

OSCE INFORMAL MINISTERIAL MEETING

Corfu 27–28 June 2009

**Statement by Ambassador Gréta Gunnarsdóttir
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Madam Chair, Your Excellency Minister Bakoyannis,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me first convey warm regards from Foreign Minister Össur Skarphéðinsson, who to his regret was not able to attend this meeting.

I want to thank the Government of Greece for having convened this informal meeting to discuss how we can strengthen European Security and pave the way for a meaningful outcome at the Ministerial Meeting in Athens. Also, I would like to thank you for the hospitality with which you have received us here in Korfu.

Madam Chair,

In the context of the Security Architecture in Europe with its network of organisations (UN, OSCE, the EU, NATO, the Council of Europe) we have agreed upon a very large body of norms to serve as guidelines in the conduct of our relations. International law regulating relations between states, and the relationship between states and their own citizens, is also very well established and it is more when it comes to implementation where gaps or deficiencies can be indentified.

We therefore need to strengthen the implementation of international law and our other common commitments as well as work harder to identify areas where we have common interests and where cooperation is needed to increase security and stability in Europe. In this regard I would like to mention disarmament and arms control, as well as transnational organized crime which by its very nature can threaten the foundations of democratic societies.

The OSCE is the natural forum for a dialogue which should encompass a comprehensive approach to security in all OSCE's three dimensions.

We should put every effort into solving protracted conflicts as well as strengthening conflict prevention and conflict resolution. In this regard the Russia – Georgia conflict was a major setback and the situation as it now stands will be extremely hard to solve. Iceland is convinced of the need for a continued cross-dimentional OSCE presence in Georgia. Greater international presence in Georgia is needed, not less. It is indeed inconsistent, that at this very

moment when we are discussing ways to increase European security through international cooperation, that we are unable to reach an agreement on increased international presence where it is so obviously needed in order to restore and maintain peace in the region.

Our last point is that we should concentrate on comprehensive security and on strengthening democratic institutions, human rights and the rule of law. Human security should be central to our continued dialogue. And most certainly the principles of the Helsinki Accords that led to the formation of this organisation should be preserved as well as reaffirmed.

Thank you Madame Chair