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STATEMENT OF THE HOLY SEE
AT THE TWENTIETH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE (OSCE)

DELIVERED BY
HIS EXCELLENCY
ARCHBISHOP DOMINIQUE MAMBERTI
SECRETARY FOR THE HOLY SEE'S RELATIONS WITH STATES

Kyiv (Ukraine)
5 – 6 December 2013

1. The Delegation of the Holy See wishes to thank His Excellency Mr. Leonid Kozhara, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, as well as the 2013 Ukrainian Chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) not only for their generous hospitality in these days, but also for their efforts to reinforce a culture of dialogue and confidence among participating States.

Looking back at the past year, but also looking towards the future, allow me to share the Holy See's views on some of the recent efforts, challenges and achievements of our Organization.

2. *Politico-military dimension.* With regard to the politico-military dimension of the OSCE, the Holy See wishes to express its appreciation for the great efforts made by the three participating States which presided over the Forum for Security Cooperation in 2013, namely, the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Republic of Lithuania and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, and directed its activities with a view to obtaining tangible results.

My Delegation noted with satisfaction the constructive atmosphere, which characterized many activities of the Forum in its traditional areas of competence, such as the promotion of the activities envisaged in the documents on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA) and the implementation of the "Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Security". The Holy See is especially interested in the important principles which they contain, on account of their obvious humanitarian implications. We wish to express particular appreciation for a successful updating of the OSCE Document on Non-Proliferation. All these activities of the Forum constitute an important contribution to the success of the Helsinki+40 Process, to which the OSCE participating States committed themselves last year in Dublin.

However, while noting these positive aspects, we must also express our concern about the lack of progress in updating the Vienna Document, which is essential for ensuring greater transparency with regard to the military activities and equipment of the participating States and is one of the preconditions for stability and security in the region. Despite the unequivocal mandate received at previous meetings in Astana and Vilnius, there would appear to be a certain lack of political will to move in this direction. We hope that this Ministerial Council will provide the necessary impetus needed to achieve this result.

3. *Economic and environmental dimension.* Many have acknowledged the importance and the indispensable role of the economic and environmental activities of the OSCE in its pursuit of comprehensive security. Greater political will and a stronger commitment, comparable to those evidenced in the other two dimensions, would serve to maximize the potential and make full use of the opportunities waiting to be exploited in a wide area of application.

The Holy See's interest in this area, which undeniably contributes to the safeguarding, promotion and protection of human dignity, security and well-being, was confirmed in the words of Pope Francis at the very beginning of his Pontificate, when he asked that everyone contribute to protecting creation and the beauty of the created world, which means respecting

each one of God's creatures and the environment in which we live. (Pope Francis, Inauguration Mass, 19 March 2013)

In this context, the Holy See appreciates the focus of the 2013 Ukrainian Chairmanship on the environmental impact of energy-related activities, energy saving and renewable sources of energy which is of common concern to all participating States and is directly linked to prosperity, health, security and the overall well-being of their citizens. The Holy See is also well aware of the importance of water management and therefore commends the incoming Swiss Chairmanship for including this important issue among its priorities for 2014.

4. It will come as no surprise that my Delegation attaches great importance to the topic of migration. In the Holy See's view, the rights of migrants must be a primary consideration. Even in times of financial crisis, migrants should not be considered merely in terms of their economic role as a temporary workforce or as permanent settlers. Their dignity as human persons must take precedence over all other considerations.

5. *Human dimension.* This year marks the 50th Anniversary of Pope John XXIII's Encyclical "*Pacem in Terris*". In this landmark document of the social teaching of the Catholic Church, John XXIII observed that "relation between states, as between individuals, must be regulated not by armed force, but in accordance with the principles of right reason: the principles that is, of truth, justice and vigorous and sincere co-operation." (*Pacem in Terris*, 114)

Many have recognized the contribution of *Pacem in Terris* to the promotion of human rights. In this regard, I wish to recall the words of John F. Kennedy, President of the United States of America, whose tragic death occurred only a few months after the publication of the encyclical: "I am much encouraged by a reading in this last week of the remarkable encyclical *Pacem in Terris*. In its penetrating analysis of today's great problems, of social welfare and human rights, of disarmament and international order and peace, that document surely shows that on the basis of one great faith and its traditions there can be developed counsel on public affairs that is of value to all men and women of good will. As a Catholic, I am proud of it; and as an American, I have learned from it." (John F. Kennedy, Speech at Boston College, 20 April 1963)

The Holy See particularly welcomes and appreciates the Ukrainian Chairmanship's focus and successfully led negotiations on freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief. These freedoms belong to the essential core of natural rights that positive law can never legitimately deny. Respect for religious freedom, which protects the transcendent dimension of the human person seeking a greater truth than the material world offers, has its roots in the non-negotiable dignity of every man and woman, created in the image of God.

This year we celebrate the 1700th anniversary of the Edict of Milan, issued in 313 A.D. by the Emperor Constantine, which is one of the most important documents of history as far as freedom of religion is concerned. It is disturbing to note that, seventeen centuries later, across the OSCE region more and more bias-motivated incidents against Christians are taking place. When we discuss denial of religious freedom and intolerance, particularly against Christians, certain countries outside the OSCE region or its neighborhood normally come to mind. We should not forget that there are also episodes of intolerance and marginalization of religion and believers even in traditionally democratic societies, where fortunately there is no violent persecution. As for the majority religious communities, their rights also need to be protected

from any unjust and unlawful restrictions. Acts of vandalism against Christian churches and cemeteries should be condemned and legally prosecuted with the same determination that is demonstrated in the case of places of worship of other religions.

6. Continued attention must also be paid to the ongoing problem of trafficking of human beings. This heinous crime must be fought with all the lawful means available. In this regard, my Delegation wishes to express its profound gratitude to the OSCE Ukrainian Chairmanship for organizing a High level conference on combating this horrible crime. We encourage the incoming Swiss Chairmanship to dedicate itself to this issue in the most determined way possible.

7. The Holy See reiterates its support for the Helsinki + 40 Process, which aims at providing a strategic result-oriented direction for years to come. I am convinced that, with increased trust and strong political will, the vision of one security community born in Helsinki in 1975 will be reinvigorated and refreshed at the end of this Process through consensual willingness to ensure peace and security for all participating States and those neighboring areas still facing so many worrying challenges on a daily basis.

8. In conclusion, I would like to renew my gratitude to the 2013 Ukrainian Chairmanship of the OSCE for its leadership and service, as well as to express my best wishes to the incoming Swiss Chairmanship as we work together to reach the goals, common vision and common values agreed upon and shared by all the participating States of the OSCE.