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REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CHAIRMAN IN OFFICE (7 September – 13 September)

OSCE Continues Consultations on Reform

VIENNA - Consultations on OSCE reform were launched in Vienna on 12 September, bringing together political directors from all 55 OSCE participating states. The starting point for the two-day meeting is a report presented in June by a Panel of Eminent Persons appointed in February to come up with reform proposals. Slovenia is being represented by the Head of the OSCE Task Force at the Slovenian Foreign Ministry, Ambassador Boris Frlec. High political representatives are to form their views on the OSCE strategic priorities and possibilities to increase its efficiency at the meeting. Work is then to continue until the OSCE Ministerial in December in Ljubljana.

OSCE Conference Discusses Reform Proposals

BRDO PRI KRANJU - Addressing a conference on OSCE reform on 7 September at Brdo pri Kranju, OSCE Chairman-in-Office Dimitrij Rupel expressed content with the developments during Slovenia's chairmanship, labeling the reform the hottest topic of the year. Chairman-in-Office added he wished to transform good intentions into more concrete plans and decisions by the end of the year. He underscored that the reform was an ongoing long-term process, impossible to complete overnight. The two-day conference marked the beginning of an operative stage of boosting the OSCE efficiency and outlining its future strategy.

OSCE Chairman-in-Office Notes Convergence of Opinions on Nagorno-Karabakh

YEREVAN - OSCE Chairman-in-Office Dimitrij Rupel was optimistic about the future of talks on the Nagorno-Karabakh after meeting his Armenian counterpart Vartan Oskanian on 6 September in Yerevan. There are signs of convergence of views on the resolution of the conflict, but "the devil is in the details," he told the press. Chairman-in-Office added that the right of nations to self-determination as well as the principle of territorial integrity had to be taken into account if a solution was to be reached. In Yerevan, Chairman-in-Office met Armenian President Robert Kocharian and Prime Minister Andranik Margarian, as well as the leader of Nagorno-Karabakh Arkadiy Gukasyan and the representative of the Azeri community Nizami Bahmanov.

Chairman-in-Office: OSCE Bridge Between Europe, North Africa and Middle East

RABAT - According to OSCE Chairman-in-Office Dimitrij Rupel, the OSCE has an important role to play in being a bridge between Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. Speaking at the OSCE's Mediterranean Conference in Rabat on 8 September, Chairman-in-Office said the bridge "has been made more permanent by the OSCE partnership process". With the seminar focusing on migration and integration policies, he stressed that migration presented a challenge to both the destination and origin countries. The former face the challenge of integrating the newly arrived people, while the latter must deal with "brain drain". The OSCE's Mediterranean partners are Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

NEW YORK, 14 through 20 September - OSCE Chairman-in-Office Dimitrij Rupel is to attend the UN Summit and take part in the 60th session of the UN General Assembly. He is to hold a number of bilateral meetings and attend the meeting of the OSCE Troika.