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**STATEMENT BY MR. MIGUEL ÁNGEL MORATINOS,
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND CO-OPERATION OF
SPAIN, AT THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

19 January 2010

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to address the OSCE at the beginning of the Chairmanship of Kazakhstan, which was decided upon at the Ministerial Council meeting in Madrid in 2007. For me, who had the honour and responsibility of presiding over that event, it is a source of great satisfaction to realize now, with Spain holding the rotating Presidency of the European Union, that Fukuyama was not right. There is no end to history and it is unfolding before our eyes with this Kazakh Chairmanship of the OSCE.

I have been at the head of three large European organizations: the OSCE, an organization with 56 participating States, the Council of Europe, with 47 members, and now, with the rotating Presidency, the European Union, with its “modest” 27 member States. I do not know which of these organizations is the most difficult to preside over.

I am especially gratified that this event is being held under the Chairmanship of Kazakhstan, which was decided upon in Madrid. I believe that this Chairmanship provides a historic opportunity both for Kazakhstan and for the OSCE. For the first time in the history of this Organization, the leadership exercised by a Central Asian country should make it possible for this Organization to focus greater attention and interest on that region and, at the same time, to promote the closer integration of the entire Eurasian area.

Greece performed outstanding and important work during the past year. The informal ministerial meeting in Corfu and the success of the Ministerial Council meeting in Athens have infused a new dynamism into this Organization that will allow us to undertake this mission with a more ambitious outlook.

I also wish to thank Sweden for the outstanding work it performed as President of the European Union during the six-month period just elapsed. Co-operation with that country was excellent, and it is the desire of the Spanish Presidency to build on those achievements.

Mr. Chairman,

The entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon marks a new stage for the European Union, a stage in which the strengthened legal and institutional framework will enable us to

get started the Europe that we need, a stronger Europe, a more united Europe, a more effective Europe. A Europe that responds to the concerns of its citizens and that at the same time can play a more relevant role of the kind that it should as a global actor.

The slogan of our Presidency clearly refers to this aspiration: renewing Europe.

This renewal, as pointed out by Jean Monnet, will not come about suddenly or spontaneously. Europe has always built itself with small successive advances. The European Union has been strengthening its external activities virtually since it was established and in a very conspicuous manner over the last ten years thanks to the development of the European Security and Defence Policy.

Within this framework the European Union has acquired the kind of civil and military capabilities that have enabled it to deploy more than 20 operations on the ground so as to make an effective contribution to the prevention, management and stabilization of conflicts as well as to post-conflict reconstruction.

However, esteemed Ambassadors, the Treaty of Lisbon marks a qualitative leap in this evolution. In addition to a stable Presidency of the Council, the creation of the post of High Representative/Vice President of the Commission and the start-up in the next few months of the European External Action Service will no doubt provide the Union with institutions that will give it a stronger, more coherent and more strategically relevant voice.

The full application of the Lisbon Treaty is one of the priorities of the Spanish Presidency of the EU. Still, at a moment of crisis such as the one we are currently living through, the EU cannot allow itself to think only of itself. It must give thought and take action to strengthen its active contribution to the solution of the real problems facing its citizens.

For that reason, the Spanish Presidency will also accord priority in its work to the co-ordination of economic policies so as to promote economic recovery and sustainable growth and to providing an impulse to the emergence of a Europe of laws and freedoms on behalf of its citizens.

The fourth priority of the Spanish Presidency will be to strengthen the foreign policy of the European Union so as to transform that community into a genuine global player. I believe that this objective is of particular interest to this Organization.

The advances brought about by the Lisbon Treaty will no doubt have a positive impact on the European Union's contribution to the OSCE. As already noted by the previous High Representative, Javier Solana, in a statement before this very forum in 2002, the EU and the OSCE are partners by nature.

The EU and the OSCE share such values as peace, prosperity, freedom, democracy, the rule of law and the universality and indivisibility of human rights. The OSCE, with its comprehensive concept of security and its inclusion of all the countries of the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian region, is a player of foremost importance with an essential role in strengthening security and stability in Europe.

Against this background reference must be made to the Corfu Process. The excellent work carried out by the Greek Chairmanship has made possible the reinforcement of this initiative, providing an anchor for the European security dialogue within the OSCE, reactivating in clear terms the role of this Organization and offering a strategic perspective and a structured procedure for the discussions to follow.

The anchoring of the Corfu Process in the OSCE makes it clear that security in Europe is of a comprehensive and indivisible nature.

Security must be comprehensive because it must include as an essential foundation respect for human rights and the strengthening of democracy and the rule of law. It is inconceivable to discuss security without taking into account citizens, persons, as the basis of that discussion. Such a discussion must also include as a fundamental element the economic and environmental factors.

In turn, security must be indivisible for the reason that no one today can achieve his or her security in an isolated manner. The challenges we are facing are common and require a common response.

The first step will without doubt be the regaining of trust and the overcoming of a period of "cold peace" that is to no one's benefit. However, an improvement in the general tone of our relations must be translated into a strengthened political will to deal jointly with the serious challenges and grave threats facing our region.

In this context I cannot but mention Kazakhstan's proposal to convene a summit meeting. The European Union has spoken out on this issue, referring to the need for a meeting of this type to be based on the existence of substantive matters for discussion. For my part, however, as Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs and Co-operation, I should like to strongly make the point, as I have already done on various occasions, including in statements at the Ministerial Council meeting in Athens, that I believe that a summit meeting is indispensable for generating the political momentum that the OSCE needs if it is to make significant progress as regards the basic issues confronting it.

Mr. Chairman,

Fortunately the risk of a military confrontation has dramatically receded since the end of the Cold War. This fact, however, must not make us forget that there have recently been serious conflicts in some regions of Europe. We cannot abandon the instruments at our disposal for arms control and for confidence-and security-building measures, which play an essential role as a basis for the security of all of us and are of primary importance in the more unstable areas of our continent.

We must make a special effort to revitalize the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty) and to update and adapt the Vienna Document. We need to be ambitious and to give thought to the kind of arrangements that can generate trust, security and stability in this strategic environment, which is very different from the one that existed when the current instruments were created.

One of the key features of this new strategic environment is the appearance of new increasingly complex risks and threats. Among the latter, I want to make special mention of

terrorism, which, as pointed out in the strategy of the EU, represents a threat not only to our security but also to our values and to the rights and freedoms of our citizens. The EU and the OSCE share a single vision regarding the need to combat this plague in a way that fully respects human rights.

However, as I have pointed out, security is much more than the absence of conflict. The OSCE has always maintained that economic and environmental factors as well as human rights are an integral and inseparable part of that notion.

The material conditions of life are an intrinsic element of human dignity and, for that reason, a fundamental part of the overall concept of security underlying the work of the OSCE. The European Union is not indifferent to such global threats as poverty, climate change, or the development of commercial relations in the interests of greater prosperity for all. Spain will continue to promote a model of sustainable development aimed at bringing about the eradication of poverty and a more secure environment.

Following the Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change, the involvement of an organization like the OSCE in countering the undesirable consequences of this phenomenon is more necessary than ever before.

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Ambassadors,

The comprehensive concept of security on which the OSCE is based finds its explanation and expression in the full exercise of human rights, fundamental freedoms, the guarantees of the rule of law and the unimpeded working of democracy. This concept is intrinsic to the establishment of the European Union, and for that reason we shall continue to support the inestimable work that the Organization, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the other institutions are performing with professionalism and impartiality, as well as the field missions as they go about their work of assisting in the implementation of the commitments that have been voluntarily assumed by all parties within this Organization.

The Spanish Presidency will coincide with the 20th anniversary of the Copenhagen Document, a seminal text in the human dimension. This symbolic date must provide the occasion for all of us to reaffirm unequivocally the commitments we have assumed in the area of human rights, the rule of law and democracy and to carry out those commitments without conditions and to pledge ourselves to further progress in deepening and strengthening them.

The protection and promotion of human rights are, accordingly, priority objectives for the European Union. Spain intends to direct special attention to progress towards the abolition of capital punishment, measures to combat discrimination against women and gender-based violence, measures against torture, the upholding of the right to drinking water and to sanitation, the fight against discrimination for reasons of sexual orientation and the protection of the rights of the child and of disabled persons.

Within the EU this Presidency will promote the Union's accession to the European Convention on Human Rights and will take initiatives on behalf of the citizenry of Europe in keeping with the concept of citizenship as a basis for fundamental rights and freedoms.

Similarly, priority will continue to be given to efforts to combat trafficking in human beings, involving proposals for new approaches aimed at all the forms of exploitation, with particular attention directed at especially vulnerable victims.

The Spanish Presidency will also promote the Alliance of Civilizations, which has recently been endorsed by the General Assembly of the United Nations in the form of a resolution that has been co-sponsored by a sizeable majority of OSCE participating States. As I noted in Athens I am convinced that the Alliance of Civilizations, and in particular its regional strategy for South Eastern Europe, adopted last month at a ministerial conference held in Sarajevo, constitute useful instruments of support in pursuing the commitments and objectives of the OSCE.

Mr. Chairman,

The efforts we are undertaking to strengthen security and stability in Europe will be of no use at all unless they help to solve the real problems on the ground, and this includes without doubt the so-called protracted conflicts.

On the subject of Georgia, the EU has a mission on the ground that is performing excellent work. However, we favour the idea of restoring the presence of the OSCE in that country. The Geneva Talks, involving both the OSCE and the European Union, provide a fundamental means of avoiding the risk of instability and keeping open channels of communication.

As far as Nagorno-Karabakh is concerned, the frequent contacts of the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan have generated a constructive dynamism, which we must not fail to take advantage of. The Basic Principles agreed in Madrid in 2007 must provide the basis for a solution to the conflict that is acceptable to all parties.

It will also be necessary to achieve progress as regards the Transdniestrian conflict, returning to the 5+2 dialogue, an initiative to which we are ready to contribute.

Mr. Chairman,

Stability in the Western Balkans is an objective that is fully shared by the EU and the OSCE. Spain believes that the implementation of the "European perspective" is an essential element for reconciliation and the future of the region. For that reason, with a view to the future incorporation of this area into the European Union, we shall promote the Stabilisation and Association Process of the Thessaloniki programme.

The EU will continue to assist the countries of the Western Balkans in their processes of political, economic and institutional reform and will continue to lend its support to regional co-operation between these countries. We are optimistic as regards the candidacy of Croatia and we are confident that in the next few months we shall be able to give the decisive push required in its accession negotiations.

We are gratified also at the recent accession application by Serbia, a key country in the region whose merits must be recognized. We also support Montenegro, Albania, the

former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and all those who wish to become members of the European Union.

Beyond the Balkans, the Spanish Presidency will also have to follow up the candidacy of Iceland, which we shall unreservedly support. In the same context, our Presidency will promote conditions to allow sustained and visible progress in the accession negotiations with Turkey.

Mr. Chairman,

The EU's relations with the countries of Central Asia have been strengthened since the adoption in 2007 of the Union's strategy for that region. It is natural that the two spaces should continue to draw closer, pursue common objectives of stability and prosperity and strengthen all the elements in their relationship, including progress in the area of human rights.

On this point, the OSCE is a fundamental forum for the full development of the common values and shared interests of the European Union and the countries of Central Asia. As I have mentioned, a greater presence on the part of Central Asia within the OSCE is in every sense necessary, and the Kazakh Chairmanship will certainly set an excellent example of this truth.

The EU ascribes great importance to the countries of the Eastern Partnership, their consolidation and their modernization. In this connection I believe that there is a need to emphasize the importance of having the presidential elections in Ukraine take place in a smooth and transparent manner and of having the country continue its path of stable development, whatever the outcome of the vote.

On the other hand, security and stability in that region depend in large measure on what happens outside it. Intense and open work with our co-operation partners is an asset for both parties and a practical embodiment of our desire to project our vision of indivisible and comprehensive security.

The Mediterranean partners play an essential role in our vision of a more united and more secure and cohesive Europe. Their active participation in the activities of the OSCE can only strengthen what is already a solid link uniting our interests and our values.

The Asian partners also play an essential role, and for that reason, the EU is firmly committed in Afghanistan, one of the basic challenges facing the international community over the years to come. A failure here would be unthinkable. The Madrid Ministerial Council meeting agreed that the OSCE should make a contribution to that country. I believe that, especially now that Central Asia is taking on greater importance for this Organization, it would be useful to give thought to how the OSCE can more effectively support the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

Mr. Chairman,

We find ourselves at a key moment for the future of security in Europe. The Corfu Process must take up and give maximum effectiveness to this desire for change and progress, the need for which is increasingly more evident. We must not fail to take this opportunity.

Spain, as the President of the European Union at a historic moment such as this, is prepared to do what is necessary to ensure that the enthusiasm and hopes that have been invested in this project are fully realized.

The Spanish Presidency of the European Union intends to work closely with the OSCE to bring about a world of greater stability, peace and prosperity. Exactly as the EU has always done in the past with this Organization.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.