

STATEMENT  
at the OSCE PA Mediterranean Forum

MONACO, 6 JULY 2012

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Dear Vice-President Jean-Charles Gardetto,

Distinguished Members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my privilege to address the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Mediterranean Forum. I wish to sincerely thank the hosts for the kind invitation and warm hospitality extended to all of us in this beautiful country as well as for the efforts of bringing together at this Forum Parliamentarians from the OSCE participating States and our Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.

At the outset I would also like to note with high appreciation the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's valuable contribution towards raising awareness of the OSCE's Mediterranean dimension within the Organisation itself and also through outreach activities and active engagement with parliamentarians from Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. Members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly continue to play a substantial role both in fostering public support to the Mediterranean dimension and acting as a bridge between the Organisation and national parliaments and governments.

The current Forum will undoubtedly serve a meaningful and important goal of exchanging views on the impact of momentous transformations that had swept the South Mediterranean on domestic political agendas and regional security and stability and, significantly, of generating ideas on how to best use available OSCE toolbox to support aspirations of peoples and countries of the region for dignity, prosperity and democratic change.

The recent developments in the South Mediterranean have once again testified to the ongoing high relevance of the OSCE concept of comprehensive and indivisible security which addresses in entirety all

three dimensions – politico-military, economic and environmental and human. It is this concept, which underpinned the OSCE dialogue and activities over the last nearly four decades, that allowed to preserve and strengthen peace and security, enhance military transparency and predictability, effectively support transition processes based on OSCE principles and commitments, advance human rights and freedoms which remain at the heart of the OSCE security concept.

As the OSCE contemplates the avenues for realizing the vision of a Security Community on its space, it is worth recalling again that at the OSCE Astana Summit of 2010 the participating States recognized that the security of the OSCE area is “inextricably linked” to that of its neighbouring regions. Developments in the southern Mediterranean in 2011 have amplified the relevance of this connection. Thus in December last year in Vilnius the OSCE Ministerial Council adopted a specific decision on Partners for Co-operation, aiming “to enhance further the Partnership for Co-operation in the three OSCE dimensions, according to the needs and priorities identified by the Partners”. The Ministerial decision clearly prescribes two principal tracks of interaction – 1) enhancing political dialogue and sharing good practices as well as 2) practical and action-oriented co-operation. This guidance informs the activities of the Ukrainian Chair of the Mediterranean Contact Group of 2012 aimed at implementation of the mentioned Vilnius Ministerial Council decision and responding to opportunities and challenges we face. From this perspective co-operation with the Partners was addressed at the recent OSCE Annual Security Review Conference, held in Vienna just over a week ago.

In terms of dialogue, the Mediterranean Contact Group in the OSCE remains the key format with full participation of the Partners and the participating States. It serves as a platform for sharing experience and good practices of the OSCE, particularly in the areas of preventing and settling conflicts, promoting co-operative approaches to security and fostering co-operation, developing confidence and security building measures and joining efforts in fighting transnational threats, promoting consolidation of democratic institutions, protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

So far, the meetings of the Contact Group this year reflected upon issues of civil control over Armed Forces (with focus on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security), areas of energy sustainability and water management. The added value of every such meetings is that they address not only the methodological approaches based on OSCE commitments and experience but also practical applicability aspects demonstrated on specific country cases. The next meeting of the Group in July will be dedicated to the OSCE third dimension, encompassing human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The regular dialogue in Vienna at the Ambassadorial level is significantly strengthened by exchange of high-level visits. Let me particularly note the address to the OSCE Permanent Council by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Jordan in March this year and visits by the OSCE Secretary General and Director of ODIHR which were recently made to the region.

Mr. Chairman,

In seeking to promote the second principal track of interaction – action-oriented cooperation which would allow to effectively re-inforce political dialogue - a List of Potential Projects and Topics of Potential Co-operation was developed and circulated to the OSCE Mediterranean Partners in March this year.

The list reflects the OSCE areas of expertise and interests initially expressed by the Partners. It serves as a working tool and is intended for helping Mediterranean Partners and participating States to identify concrete activities and prioritize their implementation. The listed project ideas can be further refined and tailored in accordance with the indications of Mediterranean Partners and potential donors. The projects can be undertaken by individual Partner states based on their needs and priorities but also entail involvement of a number of interested states, thus promoting regional co-operation. Let me use this opportunity to note the positive response of the Government of Tunisia to co-operation with the OSCE ODIHR, particularly in the areas of election legislation and observation.

May I use this platform to encourage representatives of the Mediterranean Partner states to give most careful consideration to the proposals of assistance from the OSCE, assistance that would not boast extensive financial resources, but offer OSCE's comparative advantages and decades-long experience and expertise in tackling common challenges in all three OSCE dimensions as well as supporting transition processes in a focused manner.

Mr. Chairman,

In Vilnius the OSCE participating States agreed that "the OSCE's experience in different areas can be of interest and potential benefit for the Partners, while taking into full account their prime responsibility for making national political choices as well as their specific political, cultural and religious heritage and in accordance with their needs, goals and national priorities". This statement vocally reconfirms that the OSCE's relationship with the Partners for Co-operation is rooted in partnership and rests on the principle of mutual respect and trust. I would respectfully submit that such approach should continue to guide us in further exploring areas of enhanced interaction with the Partners and possible assistance from the OSCE, to make our efforts successful and mutually beneficial.

Before concluding let me also inform this distinguished audience that as Ukraine is preparing for assuming the Chairmanship in the OSCE in 2013, two weeks ago the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine H.E. K.Gryshchenko presented to the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna an outline of Ukraine's priorities for the next year, highlighting, in particular, the interest to promote dialogue and co-operation with the Partners. I trust that today's discussion will become another meaningful contribution in strengthening the OSCE engagement with its Mediterranean Partners and charting the way forward.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.