



**Address of Guðni Bragason, the Permanent Representative of Iceland, at the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the IWG of the Structured Dialogue on the Current and Future Challenges and Risks to Security in the OSCE-Area, SD**

**Session I: Transparency, risk reduction and incident prevention.**

The membership of the NATO Alliance and the securing of the Sea Lines of Communication in the North Atlantic is essential for the security of Iceland. The so-called Greenland-Iceland-UK gap (GIUK) is as important in our security structure as that of the Alliance, as before.

When participating in military exercises in our area, such as the Trident Juncture in 2018, we fully respect the Vienna Document on military transparency. We are committed to increasing transparency, reducing risk and preventing military incidents, and urge other participating States also to do so.

The OSCE provides us with the sufficient formats to address incident prevention, related to military activities.

The modernizing of the Vienna Document is of paramount importance in this respect. I reiterate our support for the modernization of the Vienna Document. In particular we express our support for Poland's proposal on Strengthening Cooperation as Regards Hazardous and Dangerous Incidents of a Military Nature.

We urge all participating States to engage constructively in modernizing the Vienna Document.

All participating states should honor fully the CFE Treaty and the Open Skies Treaty. Otherwise, the successes, which our predecessors strived so hard to achieve, will be in vain.

We emphasize the importance of making full use of current military channels of communication (between NATO and Russia) in order to increase predictability and reduce risks.

Finally, Mr Chairman,

We are a nation without a military and will continue to be so, - a key prerequisite in our National Security Policy. We are fully committed member of the NATO Alliance, as well as being strong on our principles and values.

We also fully support the Structured Dialogue and believe we should not shy away from engaging in dialogue on issues where we disagree on.



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**Session II: Counter-terrorism.**

Mr Chairman.

Recent terrorist attacks demonstrate to us that terror can strike anywhere and a constant vigilance is needed against these cowardly attacks. Terrorists strike with the aim of causing fear, undermining democratic societies, the rule of law and our fundamental values of freedom and human rights.

The struggle against terrorism is fought on many battlefields, on the national level and not least through international cooperation.

The OSCE provides us with a good forum for developing strategy against terrorism, as well as identifying and addressing the root causes of terrorism. This matter is dealt with within all three dimensions of the organization, (and guided by the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council, in accordance with the OSCE Consolidated Framework for the Fight against Terrorism.)

We welcome the OSCE focus on measures against money laundering, illegal transactions over borders, illegal trade in arms and financing of terrorism, as well as the question of the return of foreign terrorist fighters and their families.

(We also welcome the Ministerial Decision from Milano 2018 on Small Arms and Light Weapons, SALW, and Stockpiling of Conventional Ammunition, SCA.)

The present basis for counter-terrorist measures in Iceland is the **National Security Policy** (2016) which covers foreign affairs, defense, and public safety, and provides for the operations of a **National Security Council** overseeing the execution of National Security Policy and the promotion of effective discussion of security and defense issues. The Council makes regular assessments of the state of national security.

The National Commissioner for Police issues regularly **Terrorist Threat Assessments** (2017) which, needless to say, have as a basis the continuous threat in Western Countries from terrorist organizations, individuals and groups. The Police Commissioner issued in 2017 new guidelines regarding the investigation of terrorist crimes.

At the international level, Iceland cooperates with our partners in the North Atlantic Alliance and through international police cooperation, such as Interpol and Europol, as well as within the Schengen regime.

Counter-terrorism is a multi-faceted issue. In a discussion at the Human Rights Council in Geneva on 1<sup>st</sup> March, Iceland highlighted the fourth pillar of the UN Global Counter-terrorism Strategy which focuses on measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis for the fight against terrorism.

In this context, Iceland raised concerns about the widespread misuse of counter-terrorism legislation to silence human rights defenders, including women and LGBTI rights defenders. Effective counter-terrorism strategy should strengthen, not weaken, civil society.

The OSCE Third Dimension has a special function in this respect. Within the Human Dimension we fight against xenophobia, intolerance and religious persecution, and it has an important role in preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT).