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President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Opening Remarks to the 33rd Annual Session

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Dear colleagues,

First, I would like to thank the authorities of the Netherlands - the Speakers, the Prime Minister, our friend Farah - for their support and for hosting this Annual Session.

As the Dutch writer Cees Nootboom once wrote of his homeland: the Netherlands, a land without mountains, without hidden caves, with nothing to conceal, no dark corners of the soul.

It is fitting that this Assembly gathers in a country whose own self -image is one of openness and transparency, values that the OSCE PA holds at its core.

Cees Nootboom, who passed away in Mallorca, in the constituency I have the honour to represent, leaves behind a literary legacy that reaches far beyond the Netherlands.

As I conclude the first part of this opening session, let me reflect on what weighs most heavily on the minds of our citizens.

From Canada to Mongolia, I believe one feeling is shared across our region: uncertainty.

Uncertainty about a world that increasingly places its faith in the argument of force rather than the force of argument; where democracy and international law are under pressure, and where too many people feel uncertain about the future.

Faced with this uncertainty, our responsibility as politicians is clear: to place human dignity at the centre of our work, so that people can live in security, freedom and peace.

Because lasting security is not built by walls, nor guaranteed by rearmament. It is built on justice, dialogue, respect for international law, and the political courage to defend them.

That is why this Assembly matters.

Fifty years after the Helsinki Final Act, the principles that underpin our common security are being openly challenged.

We see it in the continued war of aggression against Ukraine. We see it in Gaza, where civilians continue to suffer.

We see it wherever force replaces dialogue and international law is applied selectively or not at all.

There can be no hierarchy of principles. What we defend in Ukraine, we must defend everywhere. Without consistency, we weaken the rules-based order.

That is precisely the responsibility of this Assembly.

Over the past year, we have been present where we were needed most: supporting Ukraine and the pursuit of a just and lasting peace; facilitating dialogue in Georgia; strengthening democracy through election observation; and maintaining our engagement in the Middle East.

We have also continued to address challenges such as migration, equality, artificial intelligence, disinformation and climate change, recognising them as interconnected challenges to our common security.

Los principios de Helsinki dependen de nuestra voluntad política: de defenderlos sin excepciones e invertir en el diálogo y en las instituciones que los hacen realidad.

Ese debe seguir siendo nuestro objetivo: estar presentes allí donde los conflictos amenazan la seguridad de las personas, llevando diálogo, la fuerza de la razón y un compromiso firme con la paz.

Porque los mayores logros de nuestra historia nunca han sido fruto de esfuerzos aislados, sino de la capacidad de actuar juntos.

Solo si permanecemos fieles a ese camino estaremos a la altura de las expectativas de los más de mil millones de ciudadanos a quienes tenemos el honor de representar.

Porque la seguridad que buscamos no se alcanzará sólo con palabras, sino con las decisiones que seamos capaces de tomar, juntos.