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**STATEMENT BY CALIN STOICA, HEAD OF NATO AND MULTILATERAL
AFFAIRS, POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND SECURITY POLICY DIVISION
AT THE 20TH MEETING OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL
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Mr. Chairperson,
Mr. Secretary General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a particular pleasure for me to represent the North Atlantic Alliance on behalf of the NATO Secretary General at the 20th meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council. On behalf of the NATO delegation let me first of all express my appreciation to our Ukrainian hosts for the warm hospitality. I also take this opportunity to join previous speakers in congratulating the Ukrainian Chairmanship-in-Office for its efforts during the past year to promote security and stability within the OSCE space through a series of initiatives covering the three dimensions of the OSCE. In particular, I would like to emphasise the efforts undertaken at launching and promoting the Helsinki+40 agenda.

NATO remains a Community of values committed to individual liberty, human rights and the rule of law. While the world is changing and the threats and challenges that we face are evolving, our values and our commitment to them remain unwavering.

NATO Foreign Ministers, who met in Brussels just a couple of days ago, had an initial exchange of views on the overall themes of the NATO Summit which will be held in South Wales/UK in September 2014: the Transatlantic bond; the Future NATO; and Afghanistan.

Reinforcing the Transatlantic bond remains the foundation of NATO's security.

The Future NATO will be a key theme of the NATO Summit. And, in essence, this is about three major issues: first, investing in the right capabilities so that the Alliance remains robust, outward looking and ready in order to respond to security challenges such as Ballistic Missile proliferation, terrorism, and cyber, to name just a few; second, strengthening the connectivity among Allies and with partners primarily through joint exercises, training and education; and third, promoting a cooperative security by investing in strong and modern partnerships.

On Afghanistan, the Alliance is preparing to open a new chapter in its engagement with this country, which is also an OSCE Partner for Co-operation. Post-2014, we envisage a three-pillar engagement: through a new NATO-led non-combat mission/'Resolute Support' to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces; by contributing to the sustainability of the Afghan National Security Forces as part of the international community's assistance; and through an envisaged political and practical partnership.

NATO Foreign Ministers also had a very good discussion on the development of partnerships relations over the past couple of decades. Partners have been invaluable in NATO's operations. Moreover, they provide insight to Allied consultations. And partners enable NATO to build peace and security in Europe and beyond.

A session of the NATO-Russia Council was also held, followed by a meeting in ISAF format and a meeting of the NATO-Georgia Commission.

Relations between NATO and the OSCE continue to develop in a mutually beneficial way and in full respect of the institutional autonomy of the two partner organizations. Cooperation has further developed both at the political level, as well as in the field. High level engagements have taken place recently. The Secretary General of NATO welcomed the OSCE Secretary General at NATO HQ, on 25 November. Consultations focused on developments in Kosovo, in light of the recent municipal elections, and on Afghanistan.

Before that, on 12 November, the Chairman of the OSCE Permanent Council, Ambassador Prokopchuk addressed the Euro-Atlantic Cooperation Council on the priorities of the Ukrainian OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office.

The above-mentioned meetings took place in the wake of further high-level meetings of the OSCE Secretary General with NATO Deputy Secretary General, and with the Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Security Policy, in October and September, respectively.

Cooperation on the ground between the two organisations has continued unabated. As mentioned by the OSCE Secretary General in his comprehensive address, let me stress, in particular, the outstanding cooperation between KFOR and the OSCE Mission in Kosovo during the successive rounds of the municipal elections in Kosovo over the past month.

Similarly, our cooperation has evolved substantially regarding Afghanistan. In this context, we welcome the decision of the Permanent Council to deploy an Election Support Team for the Afghan Presidential elections next spring. OSCE's initiatives in the broader region, including through its Academy in Bishkek and its Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe are commendable.

Finally, allow me to underline that the cooperation between the two Secretariats has further expanded. We have developed regular contacts, in the framework of which we inform each other on issues of common interest on the current agenda as well as on priorities regarding geographical regions, but especially exploring on how we can combine our efforts to address emerging/transnational threats. In this context, I would like to highlight our cooperation at staff level in areas such as: counter-terrorism, cyber, Building Integrity/good governance, environmental security, capacity building, and last but definitely not least in addressing the role of women in peace and security. I would also like to express appreciation vis-à-vis the OSCE Secretary General's initiative on Security Days, to which NATO participates, an initiative that contributes to the Helsinki +40 process.

Let me conclude by wishing success to OSCE participating States in adopting the envisaged Ministerial decisions and other important documents, by warmly welcoming Serbia, which will be joining the OSCE Troika in a few days, as well as expressing our readiness to work with the incoming Swiss Chairmanship-in-Office.

Thank you for your attention.