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**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR TACAN İLDEM  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY**

**In Response to the Report of the Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia,  
Ambassador Peter Burkhard**

**(992<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Permanent Council, 27 March 2014)**

Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

I join the previous speakers in welcoming Ambassador Burkhard back to the Permanent Council and would like to express my thanks for his comprehensive presentation. It is always pleasing to go through reports that reflect a relatively positive outlook.

With such a frame of mind, we would like to congratulate Serbia for the recent successful elections. We also wish success to the new government that will take office and tackle a challenging agenda. Developments give us reason to anticipate further dynamism in Serbia's EU integration aspirations.

With Serbia, we enjoy close bilateral relations. We remain committed to further improving these relations, in a manner encompassing our cooperation at bilateral, regional and international platforms.

We welcome the steady progress made by Serbia on its path towards comprehensive reforms and the Mission's valuable contributions in this regard. The Mission's assistance especially on judiciary and police reforms are praiseworthy. The strides made in enhancing police accountability, strengthening police capacity in the fight against organized crime and minority integration into the police service are of particular importance. Turkey remains ready to offer any assistance to Serbia and the Mission regarding the police reforms.

Moreover, efforts directed to consolidate stability and harmony in southern and southwestern Serbia are crucial. These should be supported not only for Serbia's own sake, but also for maintaining sustainable peace and cooperation at the regional scale.

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome the positive results achieved so far in the ongoing Pristine-Belgrade dialogue process. Serbia's willingness to address the Kosovo issue not only helps progress towards finding a mutually acceptable and sustainable solution, but also creates a safer environment for the consolidation of peace and stability in the Balkans in general. The April 2013 agreement on the normalization of relations between the two countries has constituted a landmark achievement in this regard. We earnestly hope to see this process continue to progress in a consistent fashion. Turkey will maintain its support to the process and to the efforts for finding practical solutions to the outstanding issues.

We are happy to believe that the current constructive and cooperative atmosphere provides positive reverberation for Serbia's upcoming OSCE Chairmanship next year; while the prospective Serbian OSCE Chairmanship projects a positive sense of climate to the current state of affairs in and around the country. It is indeed pleasing to be able to talk in this hall about a positive reciprocal interaction between political dynamics for a change.

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate our support for the goals and priorities adopted by the OSCE Mission to Serbia and express our wish for the continuation of the excellent cooperation between the OSCE Mission and the Serbian authorities in the period ahead.

Thank you.