

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY DOCTOR MARIO GIRO

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SEMINAR “TOWARDS “HELSINKI +40”: OSCE, THE GLOBAL MEDITERRANEAN AND  
THE FUTURE OF COOPERATIVE SECURITY”

ROME, 18 September 2014

Ambassador Zannier, Secretary General of the OSCE,

Friends of the “Istituto Affari Internazionali”,

Dr. Emiliano Alessandri, Mediterranean Focal Point of the OSCE,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

it is a pleasure for me to inaugurate today the Seminar **Towards “Helsinki+40”: the OSCE, the Global Mediterranean and the Future of Cooperative Security.**

I would like to thank the “Istituto Affari Internazionali” and the OSCE Secretariat for having organized this important event with us, the Swiss Presidency of the OSCE for having guaranteed its patronage, along with the Italian Presidency of the European Union.

As you know, a process of transformation is underway in order to re-launch the role of the OSCE by 2015, forty years after the Conference of Helsinki: the “**Process of Helsinki+40**”. As a member of the Italian Government, thus representing the rotating Presidency of the European Union, I wish to underline the full support of Italy and EU for the activity of the OSCE, which we deem a pillar of the European security architecture. The role that the OSCE is playing in the Ukrainian crisis and in Georgia is a clear **sign that the Organization is not only an heritage of the Cold War era, but a key actor** in building a comprehensive, cooperative and indivisible security community throughout our Continent and beyond. We strongly sustain its efforts and we hope that the OSCE will be successful in its attempt of facilitating the achievement of a sustainable political solution in Ukraine.

Within the framework of the “**Process of Helsinki + 40**”, Italy is deeply convinced that is necessary to strengthen the Euro-Mediterranean security dimension also. Indeed, our Country has always considered that as an essential step for completing

the traditional Euro-Asiatic dimension of the Organization. The recent developments in that area, Syria and Libya in particular, prove the strong connection existing between issues related to the security in the Mediterranean and the dialogue between East-West in this field.

When we talk about security aspects, we are not considering only military security and arms control, but also issues related to the fight against trafficking in human beings and illegal immigration, to the safeguard of human rights, and so on. We must be aware that security is a global topic that requires global answers.

Starting from this perspective Italy firmly believes that it is necessary to develop an **enhanced dialogue with the Partner Countries of the Southern Shore of the Mediterranean**, within the framework of the OSCE and not only. We welcome the decision of Switzerland to consider **the OSCE-MED dialogue a priority of the next Ministerial Council of the Organization**, which will be held in Basel on 4 – 5 December, and the intention of putting into the agenda of the Meeting the formal request presented by Libya **of becoming a Partner for Co-operation of the OSCE**. We strongly support the Libyan initiative because we believe in the Country's need of international support, now even more than ever, in a such delicate transition period of its history.

The Seminar we inaugurate today in Rome is our little, but significant contribution to the open dialogue between the two shores of the Mediterranean, in a spirit of shared responsibilities and engagement in a better future.

Let me **conclude** this welcoming speech by **praising** an interesting achievement of the recent months that will be presented in the course of the Seminar, that is the **“New MED Research Network”**, an OSCE-related Mediterranean *“track II”* initiative that brings together researchers, academicians and think-tanks from the two shores of the Mediterranean. The project was launched with the support of the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Istituto Affari Internazionali and the Compagnia di San Paolo (a successful example of “public-private partnership”) and it is aimed at sharing experiences and analysis on the security cooperation in the Mediterranean region from a comprehensive perspective. As an informal and a non-institutionalized research community, the network can generate ideas, options and proposals for the policy-makers outside the traditional governmental and intergovernmental schemes and thus offering an added value in framing strategies to face the common challenges of the region. To give relevance to this work, I think it is of outmost importance to attract independent analysts from all countries, particularly from the Southern shore and beyond. Being an innovative way

of conducting foreign policy, the Network is certainly one of the main outcomes of today's seminar, a path on which we intend to keep walking in the future.

I wish you all a fruitful work and I thank you for your attention.