The latter option prevailed, because it is indeed the UN Centre for the countries of the region. The Centre is for you and I am confident that the next five years of this joint venture will be even more successful, based on cooperation and close coordination between the UN and the Governments of the region.

As you know, there are many important problems that can be addressed jointly through cooperation and there are serious challenges that face the region. I am confident that UNRCCA can be a very useful and effective tool for addressing those challenges and an important catalyst for finding optimal solutions to possible problems in the future.

I wish continued success to the colleagues of the Centre and distinguished representatives of the five Central Asia countries.

**Thank you.**





**Shahrbanou TADJBAKHSH**  
**UNRCCA Consultant**  
**and Researcher for the**  
**International Peace Research**  
**Institute of Oslo**



## **“Threat Prevention: New Diplomacy in Action”**

### **On the occasion of the Fifth Anniversary of UNRCCA**

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

**Your Excellences,**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

Let me start by expressing my gratitude for this invitation and to congratulate the host nation, Turkmenistan, and its Leader, President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, on this 17th anniversary of the adoption of the General Assembly resolution on neutrality.

Exactly five years ago, I had the honor to speak at the opening of the UNRCCA and in the past few years, have benefited from close cooperation with the Centre, SRSJ Jenča and the staff on the portfolios related mainly to counter-terrorism but also to Afghanistan. It therefore gives me great pleasure to participate today in this warm celebration as an extended part of the family.

Preventive diplomacy, ever since UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld first articulated it in 1960, has come to be defined as action designed to resolve, manage and conflict disputes before they become violent. There is no contestation that early response is much more effective than having to deal with a full fledged crisis through a belated intervention. Traditional instruments or toolkits of preventive diplomacy have also proved efficient: mediation, arbitration, good offices, early warning, confidence building measures etc. Prevention may be an intangible concept, difficult to measure, or prove causality for, but the mere fact that stability has endured, when odds are against it, tells us that conflict prevention mechanisms have worked. Stability in Central Asia, despite two decades of doom predictions and gloom scenarios about conflicts in the Fergana Valley, wars over water, the balkanization of the region ridden by ethnic disputes etc., is testimony to the existence of a host of preventive mechanisms, some put in place by governments themselves, some existing among communities, some brokered by the UNRCCA and some supported by a variety of regional organizations. Stability has endured and there is no doubt that UNRCCA has contributed its share to the peace architecture that is formally or informally institutionalized in Central Asia.

Sustaining this peace among States and among society is certainly a daunting task. But let me pose a more existential challenge to you: In an age when the nature of modern warfare and conflicts has changed, when major threats come not from other States but from networks of non-State actors that are found both within States and across regions, is the concept of “preventive diplomacy” or its instruments still valid? Disputes among two states could be mediated by a third party. But when the threat comes from a non-State actor, what is the role of this third party, and is ‘diplomacy’ an adequate tool?

Let me give a concrete example from this region of two types of “threats” that could potentially pose menaces to stability: terrorism and large-scale instability (even hypothetically civil war) in Afghanistan. These two threats are very different in nature, with one stemming from non-State actors with no particular geography and the other from a conflict within a State that is outside the immediate regional security complex of Central Asia. Different as these threats are, both have important characteristics: the extent, scale, timing and nature of the threats are uncertain as are the identity of the perpetrators, their sources of support and even motivations. In both cases, preventive diplomacy is preferable to active combat. Yet, in times of uncertainty, and with actors that do not fall under the traditional mandate of an inter-governmental entity such as UNRCCA, or put simply, when UNRCCA cannot sit and conduct diplomacy with terrorists nor could it directly impact outcomes in Afghanistan, how can a political mission such as UNRCCA prove its relevance?

It would be farfetched to claim that diplomacy can directly prevent terrorism, but the fifth anniversary of UNRCCA is a good occasion to highlight ways in which the Centre has been able to add value by going beyond traditional diplomacy or mediation between two States to adjusting old and new instruments to deal with new types of threats. Let me typologize the Centre’s interventions in five areas, using the CT portfolio as example.

Speech by Ms. Tadjbakhsh  
*MFA of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat*



*1.Raising awareness of the commonality of threats.* While CA states may have diverging perceptions of their sources of insecurity and security interests, the work of the Centre has relied on convincing them that no State can stand alone as an island of stability if the scourge of terrorism intensifies in the region.

*2.Fostering the added value of regional cooperation as response.* UNRCCA has tried to show concretely how a concerted approach is more beneficial than a bilateral one, a work highlighted in the success of adopting the first regional strategy for implementing the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. While the Joint Action Plan that was adopted in Ashgabat exactly a year ago needs now to be implemented by States with the support of international and regional partners, the political will that went into its elaboration and adoption demonstrated the benefit of regionalism as a diffuser of tensions among states.

*3.Raising awareness about the dependency between social, economic and political measures for a comprehensive approach.* The UNRCCA approach to CT (as well as to other areas of crisis) emphasizes analyzing root causes that are often found in socio-economic grievances, rights violations and inefficient or unjust governance institutions. UNRCCA has encouraged reaching out to a wider array of counterparts rather than traditional political actors.

*4.Collaborative approach as part of the architecture for prevention.* As UNRCCA is not a technical operational agency but a political mission, its added value has been to convene a platform where a variety of regional and international organizations, with their different mandates and capacities, come together to chart out areas of cooperation, complementarity, etc. The projects that the Centre has undertaken have relied on creating this much needed political platform instead of duplicating the work of others.

*5.Contextualizing the challenges of the CA region in its larger context.* Even though the mandate of the Centre limits it to the five republics, threats of course have a larger geography. The Centre has consistently sought to involve countries of the wider region as observer, stakeholders, etc.

In brief, UNRCCA, is, in its every day work, proving the double hypotheses that regional cooperation and amity is not only better for diffusing the tendency to dispute enmity, but that it can also contribute to preventing and mitigating the impact of new threats from non-State actors. I wish UNRCCA much success in many years to come.





**Shirin AKINER**  
Senior Fellow  
Cambridge Central Asia Forum  
University of Cambridge



**UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE**

## “Fifth Anniversary of the Inauguration of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA)”

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

The Fifth Anniversary of the Inauguration of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) is a milestone in the history of an innovative, ground-breaking institution. Once something has been achieved it often seems easy and inevitable. Yet when viewed from the other end of the process – from the starting point – the outlook is very different. There are innumerable obstacles to be overcome, some of which may seem to be almost insurmountable. In the case of UNRCCA, the difficulties were compounded by the fact that it required the understanding and support of key players at national, regional and international level. It was not merely a question of securing material support but, more importantly, of convincing the relevant decision makers that such a Centre was necessary, that it could make a real contribution to stability within the region. It could minimize the risk of conflicts through early warning and early interventions. Furthermore, if successful, it could serve as a model for similar initiatives elsewhere in the world. This was an ambitious agenda, but the basic premises were not entirely new. They built on concepts of conflict prevention and peace-making that had been developed in theory and in *ad hoc* UN missions over the years. The proposal to create UNRCCA was an attempt to institutionalize the process by creating a dedicated body that would have the task of putting these ideas into practice, not in a vague, general sense but in a specific location, addressing specific problems. It was a bold project, and great patience, diplomatic skill and perseverance were required to carry it through from the ‘drawing board’ to the point of implementation. Not surprisingly, the process took many years and it was a signal achievement that in May 2007, Secretary General Ban Ki Moon formally announced the forthcoming establishment of UNRCCA as a special UN political mission.

## RATIONALE

The rationale for locating UNRCCA in Ashgabat was threefold. Firstly, it was acknowledged that the Central Asian region faces a complex range of environmental, economic and security challenges. These include sustainable and equitable water management, border management, poverty alleviation, the fight against terrorism and extremism, and the fight against trans-national crime (especially the trafficking of drugs, but also of humans, armaments and other forms of contraband). There was, too, an acute awareness of the need to promote the stabilization and recovery of Afghanistan and in particular, to facilitate its re-integration into the economic and socio-cultural life of the region. Many of these issues are interlinked and cannot be addressed in isolation. Instead, complex, integrated solutions are needed for complex, multi-faceted problems. In other words, a coordinated regional approach is required. This dovetails with the stated purpose of UNRCCA, which is to create the conditions in which multi-lateral agreements can be negotiated and successfully implemented. It is a gauge of the extent to which this concept was seen to be of real value that all five Central Asian states gave it their support, demonstrating an almost unprecedented level of solidarity and unanimity.

So, the main challenge for UNRCCA was to create a vehicle which would enable various forms of dialogue and productive interaction to take place. The priority was to disseminate practical and theoretical information, to pool experiences, and to share 'best practice' in the management of difficult issues. This would not to be a one-way process, in which foreign agencies 'talked at' the Central Asians, but a forum in which all participants contributed on an equal basis, sharing their successes as well as learning from the experience of others. The aim of was to help local participants find the most effective solutions for emerging problems, and to combat existing threats. The primary focus of UNRCCA was, and remains, the Central Asian region, but from the outset it encouraged a wider international engagement, both with UN agencies in other parts of the world and with regional organizations.

The choice of Ashgabat was not a random decision, but recognition of Turkmenistan's long-standing commitment to promoting peaceful dialogue in regional conflicts. The Turkmen approach did not take the form of grand public statements and gestures, but of quiet, discreet meetings, away from the glare of international publicity. This was rooted in the fundamental principle of Turkmen foreign policy, namely 'Permanent, Positive Neutrality'. The 'neutrality' signifies Turkmenistan's categorical refusal to take part in aggressive actions against other states, but the 'positive' aspect means that it pursues friendly engagement, particularly with neighbors, to provide humanitarian assistance and, where possible, to facilitate peace-making initiatives. This constructive approach played a vital part in resolving the civil conflict in Tajikistan, when the Turkmen government hosted the leaders of the warring parties for long periods; this allowed them to work through their differences at their own pace and to prepare the ground for the 'General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan', signed on June 27, 1997 (and registered with the secretariat of the UN), which brought the conflict to an end. In Afghanistan, too, during the 1990s Turkmenistan was instrumental in facilitating low-key, informal dialogue between primary actors. These efforts have been renewed in recent years, particularly as the drawdown of NATO-ISAF troops becomes more imminent. A formal offer to host talks between Afghan leaders, the UN Secretary General's Special Representative on Afghan Affairs, and other interested parties, was made by President Berdimuhamedov in 2010, at the 65th Session of the General Assembly. The



Turkmen President also put forward other proposals for assistance to Afghanistan (notably regarding transport infrastructure) on this occasion.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

The fifth anniversary is a good time to take stock of what UNRCCA has achieved so far. It is important to remember that the Centre was a new type of organization, not only in the region, but also on the international stage. Thus, there were no ready-made models for it to follow, no pre-prepared plan of action to be implemented. Consequently, these first years have been a learning curve, a time of trial and error to determine what is possible, and what is not possible. The particular constraints that UNRCCA faces are, first and foremost, its official UN mandate. This specifies a very precise regional focus, as well as setting operational limits. The second constraint is one of human and material resources: in an ideal world, UNRCCA would be able to undertake any project that fell within its formal remit. In reality, a compromise always has to be made between what is desirable, and what is possible. The third constraint is the commitment of the regional states. As with all UN agencies, UNRCCA works by consensus. The Central Asian governments cannot be forced to engage in negotiations, still less to take decisions that they deem to be contrary to their national interests. Thus, progress in resolving complex issues will be determined by the participants themselves, not by UNRCCA or any other such body.

Given this background, UNRCCA has been remarkably successful in identifying and developing platforms for engagement. One of these platforms has been the conduct of seminars, expert meetings and training sessions. Activities of this type have increased steadily. In the past two years, 10 such gatherings have been held annually, mostly in Ashgabat, but some also in other regional centres. One sector that has received particular attention is the sustainable management of water resources. Some seminars have focused on the environmental consequences of the abuse of water resources, as witnessed by the fate of the Aral Sea. Others have looked at international legal experience in resolving trans-boundary disputes. Notable examples of this approach have been the seminar on 'International Water Laws and Negotiation



*At the working session of the Conference  
MFA of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat*



of Mutually Beneficial Multilateral Water Agreements in Central Asia', held in Almaty in April 2009, and the training session on 'International Legal Instruments on Trans-boundary Water Management', held in Ashgabat in December 2011. Counter-terrorism is another issue that has received considerable attention; meetings on this topic have included a series of expert meetings on the implementation of the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy in Central Asia. Other themes have included regional economic cooperation (linked to the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia) and regional security and peace-building initiatives (for example, the seminar on 'Sustainable development: A key factor for stability and peace in Central Asia', held in Tashkent in March 2012).

A second cluster of activities has been the publication and dissemination of material relating to various aspects of conflict prevention. Several booklets (in English and Russian) have been produced. Some of these are collections of speeches and presentations made on specific occasions, while others are authored reports on applied research, analytical assessments and policy proposals. These publications complement the seminar series by allowing for a more detailed examination of the topics of discussion. Also, they provide a 'concrete record' of regional and international thinking on particular issues at a given time. Thus, they are of importance to diplomats, international civil servants, academics and anyone who wishes to track the dynamics of these regional processes.

Several other activities have been initiated and implemented by UNRCCA. On an official level, these include regular annual meetings between the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the five Central Asian states. Also, active contacts and modes of cooperation have been established with regional organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Economic Cooperation Organization, Commonwealth of Independent States, Collective Security Treaty Organization, Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building in Asia, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, European Union and NATO. Likewise, there is a good level of cooperation with other UN agencies that are based in the region (e.g. UNODC, UNDP), and with the UN regional commissions that are involved in Central Asia (UNECE and ESCAP).

Not the least of UNRCCA's responsibilities is the duty to report on a regular basis to the UN Secretary General, highlighting potential threats as well as opportunities for developing regional cooperation. This has served to give greater prominence to Central Asia within the UN orbit. An indication of this is given by the increased frequency of references to the Central Asia region in speeches by the Secretary General, by the participation of high-ranking UN officials in regional meetings (often bearing personal communications from the Secretary General), and by meetings between the Secretary General and senior representatives from the Central Asian states. Of particular significance in this respect was the Secretary General's week-long visit to the Central Asian states in April 2012. During Mr. Ban Ki Moon's stay in the region he visited the Aral Sea to see for himself the state of the Sea and to observe the results of the remedial measures that are being undertaken to alleviate the environmental damage. He also had meetings with those who are directly concerned with projects to enhance regional stability through conflict prevention, economic cooperation and greater mutual understanding. In order to give greater focus to such efforts and to monitor progress, a Turkmenistan-UN Strategic Advisory Board was created in 2012.

## ASSESSMENT

This brief outline of UNRCCA undertakings over the past five years bears witness to its comprehensive programme of activities. Indeed, it is remarkable that, having started from scratch, so much has been achieved in such a short period. Inevitably, however, there are different opinions as to how successful the Centre has been. At one end of the spectrum, there are those who are overly enthusiastic, regarding the smooth functioning of UNRCCA as a mark of a 'mission accomplished'. At the other end, there are those who complain that UNRCCA is 'only a talking shop'. Neither view is an accurate summing up of the contribution that UNRCCA is making towards enhancing security and stability in the region. It is not, and never can be, a panacea for the range of security problems (environmental, human, crime and conflict) that confront the region. Instead, it is an enabling mechanism that creates a space for preventive diplomacy to take effect. This, by its very nature, is a long, difficult process of discussion and negotiation, involving patient exchanges with interlocutors 'round the table' as well as with colleagues back home, all of whom may have different goals and priorities. So, even though there is a general awareness that comment threats need to be combatted by collective action, it is often very difficult to reach agreement on the fine details of cooperation.

Nevertheless, such discussions are more likely to succeed if they are held in a neutral, non-confrontational venue. This enables all parties to set out their positions and importantly, to understand better the position of others. Certainly it is a 'talking shop', but by providing channels of communication, UNRCCA prepares the way for action. That is the major contribution that the Centre makes. The next stage – the shift from 'talking' to concrete action – is the responsibility of the member states. The Centre can help by providing facilities for meetings, organizing training sessions and expert meetings, disseminating information and other such actions. It can also help to mobilize resources and to coordinate support from the international community. However, it is only able to operate within the strict framework set by its UN mandate and by the resources that have been allocated to it. Ultimately, the results will be determined by the political will and commitment of the regional states, singly and collectively. There will always be hurdles to be overcome. Equally, some states will be more eager to participate than others. This is neither surprising nor unusual: rather, it is an evolutionary process that will gradually reveal the potential as well as the

limitations of the Centre.

It is worth noting the importance of the location of UNRCCA in Turkmenistan. It coincides with the wider process of this country's engagement with the international community and in particular, with the United Nations and its programmes and special agencies. An important aspect of Turkmenistan's foreign policy has been the constructive proposals that it has presented to the international community in recent years. Perhaps the most significant of these is the resolution on 'The reliable and stable transit of energy and its role in ensuring sustainable development and international cooperation', which was unanimously adopted by all 192 UN members at a session of the General Assembly in December 2008. The document was co-sponsored by 58 states, among them the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. This overwhelming endorsement of the resolution was an indication of its timeliness, and also of Turkmenistan's diplomatic success in explaining both its purpose and viability to fellow UN members. Other Turkmen initiatives have included the proposal (made by President Berdimuhamedov at the 65th session of the UN General Assembly in September 2010) for the establishment of a 'Caspian Environmental Forum', to provide a permanent platform for addressing environmental issues in the Caspian Sea Basin, under the aegis of UNEP. These and other such moves bring an additional dimension to the work of UNRCCA by creating new opportunities for interaction, support and outreach.

## CONCLUSIONS

The official celebrations marking the Fifth Anniversary of the Inauguration of UNRCCA were accompanied by an international conference. This was attended by a large number of participants, not only from Eurasia, but also from other parts of the world, including Central and West Africa. The speakers were senior representatives of international and regional organizations, as well as academics and other professionals. The diversity of the participants was an indication of the extent to which UNRCCA has established a serious international reputation as a sound mechanism for developing the attributes and platforms that are the basic tools of preventive diplomacy. It also signaled the importance of studying approaches and 'best practices' beyond the immediate neighborhood, thus broadening the 'preventive diplomacy dialogue' to encompass a wider audience. Both the formal presentations and the informal conversations on the margins of the main sessions of the conference underlined the value of such exchanges by providing relevant comparative material. Overall, the events marking UNRCCA's Fifth Anniversary were an opportunity to acknowledge its achievements, and also to look ahead to the challenges it will face in the next stage of its development.





At the working session of the Conference  
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## PRESS STATEMENT ON THE UNITED NATIONS REGIONAL CENTRE FOR PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY FOR CENTRAL ASIA

*29 January 2013, New York*

*SC/10903*



The following Security Council press statement was issued today by Council President Mohammad Masood Khan (Pakistan):

The members of the Security Council welcomed the briefing by Miroslav Jenča, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, on the work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) over the past six months.

The members of the Security Council stressed the need for further cooperation and coordination between the Governments of the region, the Regional Centre, and regional organizations to strengthen the region's capacity to overcome the challenges to peace, stability and sustainable development in Central Asia.

The members of the Security Council appreciated the work of the Regional Centre, which marked the fifth anniversary of its inauguration in December 2012, as an example of preventive diplomacy mechanisms available to the United Nations which contributed to strengthening peace and stability in the region, fostering good neighborly relations and cooperation, and assisted Central Asian States, in accordance with its mandate and through regional cooperation, to respond to domestic and transnational threats to peace and sustainable development of the region.

The members of the Security Council commended the specific focus in the Centre's activities on the impact of transboundary threats facing the region, implications of national developments on regional stability and the management of water and energy resources and environmental degradation, and the benefits of increased counter-terrorism cooperation. In this regard, they appreciated the successful facilitation by the Regional Centre of the implementation in Central Asia of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

The members of the Security Council welcomed the role of the Regional Centre in facilitating assistance by Central Asian States to normalizing the situation in Afghanistan as it moves from transition to transformation, which affects the situation in Central Asia and fostering broader regional integration and cooperation as a tool to boost stability and sustainable development in the region.

The members of the Security Council stressed that the Regional Centre over the past five years has become a recognized partner in the region and worked to help the countries of Central Asia identify and develop mutually acceptable solutions to existing and emerging problems.

The members of the Security Council reaffirmed their support to the efforts of the Regional Centre to facilitate dialogue and assist the Governments of Central Asia on regional issues of their common concern.

## LESSONS LEARNED ON UN REGIONAL OFFICES: IN CENTRAL AFRICA (UNOCA), WEST AFRICA (UNOWA) AND CENTRAL ASIA (UNRCCA)

*10 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

On the sidelines of the International Conference that marked the fifth anniversary of the inauguration of United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), Under-Secretary-General Feltman convened a meeting of SRSGs, Heads of the UN Regional offices dealing with issues related to preventive diplomacy to identify lessons learned. It was an opportunity to cross-fertilize the experience and knowledge of the SRSGs in charge of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) and UNRCCA, and to address common challenges. It is the first time such a comparative analysis was conducted on this relatively new and specialized model for field Missions. Some of the findings are summarized below:

- **Similarity of mandates:** The three Regional Offices have broadly similar Security Council mandates, to provide “good offices”, to cooperate with regional and sub-regional organizations, to address transnational and cross-border issues and to facilitate linkages between UN actors in the region. Nonetheless, their implementation has differed greatly due to the regional political context and the operating space afforded to the Regional Offices.

- **Operating space:** UNOWA has focused on “good offices” and preventive diplomacy in a region where different political crises continue to dominate the agenda. The balancing of these activities with longer-term capacity development of partners has been a challenge. In comparison, UNOCA and UNRCCA have assumed a more “regional approach”, engaging in political advocacy and support to the development of regional strategies (e.g. LRA and anti-piracy in the Gulf of Guinea), and providing a platform to address transnational and cross-border issues (e.g. water management and drug trafficking). The Regional Offices’ ability to draw on a range of expertise and capacities within the UN, ranging from the Peacebuilding



Fund to the Standby Team of Mediation Experts, has been critical to supplement their limited resources and to reinforce their “convening power” and “capacity building efforts”.

- **Crisis management:** The Regional Offices have contributed to being the eyes and ears in the region; enabling timely analysis and identifying appropriate “entry points” for the Secretary-General and the SRSGs to address crises. They have also played a critical role in ensuring sustained attention once the immediate crisis subsides (for example, in Guinea, Kyrgyzstan, the Sahel region, as well as electoral disputes in countries such as Senegal and Togo). The proximity of Regional Offices to the events has undoubtedly increased trust and facilitated the establishment of contacts with relevant actors, including the Governments, regional and sub-regional organizations, civil society and think tanks, who are crucial partners in promoting peace and stability in the region.

- **Expectations vs. resources:** This gap between expectations and resources is not new. However, these Regional Offices are mandated to cover a vast region with UNOCA mandated to cover ten countries, UNOWA to cover 16 and UNRCCA to cover five, while they are among the smallest field-based SPMs. In such contexts, the SRSGs emphasized the importance of periodically reprioritizing their engagement.



**Meeting of Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General**

*(Left to right: Abou Moussa, Said Djinnit, Jeffrey Feltman and Miroslav Jenča)  
UNRCCA, Ashgabat*

- **Improving coordination:** To maximize the available resources and tools at their disposal, the Regional Offices have focused on improving coordination with missions and the UN Country Teams in their respective region. They regularly convene meetings of the Resident Coordinators and the Heads of Missions to share their analysis and strengthen a regional approach on cross-cutting issues. Such collaboration has yielded some encouraging results, which should be used as a basis to further systematize the sharing of timely analysis between the Regional Offices, the UNCT and the Peace and Development Advisors deployed in the region.

## Chairmen's Summary

### International Conference on the occasion of the Fifth Anniversary of the Inauguration of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia

*11 December 2012, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan*

On 11 December, a conference entitled “*Neutrality and Preventive Diplomacy: Bases for Peace and Stability*” was held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. The conference was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan in cooperation with the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) to mark the fifth anniversary of the inauguration of UNRCCA. The conference took place on the eve of the 17th anniversary of the declaration of Turkmenistan’s Neutrality.

The conference was opened by His Excellency President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and attended by UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman; OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier; Chairman of the CIS Executive Committee Sergey Lebedev; ECO Secretary General Shamil Aleskerov; SCO Secretary General Muratbek Imanaliev; Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov; Deputy Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Kairat Umarov; Deputy Foreign Minister of Kyrgyzstan Samargul Adamkulova; First Deputy Foreign Minister of Tajikistan Makhmudzhon Sobirov; Deputy Foreign Minister of China Chen Guoping; Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkey Naci Koru; SRSG and Head of UNRCCA Miroslav Jenča; SRSG and Director of the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA) Said Djinnit; SRSG and Head of the UN Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) Abou Moussa; SRSG and Head of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) Ján Kubiš; EU Special Representative Patricia Flor; Chairman of the Executive Committee of IFAS Saghit Ibatullin; Deputy Executive Director of CICA Kanat Tumysh; Director General of the UN Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan Ayoob Mohammad Erfani; Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Turkmenistan Javkhar Izamov; US Ambassador to Turkmenistan Robert Patterson; Ambassador of Russia to Turkmenistan Alexander Blokhin; as well as the Heads of the regional offices of UN Women, UNHCR, UNESCO, DPI and UNECE, international academics and others. The diplomatic corps in Turkmenistan and Ambassadors of Turkmenistan abroad were also present.

The focus of the conference was the concept of preventive diplomacy as an innovative tool to prevent conflict and the escalation of tensions. To this end, the participants discussed lessons learnt, best practices, prospects and challenges in this field. They emphasized the importance of early warning, mediation and various forms of dialogue facilitation, but also stressed the major challenge: the need for rapid and unified diplomatic action as soon as opportunities emerge.

The participants expressed appreciation for the role of regional structures, such as UNRCCA, UNOCA and UNOWA, in addressing existing and emerging threats to regional peace and stability, working hand in hand with UN programmes, funds and agencies represented in UN Country Teams. Joint efforts with international financial institutions such as the World Bank are also important to encouraging regional cooperation. Participants expressed the wish that the UN as a whole would continue to play a central role in supporting the Governments of the three regions in the promotion of peace and stability.

An integral component of preventive diplomacy is the need for the international community to speak with one voice. In this context, close coordination among relevant regional and international organizations, such as the OSCE, the SCO, the CIS, ECO, the European Union, CICA and the African Union, is of crucial importance and helps to ensure durable peace and to create conditions conducive to social stability, sustainable economic growth and prosperity.

UNRCCA, which celebrated the fifth anniversary of its establishment on 10 December 2007, was held up as an example of a practical application of preventive diplomacy that is delivering results. Its two Programmes of Action (2009-2011 and 2012-2014) were prepared in cooperation with all of the States of Central Asia and have taken into account their views and priorities. The current Programme focuses, inter alia, on finding ways to address trans-boundary threats such as terrorism, extremism and drug trafficking; domestic challenges to peace and security; environment degradation; challenges related to water and energy management; as well as possible impacts of the situation in Afghanistan on the wider region. UNRCCA's work in these areas includes assisting its host Governments through the provision of expertise along with an impartial platform for discussion towards finding solutions to current and emerging challenges, taking into account the interests and needs of all sides. UNRCCA is a reliable partner of the Central Asian countries and a respected part of the complex system of regional and international relations that is striving to address pressing problems in the region. Participants of the Conference also made concrete proposals for future UNRCCA activities.

UNRCCA's efforts to build the professional capacity of young Central Asian diplomats and other practitioners was hailed as a lasting contribution to the sustainable application of the concept of preventive diplomacy. UNRCCA will continue to help equip future generations of diplomats with the skills necessary to successfully address the challenges the region is facing.

Close cooperation between UNRCCA and UNAMA in Afghanistan was characterized as being instrumental for the development of a holistic approach to security in the region, encompassing peace and security as well as economic development and trade facilitation, for example in the framework of the Istanbul Process.

Taking note of the vast experience and positive role of regional structures such as UNRCCA, UNOWA and UNOCA, participants expressed the conviction that these regional structures brought new institutional



dynamics to the process of dealing with regional challenges and facilitated speedy action to address potential cross-border threats. Participants underlined that, particularly in a period of increasing austerity, the establishment of similar regional structures should be considered in other areas of the world, not only after wars have broken out, but also as tools for bold preventive action.



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## **Publication**

### **“Five Years of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia”**

*Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, 2013*

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