

Closing remarks by Ambassador Jürg Lindenmann Counter Terrorism Co-ordinator, Switzerland

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Colleagues

The great Antonio Cassese once said that there is no greater punishment for a terrorist than to be brought before a judge. I rather like this statement, because when this happens, it means that we -- even in the face of a danger as great as terrorism -- are able to uphold *our* standards, *our* rules, *our* values.

In that sense, upholding the rule of law and respecting fundamental rights while fighting terrorism is not only a legal imperative (because "it's the law"), but also a moral one. It is the very essence of fighting terrorism effectively.

I think it is not naive to say that, fortunately, this message has passed in many parts of the world from the level of rhetoric onto the operational level.

But this does not mean that it is always easy to reconcile considerations of efficient intelligence gathering, investigation and prosecution with rule of law imperatives. And the use of special investigative techniques is certainly one of the core subjects where this inherent tension crystallises clearly.

And this is where all of you come in, be it as policy maker, legislator or as intelligence officer, investigator, prosecutor, judge as service provider or researcher.

The aim of this conference was to exchange experiences and good practices and deepen the discussion among relevant actors on ways and means to reconcile those interests and imperatives in practice.

I am very pleased with the broad attendance. I counted representatives from 48 States, including in particular from States that may not usually attend conferences in this building -- your participation is particularly appreciated --, representatives of 10 international organisations or entities of international organisations as well as participants from academia, civil society and the private sector. Thank you all very much for attending and participating actively.

I am also pleased with the interaction between the Council of Europe, CTED, OSCE and the Arab League in the preparation of this Conference. I know there is a lot of hard work involved -- in particular for the organisation that hosts the event on its premises, the Council of Europe -- and the effort of all those involved is really very much appreciated.

I would expect that the international organizations would take the results of this conference back and continue their work on the issue.

I believe that States representatives would also take back the results and look at their own standards and rules on governing the use of special investigative techniques and how they are operated in practice. It is certainly an issue that will stay with us, given also the important technological developments.

I think an important challenge here might be to stay creative and innovative in meeting the new challenges and utilising the new technology at its best while at the same time remaining conservative -- if you will -- with respect to our unwavering determination to uphold the rule of law.

Other challenges include international cooperation. It has been mentioned that this is favoured by building trust. I certainly hope that this conference contributed also to this end. All actors need to stay in continued dialogue.

I would like to end by thanking all of you again. You will agree that special thanks go to Ivan Koedjikov and his team, but also to the other organizers. I would also like to thank the other co-sponsors Ireland, Liechtenstein and the United States and finally our interpreters and technicians for a job well done.

With this, I have the honour to close this Conference. Best wishes and have a good trip back.