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**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe**

**2019 OSCE Mediterranean Conference  
The 25th Anniversary of the Mediterranean Contact Group:  
Achievements, Challenges, and Future Opportunities for the Partnership**

**Tirana, Albania**

*24 and 25 October 2019*

**Consolidated Summary**

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# 1 Annotated Agenda

## Introduction

The OSCE foreign ministers reaffirmed in Milan the relevance and value of the OSCE Mediterranean Partnership. They declared that the link between security in the OSCE area and the Mediterranean region has become all the more relevant since the 2014 Basel Ministerial Meeting, as has the co-operation between the OSCE participating States and the Mediterranean Partners, especially in light of the growing range of challenges and opportunities stemming from the Mediterranean region and beyond.

The foreign ministers also called for greater engagement in advancing a common approach in tackling challenges, many of which transnational and cross-dimensional in nature, and in seizing emerging opportunities, in a spirit of genuine partnership, co-operation, and ownership.

Against this background, the 2019 Mediterranean Conference will look into ways to further our common security in the Mediterranean through dialogue and co-operation on issues of mutual interest and concern.

In this context, the event will take a cross-dimensional approach, consistent with the OSCE's comprehensive security concept, focusing on topics included in the Milan Ministerial Council Declaration on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean (MC.DOC/4/18) and that reflect the priorities identified for the work of the Mediterranean Contact Group under the 2019 Albanian Chairmanship.

The event shall consist of a high-level political session, allowing for a broader, political discussion, and three subsequent working sessions, where the OSCE participating States and the Mediterranean Partners can discuss opportunities for co-operation and exchange experiences and good practices on how to address common challenges.

The Conference will provide a platform to discuss ways to transform the current level of engagement with the Mediterranean Partners into enhanced action-oriented dialogue and to ensure the continuity and sustainability of the Partnership's achievements, as called for by the Milan Declaration.

## Thursday, 24 October 2019

08.30–09.00 Registration of participants

09.00–09.30 Opening remarks

Chair: H.E. Ambassador Igli Hasani, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Albania to the International Organizations in Vienna

### Speakers:

1. H.E. Gent Cakaj, Acting Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania
2. H.E. Lukáš Parížek, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic
3. H.E. Marina Sereni, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy
4. H.E. Nasser Kamel, Secretary General of the Union for Mediterranean

09.30 –10.00 Coffee break

### **10.00 –12.30 Political segment: The 25th anniversary of the Mediterranean Contact Group: achievements, challenges and future opportunities for the Partnership**

*The CSCE/OSCE provided one of the earliest multilateral platforms for addressing the link between European and Mediterranean security. It has since offered a seminal experience on how to pursue and operationalize the notion of comprehensive security among a plurality of states across the OSCE three dimensions.*

*Twenty five years after the establishment of the OSCE Mediterranean Contact Group, what has been achieved and what is still missing in the relationship between the OSCE participating States and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation? As a follow up to the Milan Ministerial Council Declaration on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean (no.4/2018), what proposals could be explored to further develop and strengthen the OSCE Mediterranean Partnership?*

Chair: H.E. Gent Cakaj, Acting Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania

### Speakers:

1. H.E. Péter Szijjártó, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary
2. Hon. Carmelo Abela Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion of Malta

3. H.E. Suzana Pribilovic, Minister of Public Administration of Montenegro.
4. H.E. Ambassador Saja Majali, Secretary-General of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
5. H.E. Rachid Bladhane, General Secretary (Deputy Minister) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Algeria
6. H.E. Oleg Kravchenko, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus
7. H.E. Lasha Darsalia, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

To be followed by interventions by Delegations of Partners for Co-operation and participating States

Rapporteur for Opening Remarks and Political Segment: Philippe Tremblay, Head of External Co-operation, Office of Secretary General, OSCE

13.30–14.30 Lunch hosted by the OSCE

13:00-14:00 Side event: “The OSCE’s Engagement in promoting socially-impactful business models”, organized by the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (PC.INF/29/19)

14.30 Photo opportunity

**14.35–16.00 Session I: Joint efforts in countering terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism – good practices, challenges and the way forward**

*The challenge posed by violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism knows no borders. Over the years, the OSCE participating States and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation have developed a close dialogue on this topic as well as engaged in a number of practical co-operation activities aimed at enhancing their knowledge and capabilities.*

*What should be the priorities going forward? What initiatives could be launched or stepped up to address specific issues, for instance the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters, and what tools would need to be activated to support an increasingly action-oriented dialogue?*

Chair: Ambassador Paul Bekkers, Director of the Office of the OSCE Secretary General

Speakers:

1. Agron Sojati, National Coordinator for Countering Violent Extremism, Director of the Coordination CVE Center, Albania
2. Amb. Assia Alaoui, Ambassador at Large, Kingdom of Morocco
3. Guenther Sablattnig, Adviser to the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator

4. Mr. Vladimir Tarabrin, Head of the Department for New Challenges and Threats of the Russian Foreign Ministry

Rapporteur: Fejzo Numanaj, Deputy Head, Action against Terrorism Unit, TNTD, OSCE

16.00–16.30 Coffee break

**16.30–18.00 Session II: Promoting youth participation and engagement to enhance dialogue and co-operation in the Mediterranean**

*Youth is both the future and the present of our societies. Promoting youth participation and engagement provides a powerful catalyst for prosperity as well as greater security as youth is a key to economic, social, and political development; when disenfranchised, young people are at a particular risk of violent radicalization.*

*What formats should be promoted to ensure that youth from the OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation have the opportunity to share their experiences and identify joint priorities and possible common lines of action? What initiatives could be launched to ensure that Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation can fully benefit from the growing youth agenda of the OSCE?*

Chair: H.E. Ambassador Igli Hasani, Permanent Representative of Albania to the International Organizations in Vienna

*Speakers:*

1. H.E. Leena Al-Hadid, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the OSCE
2. Ms. Avital Leibovich, Director, AJC Jerusalem
3. Ms. Alba Brojka, OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office Special Representative on Youth and Security

*Rapporteur:* Alberta Borg, Counsellor, Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of the Republic of Malta

19.30–21.30 Official dinner hosted by the Republic of Albania, Palace of Brigades

**Friday, 25 October 2019**

08.30 – 9.45 Side Event: Breakfast – Discussion about the results of the Middle East Mediterranean Summit 2019 in Lugano/Switzerland, organized by Albania, Spain and Switzerland (SEC.DEL/457/19, 10 October 2019)

**10.00–12.00 Session III: Building bridges between the two shores of the Mediterranean – the role of connectivity, digitalization, sustainable development and economic growth in advancing common security in the Mediterranean**

*Promoting greater prosperity and economic growth is a common goal of the OSCE participating States and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. Yet, significant gaps continue to exist between economies on different levels and patterns of development.*

*How to build stronger bridges between the two shores of the Mediterranean by leveraging connectivity, digitalization, and sustainable development? What can the OSCE do to better articulate and address the crucial nexus between economic and security issues?*

Chair: Vuk Žugić, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Speakers:

1. Ms. Margareta Cederfelt, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Vice President
2. Mr. Noredine Benfreha, Deputy Director of the Partnership with the European Union and Regional Security at Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
3. Ettore Greco, Executive Vice President, IAI, Rome
4. Dan Catarivas Director General, Foreign Trade & International Relations at the Manufacturers' Association of Israel; Chairman of the Israel-EU Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Rapporteur: Giulia Manconi, Associate Energy Security Officer, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

### **12.00–12.30 Concluding remarks**

Moderator: Philippe Tremblay, Head of External Co-operation, Office of Secretary General, OSCE

Speakers:

1. H.E. Gent Cakaj, Acting Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania
2. H.E. Ambassador Thomas Greminger, OSCE Secretary General

12:30 - 12:40 Press conference

12.30–14.00 p.m. Closing lunch hosted by the Republic of Albania

## 2 Reports by Session Rapporteurs

### 2.5 2.1 Opening remarks

*Report by Mr. Philippe Tremblay, Head of the External Co-operation Section, Office of the Secretary General, OSCE Secretariat*

Chairperson: **H.E. Ambassador Igli Hasani**, Permanent Representative of Albania to the International Organizations in Vienna

Speakers:

**H.E. Mr. Gent Cakaj**, Acting Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania

**H.E. Mr. Lukáš Parížek**, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia

**Honourable Marina Sereni**, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy

**H.E. Mr. Nasser Kamel**, Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean

H.E. Mr. Gent Cakaj, Acting Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania, referred to the OSCE founders' deeply held conviction, enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, that security in Europe was inextricably linked to security in the Mediterranean area as a whole. That interlinkage extended to such spheres as trade, energy and migration, as well as to terrorism and trafficking flows of various kinds.

He added that, over the past 25 years, the OSCE participating States and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation had achieved many positive things together. The 2019 Mediterranean Conference was a fitting moment for both to recommit themselves to their relationship so as to pave the way for further beneficial results over the next 25 years, guided by the Milan Ministerial Council Declaration on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean (MC.DOC/4/18).

Albania's goal during its Chairmanship of the OSCE Mediterranean Contact Group (MCG) – and also for its OSCE Chairmanship starting in the next year – was to keep the Mediterranean high on the agenda. Accordingly, Albania intended to send a clear message of friendship to its Mediterranean neighbours and turn the growing security interdependence between Europe and the Mediterranean into an opportunity for regional and interregional co-operation.

He called on all the States involved to work together to transform the MCG into a true Mediterranean Partnership Group as a living embodiment of political dialogue. By serving as a platform for the exchange of experiences and for policy co-operation, such a revitalized (and renamed) Group would help to identify best practices and approaches that could enhance its member States' joint efforts to provide security and well-being for their citizens.

H.E. Mr. Lukáš Parížek, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia, speaking on behalf of the 2019 OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office, thanked the Albanian Chairmanship of the MCG for the impetus given to the Mediterranean Partnership in the course of the year. He recalled the nexus between European and Mediterranean security, and noted that it should not be viewed exclusively in terms of challenges and threats but also taking into account opportunities for mutually beneficial co-operation.



While rejoicing in the achievements of the Mediterranean Partnership over the past 25 years, including the adoption of the Milan Ministerial Council Declaration on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean, it was equally important to look ahead to the next 25 years. In that respect, he saw great potential for the relationship to grow further. It was vital that future OSCE Chairmanships-in-Office continued engaging with the Mediterranean region.

As the OSCE pursued its strong agenda for security and peace in Europe, it must also focus on the many areas in which the security dynamics in the OSCE overlapped with those in the Mediterranean. There was no shortage of topics calling for joint efforts, such as dealing with human displacement and migration, combating transnational organized crime and terrorism, empowering women across all countries and supporting youth participation and engagement.

By way of conclusion, he added that many options were available for making the Mediterranean Partnership more strategic and results-oriented. The views and preferences of the Partners should be at the centre of discussions. Slovakia would support any proposals aimed at enhancing the Mediterranean Partnership as long as they were backed by the OSCE participating States and welcomed by the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.

H.E. Ms. Marina Sereni, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy, opened her intervention by noting that climate change in the Mediterranean basin and the tragic developments in Syria had severe repercussions for the security of the OSCE area. Those were just two of the many instances proving that the link between security in the wider OSCE area and security in the Mediterranean region was becoming increasingly relevant.

Italy rejected the narrow view of the Mediterranean as a source of problems. The region offered many opportunities for co-operation in areas such as energy, environmental protection, trade, tourism, youth and religious dialogue. At the OSCE, efforts should be made to strengthen the Mediterranean Partnership as a unique instrument for developing an inclusive “Mediterranean dialogue”. Thanks to the adoption of the above-mentioned Milan Ministerial Council Declaration, Italy had succeeded in putting the Mediterranean back on the OSCE’s agenda. The Declaration must serve as a benchmark for the Organization’s future co-operation with its Mediterranean Partners.

To mark the 25th anniversary of the MCG, Italy proposed a number of measures, including an annual report to be submitted to the Permanent Council by the OSCE Secretary General on the implementation of the provisions of the Milan Ministerial Council Declaration, which had called, *inter alia*, for “Mediterranean-related issues to be clearly reflected throughout the relevant work of the OSCE across the three dimensions of comprehensive security”; an annual Permanent Council meeting entirely devoted to security in the Mediterranean; the introduction of some form of “co-chairing” of the MCG, whereby the Chairmanship would be held simultaneously by one participating State and one Mediterranean Partner for Co-operation; and the creation of a “reflection group” of experts to make recommendations on how to harness the OSCE’s added value for security in the Mediterranean.

After pointing out that the Partnership Fund seemed to be inadequate to its purpose, especially because of the restrictions on its use in the territory of the Partners for Co-operation, she mentioned how Italy had launched and funded several extrabudgetary projects for co-operation with the Mediterranean Partners.

H.E. Mr. Nasser Kamel, Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean, referred to the Memorandum of Understanding signed in Málaga the previous year, which had laid the foundations for structured and meaningful co-operation between the Union for the Mediterranean and the OSCE. The Memorandum had enabled the organizations to go one step further – beyond participation in meetings and support for each other’s initiatives – and launch a joint project on “Prevention of climate and environment security threats in the Mediterranean”, a topic that was becoming increasingly prominent on the international agenda.

He was aware of the differences between the two organizations, including differences related to their geographical scope and their mandates, but those differences should be seen as an incentive to identify complementarities and promote synergies in the areas and sectors where their interests did coincide. Other areas for potential co-operation included youth development and the digital economy. Secretary General Kamel concluded by stressing that the OSCE should continue to value the Mediterranean Partnership, as it was the best available platform for meaningful dialogue with southern and eastern Mediterranean countries on strategic issues of common interest.

## 2.6                      2.2    **Political segment: The 25th anniversary of the Mediterranean Contact Group – Achievements, challenges and future opportunities for the Partnership**

*Report by Mr. Philippe Tremblay, Head of the External Co-operation Section, Office of the Secretary General, OSCE Secretariat*

Chairperson: **H.E. Mr. Gent Cakaj**, Acting Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania  
Speakers:

**H.E. Mr. Péter Szijjártó**, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary

**H.E. Mr. Carmelo Abela**, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion of Malta

**H.E. Ms. Suzana Pribilović**, Minister for Public Administration of Montenegro

**H.E. Ms. Saja Majali**, Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan

**H.E. Mr. Rachid Bladhane**, Secretary General (Deputy Minister) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Algeria

**H.E. Mr. Oleg Kravchenko**, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belarus

**H.E. Mr. Lasha Darsalia**, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia

The Chairperson indicated his agreement to a change in name from “Mediterranean Contact Group” to “Mediterranean Partnership Group”. Such a change would reflect a stronger focus on working together for the common good and make the MCG’s 25th anniversary year truly transformative. The Mediterranean Partnership was becoming ever more relevant and stronger, and Albania intended to help develop a common vision for closer future co operation. In particular, the possibility of Mediterranean Partners co chairing the Group in the coming years had to be considered. Moreover, the OSCE executive structures should have the freedom to develop multi-year programming, and Mediterranean issues needed to be reflected in all of the Organization’s work.

H.E. Mr. Péter Szijjártó, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary, noted that the security of Europe was closely tied to that of the Mediterranean. The root causes of migration and terrorism needed to be tackled. Instead of importing instability, OSCE participating States should bring help to the places where it was needed. Countering the threat posed by terrorism was a key priority because terrorism did not stop at the borders of countries and was not confined to specific cultures. Both participating States and Partners for Co-operation must unite against radicalism and extremism, taking into account the numerous interlinkages between massive illegal migratory flows and terrorism. All people had a right to a safe and secure life in their home countries, and it was the international community’s responsibility to ensure that. International law did not define migration as fundamental human right.

H.E. Mr. Szijjártó emphasized how all countries were entitled to put the national interest first. It was in no one’s interest for Turkey to flood Europe with 4 million Syrian migrants. Hungary had disbursed 40 million euros over the past three years to ensure that refugees could return to their home countries, in addition to rebuilding 33 Christian churches in Lebanon. Moreover, Hungary played a leading role within the Visegrad Group in assisting Libya to reinforce its borders. He commended Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and Egypt for their co-operation on border protection. Lamenting the European Union’s (EU’s) “non decision” on enlargement, H.E. Mr. Szijjártó pointed out that the failure to seize the opportunity for starting accession talks with

Albania and North Macedonia would have major security implications for the Western Balkans. It was a strategic mistake, and Hungary would continue to push for EU enlargement. Lastly, he noted the importance of reaching out to young people in the Mediterranean region, as they had an important role to play in its future stability and security. To that end, Hungary had been providing a wealth of scholarships for students from less developed countries.

According to H.E. Mr. Carmelo Abela, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion of Malta, the MCG's 25th anniversary was an excellent moment to revitalize the OSCE's contribution to the region, to strengthen political will and to tackle common security challenges. Malta was committed to regional co-operation, notably with the Union for the Mediterranean and the Western Mediterranean Forum (or "5+5 Dialogue"). In that respect it was worth mentioning the ambassadorial retreat held in Valletta in June, which had been well attended and had focused on the need for additional dialogue on migration and climate change. Malta set great store by the empowerment of young people, and it was important to reach out to them proactively. That would help reduce the risk of radicalization and terrorism, and strengthen dialogue and co-operation within the region. Among other ideas worth pursuing were the appointment of an OSCE Special Representative for the Mediterranean, the possibility of dedicating a Permanent Council meeting to the Mediterranean, and inviting the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation to co-chair the MCG. Changing the Group's name to "Mediterranean Partnership Group" would reflect more accurately the greater interaction between its members.

H.E. Ms. Suzana Pribilović, Minister for Public Administration of Montenegro, stressed that the security of the Mediterranean region was of the utmost importance for the OSCE. The Milan Ministerial Council Declaration on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean provided a good blueprint for policies, but it was important to draw up specific guidelines for co-operation and to achieve an action oriented dialogue.

H.E. Ms. Saja Majali, Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan, commended Albania for advancing relations with the OSCE's Mediterranean partners. The above-mentioned Milan Ministerial Council Declaration demonstrated that the participating States agreed on multilateral principles as a basis for work and co-operation. Moreover, commemorating the OSCE's Mediterranean Partnership in Albania was a potent symbol of religious coexistence. The Partnership had resulted in improved co-operation and a growing range of opportunities, but there was still more that could be done. The interdependence in security matters compelled Partners to pursue regional approaches in order to tackle the root causes of common threats. For Jordan, it was important to achieve a two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which involved establishing a Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital, and also to protect the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. In order not to abandon young people to the forces of radicalism, the legal status quo of Jerusalem had to be safeguarded and a political solution achieved in Syria. Jordan would contribute to conflict resolution efforts in the Middle East and beyond, and attached great importance to its partnership with the OSCE.

H.E. Mr. Rachid Bladhane, Secretary General (Deputy Minister) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Algeria, thanked Albania for organizing so important a conference. The Mediterranean Partnership had contributed significantly to peace, stability and prosperity in the region. Participating States and Partners for Co-operation needed to act on the Milan Ministerial Council Declaration – for example, by organizing an annual Permanent Council meeting on the Mediterranean Partnership. Algeria was well disposed to the idea of co-chairing arrangements for the MCG and to other complementary mechanisms. In that respect, the Memorandum of

Understanding recently concluded with the Union for the Mediterranean was very important, as were the meetings of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

H.E. Mr. Lasha Darsalia, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia, commended the Mediterranean Partners for being willing to exchange views, and emphasized that international co-operation strengthened the global alliance against terrorism. The representative focused on Georgia's engagement in national and international efforts in countering terrorism. In addition, he noted that the occupation of regions of Georgia by the Russian Federation creates a favourable environment for terrorist activities.

### **Interventions:**

The representative of Belarus observed that the Mediterranean Partnership was part and parcel of the Helsinki process. Transnational challenges had a profound impact on the OSCE area, highlighting the renewed relevance of the Mediterranean for stability in Europe. In the 2014 Basel Ministerial Council Declaration on Co-operation with the Mediterranean Partners (MC.DOC/9/14) and the 2018 Milan Ministerial Council Declaration on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean, participating States had reiterated the importance of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation to tackle common challenges across the three dimensions of security. In that respect, the challenges posed by terrorism and violent extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism (VERLT) were the most pressing, in particular the need to take action against terrorist fighters. Artificial intelligence had ushered in a new era of cyberattacks that could outmanoeuvre defence mechanisms. Participating States had to strengthen their defences and educate young people so as to enable them to reject manipulative narratives in cyberspace that could otherwise lead to radicalism. Combating trafficking in human beings along migration routes was another priority, and Belarus was pleased to see the OSCE playing a key role in relevant efforts.

The representative of Georgia pointed out that the interdependence of security in the OSCE area and security in the Mediterranean region had already been recognized in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. The recent migrant crisis and the threats posed by terrorism called for solidarity among all States as they strove to tackle the root causes of those phenomena. The OSCE could assist the Mediterranean Partners by supporting key projects to combat trafficking in human beings. In that regard, the Partnership Fund played an important role in streamlining the work of the Partners for Co-operation – inter alia, by supporting the exchange of best practices on energy and environmental issues.

The representative of Egypt said that it was important to maintain the increased momentum of interactions between the OSCE and the Partners for Co-operation. Egypt was committed to the fundamental principles of the Mediterranean Partnership and saw in it an excellent model for co-operation and political dialogue. Furthermore, Egypt was keen to resume engagement with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly by encouraging its members of parliament to participate in inter-parliamentary dialogue. A visit to Cairo by a senior-level delegation from the Parliamentary Assembly was being planned to explore arrangements for parliamentary co-operation. Egypt was particularly interested in deepening co-operation on combating trafficking in human beings, on the exchange of advanced passenger information and on dealing with returning foreign terrorist fighters. Renaming the MCG to “Mediterranean Partnership Group” and inviting the Mediterranean Partners to co-chair the Group were valuable proposals that, if adopted, would surely facilitate the implementation of the 2018 Milan Ministerial Council Declaration.

The representative of Tunisia stated that the recent presidential and parliamentary elections in his country had been free and transparent. Given that security in the Mediterranean area was an important objective for the Tunisian Government, co-operation with the OSCE had to continue, all the more so since the Organization had proved to be a reliable partner during the country's democratic transition. The MCG was an important platform for partnership, and Tunisia supported the proposal to change its name to "Mediterranean Partnership Group".

The High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, H.E. Ms. Federica Mogherini, quoted in the statement by the representative of the EU, noted how the Milan Ministerial Council Declaration was a very good starting point for addressing transnational risks in the wider Mediterranean region. Thanks to the EU's holistic concept of security and the European Neighbourhood Policy, there were additional tools for supporting efforts in a wide range of areas, including the rule of law and migration. Both the OSCE and the EU had to do more to combat trafficking in human beings and involve civil society in Mediterranean countries to a greater extent by empowering young people, which was also an effective counter-terrorism strategy. Co-operation with its Mediterranean Partners was a priority of the EU Global Strategy.

The representative of Spain stressed that promoting the involvement of women made it possible to respond more effectively to the challenges faced by the Mediterranean region, particularly in tackling radicalization. The full participation of women was, moreover, essential to build stable economies and societies. Spain believed that mainstreaming a gender perspective in all three dimensions of security was crucial, and reiterated its support for the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. The link between youth and security was becoming increasingly relevant, given that young people made up more than 50 per cent of the population in the Mediterranean region. In that respect, the 2017 OSCE Youth Conference held in Málaga had helped to hone the youth and gender agendas.

The representative of United States of America said that the Helsinki Final Act had underlined the links between security in the OSCE area and security in the Mediterranean region. It was important to understand why exactly the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation wanted to work together with the OSCE and also how to make the results of such co-operation more visible in the Mediterranean region. All of the OSCE's activities should be designed to enhance the security of its participating States. The United States had made available extrabudgetary funds to the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) so that it could provide assistance with the recent elections in Tunisia – an excellent example of how co-operation could benefit both participating States and Partners for Co-operation.

The representative of Ukraine noted that the MCG demonstrated the OSCE's added value across the three dimensions of security in the Mediterranean region by facilitating the exchange of information and experience in such important areas as migration, anti-trafficking, the protection of cultural property and cybersecurity. There was, however, scope for increasing co-operation on digitalization and innovative technologies. Ukraine continue to believe that the OSCE was the right platform for strengthening protection of the rights of internally displaced persons.

The representative of Portugal said that among the important challenges that could be tackled jointly were climate change, food security and large-scale migratory flows. Migration, in particular, called for the attention of all States, which should do their utmost to protect refugees. The health of the world's oceans and seas was a major concern for Portugal, which would be

hosting a High Level UN Conference on that topic in 2020, and the MCG could consider contributing to relevant efforts in the future. Youth, women and civil society should play a special role in the Mediterranean Partnership.

The representative of the Russian Federation mentioned how, during its 18th Autumn Meeting, held in Marrakech earlier in the month, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly had discussed issues of common interest and relevant work in the three dimensions of security. The 2018 Milan Ministerial Council Declaration had made it clear that transnational security challenges could be tackled only through co-ordinated efforts. The MCG's 25th anniversary was an opportunity to take stock of the high level of co-operation and dialogue achieved by the OSCE with its Mediterranean Partners. The OSCE should continue to share its expertise with the Mediterranean Partners with a view to promoting common values and encouraging them voluntarily to adopt OSCE principles and commitments. The Russian Federation for its part would continue to work closely with the Partners for Co-operation on countering transnational threats.

The representative of Germany said that changing the MCG's name to "Mediterranean Partnership Group" was a valid proposal. As far as regional co-operation and the sharing of best practices were concerned, counter-terrorism should be a priority. The OSCE should facilitate subregional co-operation on tackling VERLT together with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, but it was important also to address the symptoms and causes. The facilitation of dialogue and mediation between communities helped to strengthen the rule of law across the Mediterranean region. The problems faced by young people in the region should be a special focus of the MCG's work. Specific topics that would benefit from greater attention on the MCG's part were connectivity, migration, security and renewable energy. The recent launch, with the OSCE's support, of human rights-based policing initiatives involving Mediterranean Partners was also mentioned.

The representative of Armenia emphasized that the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 had acknowledged the need for strong relations with those Mediterranean countries that were not part of the Helsinki process, and that, after the adoption 2018 Milan Ministerial Council Declaration, those ties had become more pertinent than ever. However, counter terrorism should not serve as a pretext for political repression. Armenia was confident that the Mediterranean Conference would help to promote dialogue and strengthen relations with the Mediterranean Partners.

The representative of Cyprus observed that the Mediterranean region was a socially, economically and politically diverse space; it was, moreover, highly interconnected. Cyprus was proud of its unique vantage point on co-operation with the Mediterranean Partners. It was vital to reinvigorate the Mediterranean Partnership and harness the region's untapped potential. Co-operation should continue along the lines of the Milan Ministerial Council Declaration by addressing common threats and opportunities across the three dimensions of security. Gender equality, youth empowerment and energy co-operation were further topics worth exploring. Co-operation and dialogue with the Mediterranean Partners should be meaningful and balanced, and would benefit from additional contributions to the Partnership Fund by participating States.

The representative of Switzerland said that following up on the Milan Ministerial Council Declaration should be a key focus of the MCG's work, particularly with regard to migration, radicalization and connectivity. Given the important role played by young people in the

Mediterranean region, the OSCE should provide further support for the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security.

The representative of France said that the Mediterranean dimension was an important part of the OSCE's work, and France would further explore its future relationship with the region during a conference to be held in Marseilles in December. It was essential to recognize that migration could be an opportunity as well as a challenge. Not all problems could be solved by counter-terrorism initiatives. Youth, environmental protection and climate change were other equally important topics to which the MCG should devote its attention.

The representative of Azerbaijan argued that priority should be given to implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, in particular by tackling VERLT, discrimination, education deficits and hate speech, all of which could fuel violent terrorism. Azerbaijan had launched the Baku Process with a view to promoting dialogue between the Muslim world and Europe. There was tremendous scope for strengthening relations with the Mediterranean Partners through co-operation on sustainable development, economic growth and connectivity.

The representative of Bulgaria noted that further dialogue was necessary to promote connectivity, sustainable development and economic growth in the Mediterranean region. Bulgaria supported the proposal to change the MCG's name, as it would reflect the increasing weight of the Mediterranean Partnership in the OSCE's work.

The representative of Kazakhstan said that it supported proposals put forward by Italy and others on how to reform the Mediterranean Partnership. He noted that the Astana Commemorative Declaration of 2010 had highlighted the interdependence of security in the OSCE area and security in the Mediterranean region. In addition to sustainable development, economic development and migration, human rights should be a priority of the Mediterranean Partnership. Effective migration governance was crucial, as reflected in the Almaty Process on Refugee Protection and International Migration. The root causes of terrorism and uncontrolled migration were not only to be found along the southern shore of the Mediterranean but, rather, throughout the whole OSCE area. Kazakhstan was committed to the promotion of interreligious understanding through dialogue.

The representative of Greece said that trafficking in human beings was a major challenge that had to be tackled, but it was essential not to conflate migration with terrorism. In that respect, the role of youth – particularly vulnerable young people – had to be taken into account. Dialogue with civil society was important, as was co-operation between the private and public sectors.

The representative of Slovenia emphasized that common challenges had to be addressed by all States working together. Alongside the Milan Ministerial Council Declaration, Slovenia supported the Italian and Albanian proposals, including the proposals to convene a Permanent Council meeting or a joint meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation and the Permanent Council dedicated to the Mediterranean.

The representative of United Kingdom said that the recent proposals on promoting diversity, social inclusion and participation in the public sphere were to be fully welcomed.

The representative of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean observed how, after the accession of new members from the Gulf, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean



(PAM) was the only organization that, alongside the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, was in the position to tackle specific security issues affecting the Mediterranean region. The PAM was concerned about mass displacements of people in northern Syria and the fate of foreign fighters there who had fought for the terrorist group “Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant” (ISIL). The PAM played a key part in global counter-terrorism efforts, together with the UN and in line with relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

## 2.7                    2.3    **Session I: Joint efforts in countering terrorism and violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism – Good practices, challenges and the way forward**

*Report by Mr. Fejzo Numanaj, Deputy Head of the Action against Terrorism Unit, Transnational Threats Department, OSCE Secretariat*

Chairperson: Ambassador **Paul Bekkers**, Director of the Office of the Secretary General, OSCE Secretariat

Speakers:

**Mr. Agron Sojati**, National Coordinator for Countering Violent Extremism/Director of the Coordination Center for Countering Violent Extremism, Albania

**H.E. Ms. Assia Bensalah Alaoui**, Ambassador-at-Large for His Majesty the King of Morocco

**Mr. Günther Sablattnig**, Adviser to the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator

**Ambassador Vladimir Tarabrin**, Head of the Department for New Challenges and Threats, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Russian Federation

The Chairperson welcomed the participants and thanked Albania for hosting the conference. He gave a brief overview of the OSCE's efforts in preventing and countering VERLT, with a focus on border security and management, and on confidence- and resilience-building among State and non-State actors in the OSCE area (including the territory of the Partners for Co-operation). Ambassador Bekkers drew attention to the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs), which was currently affecting several participating States and needed to be tackled through joint efforts that were compliant with human rights and fundamental freedoms. He invited the participants to engage in substantive discussions during the session and asked the panellists to consider what the priorities for future work should be; what initiatives could be launched or stepped up to deal with specific issues, such as the threat posed by FTFs; and what tools should be activated in order to support an action-oriented dialogue.

Mr. Günther Sablattnig, Adviser to the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, said that ISIL and scattered Al-Qaida-affiliated groups continued to be a threat to Europe and the neighbourhood. Foreign terrorist fighters possessed combat experience and were well connected with global jihadi networks. Recent attempted jailbreaks by FTFs being held in Syrian territory were a cause for grave concern. An additional threat warranting particular attention was far-right and left-wing radicalization, along with home-grown terror, especially in view of the recent terrorist attacks in Halle, Germany, and Christchurch, New Zealand. Like the Salafis, white supremacists promoted a polarized worldview seeking the destruction of what was perceived as different. Mr. Sablattnig emphasized the importance of delinking migration and terrorism; nevertheless, strengthened border controls, inter-agency co-operation through the use of Interpol databases and preventive work in penal institutions should still remain priorities. Human rights-compliant programmes on preventing and countering violent extremism in the Western Balkans and the Middle East would continue to be supported by the EU. Since 2016 the EU had had a designated Commissioner responsible for issues related to violent extremism. Mainstreaming preventive work through inter-faith dialogue, youth initiatives and education would continue to be a primary focus for the EU.

Mr. Agron Sojati, National Coordinator for Countering Violent Extremism/Director of the Coordination Centre for Countering Violent Extremism, Albania, began by commending the work done by the OSCE both within the Secretariat – through its Action against Terrorism Unit

– and at the OSCE Presence in Albania to support his country in sustaining a multi-stakeholder dialogue at the national and regional level. In 2015, Albania had adopted a national strategy on countering violent extremism that addressed, inter alia, push and pull factors and focused on civil society's role in preventing violent extremism. Because of their small size, all countries in the Western Balkans were susceptible to transnational threats; therefore, close co-operation and co-ordination with partners and neighbours were of paramount importance. Around 150 Albanian citizens, including women and children, had travelled to and resided in ISIL-held territories over the past few years. South Eastern Europe was one of the regions with the highest per capita rate of citizens who had joined ISIL. More than 40 Albanian citizens had returned from territories previously held by ISIL and were currently enrolled in reintegration programmes. The Ministries of Education, Justice, Finance and the Interior were some of the frontline institutions in the implementation of the national strategy against violent extremism. Around 30,000 teachers alongside thousands of social workers, psychologists and police officers had been trained in the early detection of extremist views. Albania was following a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to preventing and countering VERT. The Coordination Center for Countering Violent Extremism had signed a memorandum of understanding with religious leaders to facilitate the exchange of best practices.

H.E. Ms. Assia Bensalah Alaoui, Ambassador-at-Large for His Majesty the King of Morocco, said that the surge of ISIL had encouraged extremist networks across the world. The devastating consequences of the so-called Arab Spring had altered the entire security landscape in a region with 34 million inhabitants. Morocco had succeeded in protecting itself thanks to a comprehensive security strategy that was able to adapt to evolving challenges. In view of its complexity, violent extremism should be addressed through multidimensional responses that focused on the nexus between economy, development and security within a framework of the rule of law and constitutional order. The promotion of moderate forms of Islam and of South-South cooperation was important to tackle the threat of extremism in Africa, notably in the Sahara region. The Moroccan security forces had undergone a full modernization of both their equipment and skills. Grass-roots efforts played a key role in detecting any early signs of radicalization that might threaten the social order within local communities. Since poor and illiterate young people could easily fall prey to terrorist recruiters, improving education was vital. The reforms undertaken by the Moroccan Government in relation to the training of imams through the League of *Ulamā* (“religious scholars”) had proven to be useful in terms of preserving and promoting a moderate form of Islam.

Ambassador Vladimir Tarabrin, Head of the Department for New Challenges and Threats at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, praised the OSCE's role in promoting dialogue among participating States and Partners for Co-operation on matters related to preventing and countering violent extremism. Nevertheless, since 2016 the participating States had not been able to agree on a Ministerial Council decision on that topic. Such fragmentation of the international community clearly played into the hands of extremists and terrorists. The FTF phenomenon was a global challenge requiring joint responses. Disguised as refugees, FTFs were exploiting humanitarian corridors to escape war zones and settle in Europe as refugees and asylum seekers. Strengthening border security and information exchange among law enforcement agencies via joint databases was crucial to prevent that, in line with UN Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). The response to the FTF phenomenon should be based on the “extradite or prosecute” principle rather than on the establishment of international tribunals – something that Ambassador Tarabrin viewed as counterproductive. The Russian Federation was keen to arrange for the repatriation of children from Syria in an operation to be conducted under

the auspices of the State Commissioner for Children's Rights. Around 90 minors had been repatriated from Iraq so far.

### **Interventions:**

The representative of Turkey gave a brief overview of the military operation "Peace Spring" recently launched by Turkey along the Syrian-Turkish border. Turkey's geographic position made the country a constant target for various terrorist groups and networks.

The representative of Armenia lamented that the various conflicts in the Middle East – the "Cradle of Civilization" – had drastically shrunk the size of Christian communities in the region. The representative of Jordan added that Muslims, too, had suffered equally from atrocities. The Armenian representative also deplored the ongoing military operation across the Syrian border.

The representative of Georgia commended the Mediterranean Partners for being willing to exchange views, and emphasized that international co-operation strengthened the global alliance against terrorism. However, focusing attention on conflicts in the Mediterranean region and the Middle East and North Africa should not lead the international community to neglect conflicts in the European space, including violations of Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The representative of Switzerland stressed the need for enhanced global partnerships to tackle the challenges arising from FTFs and all forms of terrorism.

The representative of Kazakhstan focused on efforts made by his Government to repatriate Kazakh citizens from Syria and Iraq. Since January 2019, around 600 citizens, mostly women and children, had been repatriated and sheltered in a rehabilitation centre on the coast of the Caspian Sea. Thirty-three men and 12 women had been taken into custody on suspicion of having been involved in terrorist activities in Syria and Iraq. An unspecified number of orphans had been handed over to their next of kin. Kazakhstan expressed its commitment to working closer with the UN and the OSCE.

The representative of Italy reiterated the importance of the media's role in addressing transnational threats and also referred to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's engagement in preventive efforts against violent extremism. Italy had contributed directly to the work of the OSCE Secretariat's Transnational Threats Department, specifically to the production of a handbook on the role of gender in preventing and countering VERLT and its translation into Arabic. He concluded by recalling a draft Ministerial Council decision on the return of FTFs that had been discussed during the Italian OSCE Chairmanship in 2018; that draft might still serve as the basis for future efforts.

The representative of Algeria emphasized that the root causes of radicalization were diverse. Civil society and the media were at the centre of his country's deradicalization programmes. Algeria took issue with some comments made by one of the panellists on the security situation in the Sahara.

Welcoming the OSCE's efforts to enhance dialogue among the Mediterranean countries, the representative of Egypt highlighted his country's efforts to strengthen international partnerships and promote a moderate form of Islam with the help of the Al-Azhar University in Cairo and various religious scholars.

The representative of the United States focused on the need for a holistic approach to tackling violent extremism. The US national strategy on countering violent extremism sought to diminish terrorists' ability to recruit and radicalize others and to commit acts of violence. She expressed her country's support for the OSCE's work on confidence-building measures in cybersecurity and called for the promotion of the rule of law and democratic institutions, along with full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, when dealing with transnational threats.

## 2.8                      2.4    **Session II: Promoting youth participation and engagement to enhance dialogue and co-operation in the Mediterranean**

*Report by Ms. Alberta Borg, Counsellor, Deputy Head of the Delegation of Malta to the OSCE Chairperson:*

**H.E. Ambassador Igli Hasani**, Permanent Representative of Albania to the International Organizations in Vienna

Speakers:

**H.E. Ms. Leena Al-Hadid**, Permanent Representative of Jordan to the OSCE

**Ms. Avital Leibovich**, Director of the American Jewish Committee in Jerusalem

**Ms. Alba Brojka**, Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Youth and Security

The Chairperson drew attention to the fact that some 60 per cent of people in the Mediterranean region were under the age of 30, which meant that the region was one of the youngest in the world. Three questions were raised to spur discussion: (a) how to confront the threat of radicalization by empowering young people to work for peace and tolerance? (b) how to empower young people to work towards a green economy? and (c) how to deal with growing disillusionment with democracy among young people in Mediterranean countries? The Chairperson pointed out that the session should aim to discuss how the OSCE could find solutions to those problems through its work in all three dimensions of security, and in line with the mandate given by the Milan Ministerial Council Declaration on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean.

H.E. Ms. Leena Al-Hadid, Permanent Representative of Jordan to the OSCE, noted that youth unemployment was rising and that the many crises in the region were having a spill-over effect on Jordan and its neighbours. However, more than 100,000 young people still graduated every year in Jordan; over half of them were women. In 2015, Jordan had hosted the Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security to raise awareness of the need for a policy framework to support young people in preventing and countering violence and transforming conflict into peace-building (as enshrined in the Amman Youth Declaration). In 2015, Jordan had also led UN Security Council efforts to secure the adoption of resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security, which had been the first Security Council resolution of its kind.

Educating young people to ensure that they had opportunities and could look forward to a stable economic future remained a priority for Jordan. In that sense, it was important to ensure that the millions of refugees residing in the country were also given an education, as that would have an effect on the region as a whole. Schools currently had to work using two or three shifts in order to cope with the large numbers of refugee children from Syria and other countries. H.E. Ms. Al-Hadid noted that frustration and despair fuelled VERT and needed, therefore, to be transformed into opportunity and engagement. That had to be achieved before radicals began tempting young people with “false hopes of glory”. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development were a good blueprint for such efforts, since employment, rule of law, crime prevention, criminal justice and sustainable development were all interlinked.

Her recommendations for future action included: (a) well-formulated and focused projects in which young people were encouraged to take a leading role; (b) making use of public-private partnerships and following a multi-stakeholder approach; (c) setting targets (based on SDGs 10 and 16); (d) mainstreaming interfaith dialogue; and (e) ensuring that no one was left behind.

Ms. Avital Leibovich, Director of the American Jewish Committee in Jerusalem, noted that one significant problem was the fact that young people from different countries in the region had few opportunities to meet and talk with one another. They tended to be fed views by the media that were not always accurate. Many of them had not studied properly their own and other countries' history and had limited knowledge of the current political situation.

Ms. Leibovich mentioned a number of international initiatives involving NGOs and governments (e.g., J'allah, Seeds of Peace, Model United Nations, Youth Invitation Programmes) that sought to bring young people together. Those initiatives did not necessarily have to be political, although political parties – especially their youth forums and young politicians – could serve as role models.

Education, social mobility programmes, information and communication technologies (ICTs) and social media campaigns were all promising tools that could bring young people together and foster friendship and collaboration. Young people all over the world shared much the same goals and concerns, and they were usually willing to work together for good causes.

Ms. Alba Brojka, Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Youth and Security, highlighted the Slovak Chairmanship's initiatives on youth across all three OSCE dimensions, and also similar initiatives in the OSCE field missions. Of particular note was the OSCE-wide Youth Forum to be held in Bratislava a few days later. Existing partnerships such as the one between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation should be strengthened, as emphasized in relevant Minister Council declarations from 2003 and 2007.

In view of the large numbers of young people across the Mediterranean region, working directly with them legitimized the democratic institutions of countries and helped to strengthen institutional accountability. Young people had to be involved in policy- and decision making; it was not sufficient just to ask them to vote. "Policy panic" was resulting in young people being categorized and stereotyped, reducing their trust in government and depriving them of opportunities to express their opinions. Young people should be seen as "agents of change" in peace processes, and needed to be given ownership of those processes and allowed to participate in them in a meaningful way. Peace must be brought about "horizontally" – between the heterogeneous groups of youth (women, minorities, vulnerable groups) – and "vertically" – from young people to the government.

The Mediterranean was experiencing significant climate change, which was multiplying threats, increasing tensions, revealing inequalities and undermining human rights – the impact on young people in particular was devastating. Young people could come up with sustainable solutions to climate change, which should be encouraged by the provision of support for youth entrepreneurship.

In closing, Ms Brojka argued that it was important to have platforms for dialogue such as the OSCE which facilitated truly inclusive discussions among a broad network of governmental and non-governmental entities.

Interventions:

The representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina recommended the development of programmes to raise awareness of VERLT (e.g., Leaders Against Intolerance and Violent Extremism), the creation of early warning mechanisms and region-specific tools and initiatives (e.g., the Regional Youth Cooperation Office in the Western Balkans). It was also important to offer counter-narratives, especially through social media. Since young people were greatly influenced by their peers, a Mediterranean peer network should be established to show young people that their energy could be harnessed in non-violent ways in order to bring about desired changes.

The Foreign Minister of Malta considered young people to be a positive force who deserved to be better appreciated. Governments and societies must not only advocate but also facilitate the participation of young people in political processes. Young people were not so much the “leaders of tomorrow” as “partners of the present”. The representative highlighted some of Malta’s initiatives to give young people an opportunity to engage with their respective leaders (e.g., “5+5 Dialogue” breakfast sessions with young people). If young people were given the opportunity to pursue a positive personal agenda in society, education and employment, then they would naturally prefer and strive for a peaceful future.

The representative of Egypt acknowledged that young people were key to social and political development and a catalyst for prosperity and security. Because of demographic change, young people could be a double-edged sword if governments failed to invest in their health, education and well-being. Young people had to be equipped with the necessary skills to be able to enter a challenging and often saturated labour market. Collaboration with the private sector and civil society was key to strengthening capacity and building the skills of young people. Some important initiatives supported by the Egyptian Government included the 2019 World Youth Forum, which would be held in Sharm El-Sheikh in December. The topics discussed at such forums included combating terrorism, water security, global peace security, sustainable energy, climate change and the empowerment of women.

The representative of Switzerland pointed out that young people knew that they had the potential and capacity to bring about change. The huge impact of the “Fridays for Future” movement on efforts to combat climate change was a case in point. The Middle East Mediterranean Summer Summit 2019 held in Lugano, Switzerland, in August had provided a further opportunity for young people from the Middle East to share their ideas with the Foreign Ministers of Switzerland and Malta. Some of the Summit participants had been invited to take part in a side event to be held on the margins of the Mediterranean Conference the next day.

The representative of Italy noted a growing momentum in the implementation of the OSCE’s agenda on youth and security, which had culminated in the Milan Ministerial Council Declaration on the Role of Youth in Contributing to Peace and Security Efforts (MC.DOC/3/18). It was up to the 57 participating States to follow up on that commitment. During its OSCE Chairmanship in 2018, Italy had tried to shift the narrative away from one of youth stigmatization to one of youth involvement, emphasizing how young people actively contributed to day to day activities in their local communities. The GEMS (“Green Entrepreneurs in the Mediterranean”) Award – funded through an OSCE extrabudgetary project – had recognized the efforts of young entrepreneurs starting up “green” businesses (four out of the six winners had been young women). Italy appealed for additional funds to be provided by participating States so that the GEMS Award could continue to be organized. The European University Institute in Florence would host an ODIHR training course for young civil servants from the Mediterranean Partner States.



The representative of Algeria noted that there was ample evidence of the importance of investing in future generations, beyond formal education, and of tackling unemployment. That was a priority for the Algerian Government and, accordingly, was reflected in the national budget. Young people should be given the opportunity to contribute to development and socio-economic change in the Mediterranean region as a whole. It was increasingly important to shift the emphasis of intercultural education on to combating VERLT, racism and xenophobic and Islamophobic speech. Migration should not be equated with a deterioration of security; rather, it could be a positive force. Illegal migration, on the other hand, did undermine the security of young people.

The representative of France noted how the OSCE was not operating in isolation but, rather, within a universal framework. An important principle to remember even when working with young people was the equality of men and women. The French representative referred to valuable initiatives such as the Regional Youth Cooperation Office in the Western Balkans and the Memory Lab project. All young people deserved to be heard.

The representative of Slovenia noted that young people were a susceptible group in society and needed to have genuine opportunities for becoming actively involved in politics. As in the case of gender mainstreaming, it was vital not to ignore youth, since one could not “win a match with only half a team”. The Slovenian representative recommended that young people be invited to meetings of the OSCE decision-making bodies to help prepare and negotiate draft decisions. A number of initiatives were highlighted, including co-operation with the Union for the Mediterranean and the Euro Mediterranean University in Piran, Slovenia.

The representative of Spain drew attention to the Chairmanship of the OSCE Group of Friends on Youth and Security, which aimed to identify best practices in support of youth policies. Spain actively backed efforts to implement commitments laid down in the various Ministerial Council decisions on youth and also the Málaga Decalogue of recommendations adopted at the 2017 OSCE Youth Conference held in Málaga.

The representative of Finland stated that it was important to involve young people in peace processes and conflict prevention and mediation. Finland was the first country drawing up an action plan to implement UN Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security, and it was willing to share its experience and lessons learned once the action plan had been officially launched. Young people were a positive force and they needed to be heard even if their message happened to be uncomfortable for some.

The representative of the European Union pointed out that the Mediterranean region would need to create over 94 million new jobs over the next decade in order to avoid unemployment, which would otherwise lead to instability and vulnerability. The representative also mentioned some of the EU’s initiatives, such as Erasmus+ and Young Mediterranean Voices (supported by the Anna Lindh Foundation), aimed at creating spaces for young people to debate matters of interest to them. UN Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) was in line with the EU Global Strategy, which also recognized that young people could make a positive contribution to the SDGs. The new EU Youth Strategy for 2019–2027 fostered social and civic engagement in the EU and beyond, ensuring that sufficient resources were available for young people.

The representative of Armenia noted that young people were at risk of being radicalized and becoming a threat to security if due attention was not paid to their needs. Radicalization was especially common in countries where hate speech and intolerance went unpunished, where there was widespread idolization of, and impunity for, hate crimes, and where the perpetrators

of identity-based crimes were officially glorified. The Syrian conflict had taken a toll on the Armenian community, and various young people from different ethnic and religious groups had become victims to the violence there. Interfaith dialogue was essential to promote trust, confidence and reconciliation. The Armenian representative recalled the high level of participation of young people in the country's "Velvet Revolution" of 2018. The Armenian Government was determined to ensure that young people's aspirations were always respected.

The representative of Slovakia observed that the Milan Ministerial Council Declaration on the Role of Youth in Contributing to Peace and Security Efforts constituted an important point of reference for the Mediterranean Partners. Engaging youth was a cornerstone of the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship's approach. Slovakia saw young people as "builders of bridges" and promoters of peace and security; their perspectives needed always to be taken into account when discussing challenges in the OSCE area. Some notable developments were highlighted, such as the "Perspectives 20–30" initiative and the OSCE-wide Youth Forum to be held in Bratislava in a few days' time. Working with and for youth was in the best interest of OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation alike.

The representative of North Macedonia recommended that the opportunities provided to young people for political engagement should be practical and empowering, rather than merely legalistic and theoretical. The Government of North Macedonia helped young entrepreneurs through start up programmes to ensure that they had opportunities in the present and not just for the future.

The representative of the ODIHR referred to the 11th Young Policy Advisers Course for OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation to be held in Florence in November. After completing the course, a fresh cohort of 12 civil servants from the Mediterranean region would join the peer network of 300 alumni who since 2009 had been trained in the promotion of democratic values.

## 2.5 **Session III: Building bridges between the two shores of the Mediterranean – The role of connectivity, digitalization, sustainable development and economic growth in advancing common security in the Mediterranean**

*Report by Ms. Giulia Manconi, Associate Energy Security Officer, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, OSCE Secretariat*

Chairperson: **Ambassador Vuk Žugić**, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Speakers:

**Hon. Margareta Cederfelt**, Vice-President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

**Mr. Nor-Eddine Benfreha**, Deputy Director for the Partnership with the European Union and for Regional Security at the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Mr. Ettore Greco**, Executive Vice President of the International Affairs Institute in Rome

**Mr. Dan Catarivas**, Director of the Division of Foreign Trade and International Relations at the Manufacturers' Association of Israel; Chairman of the Israel-EU Chamber of Commerce and Industry

The Chairperson welcomed the distinguished speakers and gave a brief overview of the OSCE's efforts to improve economic and environmental co-operation between the OSCE participating States and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. In that connection, Ambassador Žugić recalled the Milan Ministerial Council Declaration on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean, which had called for greater collaboration between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation in areas of common interest and concern, including energy security and environmental challenges. The OSCE was currently implementing a joint project with the Union for the Mediterranean on "Prevention of climate and environment security threats in the Mediterranean", and would soon launch a new online training course on the protection of critical energy networks against natural and man-made disasters.

Hon. Margareta Cederfelt, Vice-President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, focused her intervention on the role of new and exponential technologies in facilitating progress towards the SDGs, with a particular emphasis on SDG 5 on gender equality. Digitalization provided new opportunities for the economic empowerment of women and could contribute to greater gender equality. Nevertheless, more had to be done to bridge the digital gender divide and make sure that women were fully empowered and represented also in the digital realm. In that regard, Ms. Cederfelt noted that professional development and mentoring support programmes for female students in the ICT field and in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) were key to closing digital divides and promoting the empowerment of women in society and in the labour market. She continued by mentioning some of the measures introduced by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to foster gender equality, including the provision of statistical analysis and reports on women's participation in the economy and in the ICT sector. By pursuing such objectives it would also be possible to strengthen security and stability in the Mediterranean region.

Mr. Nor-Eddine Benfreha, Deputy Director for the Partnership with the European Union and for Regional Security at the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, focused on the role of connectivity and digitalization in promoting sustainable development, economic growth and security in the Mediterranean. Connectivity had economic, social, political and environmental

benefits; it could catalyse the modernization of private and public life and pave the way to job creation, innovation and competitiveness. Within the framework of regional co-operation between the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, digitalization could be seen as a confidence-building measure, since it helped to disseminate information and reduce mistrust. At the same time, the digitalization of society exposed countries to cyberattacks, which undermined confidence and trust. In order to tackle the security risks posed by digitalization, there was an urgent need to strengthen co-operation and agree on common regulations in the Mediterranean region, also with a view to making financial transactions more secure and improving data storage systems. The OSCE could help the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation to build their capacity in the area of digital security and to amalgamate the existing fragmented national efforts into a unique regional co-operation initiative. Such co-operation should focus on areas of common interest, including anti-money laundering, combating the financing of terrorism and promoting cybersecurity.

Mr. Ettore Greco, Executive Vice President of the International Affairs Institute (IAI) in Rome, began by observing that there was a clear complementarity of economic trends and interests between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean, which could serve as the basis for “win-win” regional co-operation. Nevertheless, the potential for such co-operation had not yet been fully exploited; nor did the existing co-operation benefit all parties equally. Economic relations between the two shores of the Mediterranean continued to rely heavily on trade liberalization, which applied mainly to industrial products but excluded agriculture – a sector in which the southern countries had a comparative advantage. A number of bottlenecks needed to be removed in order to enhance Euro-Mediterranean relations. A new co-operation framework should be put in place by the EU and structural reforms adopted by the Mediterranean countries to deal with the lack of adequate standards and regulations, with aged physical infrastructures and an unfavourable business environment. Along with trade, energy was widely seen as a key sector for increased Euro-Mediterranean co-operation. Nevertheless, even in that sector there continued to be many governance-related challenges, and institutional support for the energy transition was still limited and fragmented along national lines. Mr. Greco pointed out that the energy sector was characterized by many of the opportunities and challenges associated with digitalization. On the one hand, new technologies could lead to a smoother integration of renewables into the energy grid, but on the other hand, digitalization gave rise to new security challenges, especially with regard to the protection of critical energy infrastructure against cyberattacks. The OSCE could serve as a valuable forum for discussing all those challenges, for facilitating the exchange of best practices and identifying new forms of co-operation.

Mr. Dan Catarivas, Director of the Division of Foreign Trade and International Relations at the Manufacturers’ Association of Israel and Chairman of the Israel-EU Chamber of Commerce and Industry, began by noting that one of the main obstacles to economic co-operation was the uncertainty generated by the ongoing trade war, which was bad for business because it affected employment, social stability and security. It would not be possible to increase connectivity without first concluding a Euro Mediterranean free trade agreement. The private sector would have a major role to play in the promotion of connectivity, but the business climate in the Mediterranean region was not yet sufficiently favourable for that to happen. Mr. Catarivas also highlighted the potential of the digital transformation in terms of alleviating poverty and empowering young people in the Southern Mediterranean region. There should, accordingly, be greater investment in education and enabling infrastructures. At the same time, he warned the audience about the risks associated with the digital transformation of society, pointing out

that the socio-economic divide between the two shores of the Mediterranean was not narrowing. There was a risk of that divide being reflected in the digital realm, too.

#### Interventions:

The representative of Cyprus stated that his country was fully aware of the Mediterranean region's great potential in terms of connectivity, digitalization and economic growth. Cyprus was working hard to strengthen collaboration with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation in order to promote a successful model for fostering regional synergies and, thereby, increasing prosperity, stability and peace. The representative mentioned several projects that had been conducted by Cyprus in the areas of energy and environmental sustainability, including projects on combating climate change and tackling overreliance on fossil fuels.

The representative of the Russian Federation said that his country attached great importance to working together with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. Referring to the Milan Ministerial Council Declaration on the Digital Economy as a Driver for Promoting Co-operation, Security and Growth (MC.DOC/2/18), he explained that the development of the digital economy in the Russian Federation was being supported at the highest level. A new national programme on the digital economy had been launched to help improve the quality of life and establish a more favourable business climate. It was important to prepare society for the widespread use of innovative technologies in people's daily lives. The digital economy could make a significant contribution towards the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which could count on his country's full support. The Russian Federation was interested in continuing regular dialogue and practical co-operation with the Mediterranean Partners.

The representative of the European Union said that the EU believed in the role of economic connectivity as an enabler of peace and security. The EU followed a rules based, sustainable, inclusive and transparent approach to connectivity that was based on standards and regulations of the highest quality. The EU had six Association Agreements in place with the OSCE Partners for Co-operation; those had already helped to foster regional trade and connectivity. The construction of resilient infrastructures would be fundamental to improving the economic environment in the Mediterranean region. Water scarcity and climate change were two of the most urgent issues that the EU was currently working on together with the Mediterranean Partners.

The representative of Jordan underlined the importance of closing the digital gender gap by promoting women's participation in the economy and digital literacy. Jordan was seeking to empower women with the help of the Internet and was working hard to achieve SDG 4 (on quality education) and SDG 5 (on gender equality), in particular by encouraging girls and women to study ICT-related subjects at school and university. Promoting technology transfer and capacity-building in the fields of ICT and digitalization would be crucial in increasing connectivity and stability throughout the Mediterranean region.

The representative of Spain said that, in view of the large proportion of young people in the Mediterranean region, more should be done to empower them and, specifically, to tackle unemployment by investing in human capital development and digital literacy. The OSCE could serve as a valuable platform for the exchange of best practices in that area, too.

## 2.6 Concluding remarks

*Report by Mr. Philippe Tremblay, Head of the External Co-operation Section, Office of the Secretary General, OSCE Secretariat*

Moderator: **Mr. Philippe Tremblay**, Head of the External Co-operation Section, Office of the Secretary General, OSCE Secretariat

Speakers:

**H.E. Mr. Gent Cakaj**, Acting Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania

**H.E. Mr. Thomas Greminger**, OSCE Secretary General

H.E. Mr. Thomas Greminger, Secretary General of the OSCE, noted that the Mediterranean Conference had established itself as a key forum for dialogue on Mediterranean issues. It was a unique platform for action-oriented discussions among countries from the Mediterranean region and from across the three continents represented in the OSCE. The expectations and preferences of the MCG would have to remain at the centre of those discussions, because the Mediterranean Partners had a key role to play in determining the future pace and areas of co-operation.

Secretary General Greminger pointed out that he had advocated the adoption of a more strategic approach to the OSCE's Mediterranean Partnership. Having recognized the growing relevance of the link between the OSCE and Mediterranean security in Milan, it was now time to transform that awareness into concrete action. In that respect, he suggested a number of possible steps, including the use of "informal spaces" at the OSCE Ministerial Council meetings for discussions with the foreign ministers of the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation; and strengthening the Partnership Fund through multi-year allocations, which would increase its flexibility and ability to support practical co-operation projects.

The idea of sharing the Chairmanship of the MCG between a participating State and a Mediterranean Partner for Co-operation was excellent, as it could help to create a real sense of co-ownership and co-responsibility for the Mediterranean Partnership. Moreover, changing the name of the MCG to "Mediterranean Partnership Group" would better reflect the existing dialogue and co-operation between participating States and the Mediterranean Partners. He encouraged participating States to consider adopting similar ideas for the further enhancement of the OSCE's Asian Partnership.

Steps to strengthen the Mediterranean dimension of the OSCE could be taken by the Organization's executive structures within their existing mandates. The Secretariat could complement its annual reports on the Partnership Fund with additional information and a broader analysis of the OSCE's evolving engagement with the Mediterranean across its executive structures. However, mainstreaming Mediterranean issues ultimately depended on the participating States' willingness to keep the Mediterranean high on the OSCE's agenda. As long as there was no separate "Mediterranean programme" in the Unified Budget, activities involving the Mediterranean Partners would remain limited to a small number of extra-budgetary projects.

Lastly, Secretary General Greminger reflected on the specific niche occupied by the OSCE in a fairly crowded field of international organizations and institutions promoting Mediterranean co-operation. It was essential to strengthen the OSCE's engagement with relevant counterparts – including the Union for the Mediterranean, which was a key OSCE partner – in order to avoid duplication of efforts and maximize synergies. Moreover, it was necessary to communicate more effectively the added value that the OSCE was able to bring to “track II diplomacy” initiatives dealing with the Mediterranean, starting with the OSCE New-Med Track II Network.

H.E. Mr. Gent Cakaj, Acting Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania, thanked the OSCE participating States and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation for taking part in, and actively contributing to, the 2019 OSCE Mediterranean Conference, which was the crowning event in Albania's Chairmanship of the MCG. Co-operation with the MCG was a two-way street and the input provided by the Mediterranean Partners in particular was essential to advancing the common agenda. He also thanked the OSCE Secretariat for the excellent co-operation throughout the year and, specifically, for the support it had provided to Albania in connection with the preparations for the Mediterranean Conference.

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the MCG, Albania had undertaken considerable efforts to make full use of that unique platform and advance dialogue and co-operation between the OSCE participating States and the Mediterranean Partners. In that respect, he recalled the substantial work programme that had been drawn up at the beginning of the year, which was distinguished by a high level of continuity with the efforts of previous MCG Chairmanships. He also recalled the ambassadorial retreat organized jointly with Malta in June to commemorate over two decades of successful co-operation and to reflect on ways of further strengthening the invaluable Mediterranean Partnership. The agenda of the 2019 OSCE Mediterranean Conference in Tirana had featured issues of common concern for the OSCE participating States and the Mediterranean Partners alike, such as combating terrorism and violent extremism, but also opportunities for enhanced engagement in areas of mutual interest, including youth, energy, connectivity and digitalization.

As takeaways from the Conference, H.E. Mr. Cakaj mentioned the renewed confirmation of the inextricable link between security in Europe and in the Mediterranean region as a whole. That link was more relevant than ever, as recognized by the foreign ministers of the OSCE participating States in the 2018 Milan Ministerial Council Declaration on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean. In that respect, he emphasized the importance of engaging in meaningful political dialogue on Mediterranean issues in Vienna. Careful consideration should be given to a number of proposals that had been floated for quite some time, such as inviting the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation to co-chair the OSCE Mediterranean Contact Group, renaming the MCG to “Mediterranean Partnership Group” and ensuring high-level political participation by the Mediterranean Partners in the OSCE Ministerial Council meetings (which could, *inter alia*, be achieved by making full use of the opportunities for informal dialogue offered by the Ministerial Council meetings).

With regard to the Partnership Fund, H.E. Mr. Cakaj noted that achieving priorities was not possible unless adequate extra-budgetary resources were made available by participating States. The Partnership Fund would greatly benefit from the diversification of its donor base, which would allow for greater predictability of resources, and from finding creative ways of overcoming the restrictions on activities implemented in the territory of the Mediterranean Partners.

### 3 List of Participants

State / Organization	Gender	First Name	Family Name	Title/Position/Rank
<b>Participating States</b>				
ALBANIA	Mr	Gent	Cakaj	Acting H.E. Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania
ALBANIA	Mr	Igli	Hasani	Ambassador, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania to the International Organizations in Vienna
ALBANIA	Mr	Edi	Rama	H.E. Prime Minister of Republic of Albania, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Albania
ALBANIA	Ms	Anila	Ajvazi	Desk Officer, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Ms	Almona	Bajramaj	Desk Officer, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Mr	Sokol	Beja	Head of Unit for Protocol & Communication, Task-Force Albanian Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Mr	Etrit	Bekteshi	Head of Unit for Economic and Environmental Dimension, Task Force
ALBANIA	Mr	Genti	Bendo	Head of Unit for Politico-military Dimension, Task Force
ALBANIA	Ms	Valenina	Bizhga	Chief of Cabinet of the Prime Minister, Prime Minister Office
ALBANIA	Ms	Elona	Boci	Liaison Officer, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Ms	Fiona	Demneri	Advisor to the Minister for Media, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Republic of Albania
ALBANIA	Ms	Blerta	Derhemi	Head of Unit for Human Dimension, Task Force
ALBANIA	Ms	Francesk	Fusha	Desk-officer of Politico-military Unit, Task Force
ALBANIA	Ms	Entela	Gjika	Director, Director of State Protocol/ Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Republic of Albania
ALBANIA	Mr	Simone	Guerrini	Principal Adviser, Permanent Mission of Albania to the OSCE
ALBANIA	Ms	Jonlinda	Hada	Desk-officer, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Ms	Mimoza	Halimi	Director General, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Republic of Albania
ALBANIA	Mr	Ervin	Hodo	Major, Ministry of Defense In Albania
ALBANIA	Ms	Ines	Hoxha	Desk -officer of Protocol & Communication, Task Force
ALBANIA	Ms	Mira	Hoxha	Director of Economic and Public Diplomacy, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Republic of Albania



State / Organization	Gender	First Name	Family Name	Title/Position/Rank
ALBANIA	Ms	Miranda	Hoxha	Desk -Officer, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Ms	Romina	Hyseni	Desk-officer, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Mr	Gezim	Hysi	Desk Officer, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Ms	Christine	Jaenicke	Senior Adviser, Task Force
ALBANIA	Ms	Migena	Jaku	Photographer of the A/MFEA
ALBANIA	Ms	Petrika	Jorgji	Coordinator, Task-Force/Albanian Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Ms	Xhona	Jupe	Desk-officer, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Ms	Viola	Kaloshi	First Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania to the International Organizations in Vienna
ALBANIA	Mr	Dastid	Koreshi	Chief of Cabinet, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Republic of Albania
ALBANIA	Mr	Ardit	Kurti	Desk-officer, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Mr	Shkëlzen	Macukulli	Desk Officer, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Mr	Alban	Malia	Desk-officer, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Mr	Serxho	Matraku	Desk Officer, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Ms	Besjana	Mehmeti	Desk-officer of Protocol & Communication, Task Force
ALBANIA	Ms	Inid	Milo	Head of Task Force of the 2020 Albanian OSCE Chairmanship, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Republic of Albania
ALBANIA	Mr	Elidian	Muça	Major, Ministry of Defense in Albania
ALBANIA	Mr	Enxhi	Sadaj	Desk Officer, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Ms	Blerina	Serjani	Desk Officer, Department of Osce and International Organization
ALBANIA	Ms	Ermira	Shahini	Desk Officer for Supporting Service, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Mr	Erenik	Shllaku	Desk-officer, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Mr	Armand	Skapi	General Secretary, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Republic of Albania
ALBANIA	Mr	Agron	Sojati	National Coordinator / Director, Coordination Center for Countering Violent Extremism
ALBANIA	Ms	Ebi	Spahiu	Security and Stability Officer, Security & Stability
ALBANIA	Mr	Altin	Tafa	Driver, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Ms	Adela	Xhafa	Assistant to Head of Task Force, Task Force

State / Organization	Gender	First Name	Family Name	Title/Position/Rank
ALBANIA	Mr	Etjen	Xhafaj	Deputy Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
ALBANIA	Mr	Sokol	Xhoka	Director, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Republic of Albania
ALBANIA	Mr	Besian	Zogaj	Political Advisor to the Minister, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Republic of Albania
AUSTRIA	Mr	Florian	Raunig	Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Head of Department for OSCE, Council of Europe and Inter-parliamentary Union
AZERBAIJAN	Ms	Narmin	Ahangari	Second Secretary
BELARUS	Mr	Oleg	Kravchenko	Deputy Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus
BELARUS	Mr	Oleg	Anisimov	Counsellor
BELARUS	Mr	Maksim	Sapsai	First Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus
BELGIUM	Mr	Paul	Huynen	Ambassador, Permanent Representation of Belgium to the OSCE
BULGARIA	Mr	Momtchil	Raytchevski	Ambassador, Embassy of Bulgaria In Tirana, Albania
BULGARIA	Ms	Maria	Peeva	Attache, Embassy of Bulgaria In Tirana, Albania
CROATIA	Mr	Zlatko	Kramaric	Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs
CROATIA	Ms	Ljiljana	Basic	First Secretary, Deputy of Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs
CZECH REPUBLIC	Mr	Pavel	Vacek	Ambassador, Department Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
CZECH REPUBLIC	Mr	H.E. Mr. Jaroslav	Ludva	Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Embassy of the Czech Republic In Tirana
CZECH REPUBLIC	Mr	Jaroslav	Ludva	Ambassador, Embassy of the Czech Republic In Tirana
CZECH REPUBLIC	Mr	Svatopluk	Opela	Minister-Counsellor, Embassy of the Czech Republic In Tirana
CZECH REPUBLIC	Ms	Najada	Skuka	Advisor to Ambassador, Embassy of the Czech Republic In Tirana
FINLAND	Ms	Päivi	Laivola de Rosière	Ambassador, Permanent Delegation of Finland to the OSCE
EUROPEAN UNION	Mr	Ioannis	Vrailas	EU Permanent Representative, EU Delegation to the International Organizations in Vienna
EUROPEAN UNION	Ms	Aikaterini	Mitrara	EU Delegation to the International Organizations In Vienna
GEORGIA	Mr	Lasha	Darsalia	Deputy Minister, Deputy Minister
GEORGIA	Mr	David	Dondua	Ambassador, Permanent Representation of Georgia to the OSCE

State / Organization	Gender	First Name	Family Name	Title/Position/Rank
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GERMANY	Ms	Susanne	Schütz	Ambassador, Federal Foreign Office
GERMANY	Ms	Petra	Dachtler	Head of Department, OSCE and Council of Europe
GERMANY	Ms	Eleni	Roumpou	Foreign Language Assistant, OSCE and Council of Europe
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HUNGARY	Mr	Karoly	Dan	Ambassador
ICELAND	Mr	Gudni	Bragason	Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Iceland
ITALY	Mrs.	Marina	Sereni	Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
ITALY	Mr	Alessandro	Azzoni	Ambassador, Permanent Delegation of the OSCE
ITALY	Mr	Giuseppe	Cavagna	Minister Plenipotentiary, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
ITALY	Mr	Marco	Lapadura	Counsellor, Permanent Delegation of the OSCE
ITALY	Mr	Vinicio	Mati	Minister Plenipotentiary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
ITALY	Ms	Alessandra	Scalia	Advisor, Permanent Delegation of the OSCE
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LUXEMBOURG	Mr	Christian	Steinbach	Attache, Directorate for Political Affairs
MALTA	Mr	Carmelo	Abela	Minister for Foreign Affairs
MALTA	Ms	Natasha	Meli Daudey	Ambassador, MFTP
MALTA	Ms	Alberta	Borg	Counsellor, MFTP
MALTA	Ms	Dorina	Gabriele	2nd Sec, MFTP
MALTA	Ms	Gratiana	Leyland	Assistant, MFTP
MONACO	Mr	Lorenzo	Ravano	Minister-counsellor, Permanent Mission
MONTENEGRO	Ms	Suzana	Pribilovic	Minister of Public Administration, Ministry of Public Administration
MONTENEGRO	Mr	Dušan	Polovic	Director General, Ministry of Public Administration

State / Organization	Gender	First Name	Family Name	Title/Position/Rank
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MONTENEGRO	Ms	Milena	Šofranac-Ljubojevic	Director of the Directorate for OSCE and Council of Europe, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NETHERLANDS	Mr	Arne	Brandsma	Political Adviser, Permanent Representation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the OSCE
NORWAY	Mr	Rune	Castberg	Senior Adviser, Incoming Albanian 2020 OSCE Chairmanship/CIO
PORTUGAL	Mr	Jorge	Lobo De Mesquita	Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Representation of Portugal to the OSCE
ROMANIA	Mr	Mircea	Perpelea	Ambassador, Embassy of Romania in Tirana
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	Mr	Vladimir	Tarabrin	Director, Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	Mr	Mikhail	Kokorev	Senior Counsellor, MFA of Russia
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	Mr	Ivan	Artiukh	Second Secretary, Permanent Mission
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	Mr	Gleb	Myasoyedov	Attaché, Department on New Challenges and Threats
SLOVAKIA	Mr	Lukas	Parizek	State Secretary and Special Representative for the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship
SLOVAKIA	Mr	Milan	CIGANIK	Ambassador, Directorate General, Slovak OSCE Chairmanship
SLOVAKIA	Mr	Martin	Koncal	Minister - Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Slovakia to the OSCE
SLOVAKIA	Mr	Henrich	Privitzer	Advisor, Office of the State Secretary
SLOVENIA	Mrs	Barbara	Žvokelj	Ambassador - Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the OSCE
SPAIN	Mr	Marcos	Gomez Martinez	Director General, Ministerio De Asuntos Exteriores, Union Europea Y Cooperacion
SPAIN	Mr	Luis	Cuesta	Ambassador, Permanent Representation of Spain to the OSCE
SPAIN	Ms	Eva	Mendoza Giraldo	Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Kingdom of Spain
SWEDEN	Mr	Elsa	Håstad	Ambassador, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
SWEDEN	Mr	Michael	Nordenberg	Political Adviser, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
SWITZERLAND	Mr	Wolfgang Amadeus	Brühlhart	Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Head of Delegation, MFA
SWITZERLAND	Mr	Adrian	Maître	Ambassador, Swiss Ambassador to the Republic of Albania
SWITZERLAND	Ms	Erisa	Lame	Programme Officer, Embassy of Switzerland to the Republic of Albania

State / Organization	Gender	First Name	Family Name	Title/Position/Rank
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SWITZERLAND	Mr	Tedi	Beni	System Administrator, Security Officer, Embassy of Switzerland to the Republic of Albania
TURKEY	Mr	Murat Ahmet	Yörük	Ambassador, Turkish Embassy in Tirana
TURKEY	Ms	Ilayda	Bakirci Kayar	Third Secretary, Turkish Embassy in Tirana
UKRAINE	Mr	Yevhenii	Tsymbaliuk	Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Ukraine
UNITED KINGDOM	Mr	Neil	Bush	Ambassador, Foreign & Commonwealth Office
<b>Partners for Co-operation</b>				
ALGERIA	Mr	Rachid	Bladhane	Deputy Minister, Secretary General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
ALGERIA	Mr	Mokhtar	Naoun	Alternate Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Algeria to the OSCE
EGYPT	Mr	Omar Amer	Youssef	Ambassador/Permanent Representative
EGYPT	Ms	Enas	Kandel	Embassy of Egypt in Tirana
ISRAEL	Mr	Noah	Gal Gendler	Ambassador
ISRAEL	Ms	Liora	Peleg	Deputy Head of Mission , Embassy of Israel in Albania, Deputy Head of Mission
ISRAEL	Ms	Jonida	Doci	PA to the Ambassador, Secretary Department
JORDAN	Ms	Leena	Al-Hadid	Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Vienna
JORDAN	Mr	Nawras	Jankhout	Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
MOROCCO	Ms	Assia	Bensalah	Ambassadeur Itinérante
MOROCCO	Mr	Azzeddine	FARHANE	Ambassador
TUNISIA	Mr	Ali	Cherif	Director, Ministry of Interior
<b>Guests of the Home Country</b>				
TURKPA	Mr	Fuad	Alakbarov	Deputy Secretary General
TURKPA	Mr	Altynbek	Mamaiusupov	Secretary General
TURKPA	Mr	Azar	Mammadov	Specialist
<b>Business</b>				
Eco-heat	Mr	Othmane	Benhlime	Co-founder & CEO, CleanTech
Manufacturer's Association of Israel	Mr	Dan	Catarivas	Director General, Foreign Trade & International , Relations

State / Organization	Gender	First Name	Family Name	Title/Position/Rank
<b>Academics</b>				
Istituto Affari Internazionali	Mr	Ettore	Greco	Executive Vicepresident, Multilateralism and Global Governance
Universita svizzera di Lugano	Ms	Federica	Frediani	Researcher - Faculty of Communication Sciences- Project MEM Lugano
University of Lugano	Mr	Wassim	Ghozlani	Speaker of the Side Event
University of Lugano	Mr	Ali	Khair	Speaker at the Side Event
<b>OSCE</b>				
OSCE Secretariat	Mr	Thomas	Greminger	Secretary General
OSCE Secretariat		Vuk	Žugić	Ambassador, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities
OSCE Secretariat	Mr	Paul	Bekkers	Director, Office of the Secretary General
OSCE Secretariat	Mr	Philippe	Tremblay	Head of the External Co-operation Section, Office of the Secretary General
OSCE Secretariat	Mr	Fejzo	Numanaj	Deputy Head of the Action against Terrorism Unit, Transnational Threats Department
OSCE Secretariat	Mr	Emiliano	Alessandri	Senior External Co-operation Officer, Office of the Secretary General
OSCE Secretariat	Mr	Xhodi	Sakiqi	External Co-operation Officer, Office of the Secretary General
OSCE Secretariat	Ms	Teresa	Albano	Economic Affairs Officer, OCEEA
OSCE Secretariat	Ms	Mersiha	Causevic Podzic	Media Outreach Officer, Communication and Media Relations Unit
OSCE Secretariat	Ms	Giulia	Manconi	Associate Energy Security Officer, OCEEA
OSCE Secretariat	Ms	Jana Emerencie	Kostrhunova	Junior Professional Officer, Office of the Secretary General/External Co-operation
OSCE Secretariat	Ms	Aldona	Szymanski	Senior External Co-operation Assistant, Office of the Secretary General
OSCE Secretariat	Ms	Anita	Alidemaj	External Co-operation Assistant, Office of the Secretary General
OSCE Secretariat	Ms	Karen	Olson	Interpreter
OSCE Secretariat	Ms	Francesca	Adragna	Interpreter
OSCE Secretariat	Mr	Alain	Gauthier	Interpreter
OSCE Secretariat	Ms	Jennifer	Fearnside	Interpreter
ODIHR	Ms	Christie	Edwards	Deputy Head, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department
ODIHR	Ms	Assel	Zhabagina	Consultant, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination
OSCE HCNM	Mr	Lamberto	Zannier	High Commissioner on National Minorities
OSCE HCNM	Mr	William	Romans	Senior Legal Adviser

State / Organization	Gender	First Name	Family Name	Title/Position/Rank
OSCE Parliamentary Assembly	Mr	Margareta	Cederfelt	Vice-President, Delegation of Sweden
OSCE Parliamentary Assembly	Mr	Andreas	Nothelle	Ambassador, Special Representative, Vienna Liaison Office
<b>Personal Representatives of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office</b>				
	Mr	Andrew	Baker	Rabbi, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism
	Mr	Mehmet	Paçacı	Ambassador, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims
	Ms	Ingeborg	Gabriel	Professor, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, also focusing on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians and Members of Other Religions
<b>Invited Representatives from non-OSCE participating States</b>				
People's representatives Assembly of Tunisia	Ms	Imen	Ben Mohamed	Member of Parliament