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**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA AT THE FIFTEENTH MEETING
OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Madrid, 29 and 30 November 2007

Mr. Chairman

On behalf of the Tunisian delegation, I should like to congratulate the Spanish Chairmanship on its commitment and energetic efforts during its term in office aimed at a genuine revival of co-operation between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation (MPC).

I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute also to the Spanish Government for doing everything possible to ensure that the Cordoba Conference on Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims was a success.

If the objective of the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris is to take into consideration the interdependence that exists between the security of the OSCE area and that of the Southern Mediterranean region, the partnership naturally becomes a political formula embodying the greatest possible measure of confidence between the countries of North and South — confidence certain to ensure lasting development, mutual stability and the security which more and more essential.

The aim, then, must be to make relations between the OSCE and the MPC more ambitious so that they can cope with transformations and challenges. Accordingly, the purpose of our co-operation is to deal with human affairs on a global scale.

In this context, relations between the OSCE and the MPC are supposed to cover essential common objectives dictated entirely by mutual interest in creating operational lines of co-operation with regard to development, stability and security and in responding to real concerns, namely:

- Economic inequalities and cultural and social insecurities;
- The problem of security, which is related to all of the challenges with which the Southern Mediterranean countries are confronted, is mainly focused on questions of economic and social development and the living conditions of the populations involved, the aim being to avoid their vulnerability and exposure to all kinds of threats (for example, the involvement of young people in major crime networks, in particular terrorism);

- Security fanaticism, resulting in particular from incitement to hatred in support of the false prophecy of a clash of civilizations.

Mr. Chairman,

It was in a spirit of promotion of universal values and principles that the dialogue initiated between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation in Lisbon in 1996 — which was to constitute an important framework for exchange and co-operation designed to consolidate lasting development and mutual peace and stability in the OSCE/MPC area — was initiated.

Accordingly, given the slow progress that has been made to date, our dialogue requires a new synergy and a revival on a basis adapted to the nature of the challenges of our region and to the expectations of all our countries, hence the need:

- To make the Mediterranean strategic concept in its entirety part of the fundamental objectives of the OSCE, which means that we need an individual approach varying in accordance with the specific sociological, cultural and political characteristics of the Mediterranean partner countries;
- To define a lasting vision of the region and of relations between the OSCE and the MPC that would rehabilitate the concept of multilateralism.

The achievement of these goals calls for:

- The elaboration of an operational plan of action to implement a partnership for peace and security in the Mediterranean region;
- The drawing up of an agenda consisting of relevant questions connected with the partnership and international questions of common interest for OSCE/MPC meetings;
- The establishment at the political level of a follow-up committee for OSCE/MPC activities;
- Engagement in an in-depth dialogue to consider the appropriate framework for establishing conditions of prosperity, stability and security;
- Consideration of mechanisms concerned with measures for confidence building, transparency and conflict prevention;
- Promotion of co-operation between the MPC and the Conflict Prevention Centre through information exchanges and assistance;
- Consideration of the possibility of establishing a Mediterranean conflict prevention centre;
- The use of partnership fund resources to provide real support for co-operation in the socio-economic and environmental spheres.

If international security is to be improved, we need to deal with the root causes of the risks and challenges we are facing, and a common, reliable, updated and more interdependent vision of relations between the OSCE and the MPC is essential.

To this end, a new approach to co-operation between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation would involve:

- Identifying, developing and putting into practice a culture of progress based on solidarity, social justice and human rights;
- Developing a common perception of the future of the Mediterranean region through a reappraisal of transnational problems;
- Taking into account shared concerns, namely the international problems of security and development.

Mr. Chairman,

Security and stability in the OSCE/MPC area will always be dependent on a relationship of mutual trust, a sharing of responsibilities and respect for the integrity and sovereignty of States.

Thank you for your attention.