

**SPEAKINGS NOTES OF AMBASSADOR YUSUF BULUÇ
TURKISH DELEGATION**

**ADRESS BY THE GENERAL DIRECTOR OF THE DIRECTORATE
GENERAL FOR ENLARGEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION
MR. M. LEIGH**

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We likewise welcome Mr. Leigh to the Permanent Council and thank him for his presentation. We also welcome the initiative that offered this opportunity to meet with Mr. Leigh, enabling this useful exchange of views, and appreciate the spirit of transparency and quest for dialogue with OSCE participating States which underpins the initiative. However, the message which you intended to carry with you to Vienna today was a well kept secret which has left me with little choice but to respond with some spontaneity and anticipation, as the EU itself could not afford us the facility and the relative convenience of alignment with a Presidency Joint Statement. I do so in a national capacity following my Montenegrin colleague who spoke on behalf of a number of South East European countries, which unlike my country's unique and historical process of accession to the EU already now spanning some 45 years, find themselves in another, perhaps also unique association with the European Union, in turn through the Stabilization and Association instruments.

As you yourself have so aptly pointed out, the European Union and the OSCE find themselves in the fortuitous position of contributing substantially to Euro-Atlantic security through a myriad of tools and instruments, including a set of values, norms and commitments which are mutually supportive and form the foundation of our collective endeavors. Human security, or providing for the safety, well being and prosperity of each and every individual in our societies is the common aspiration and goal of both the OSCE and the EU.

How gratifying it must be for you – but also how challenging - in your present capacity as General Director of the Directorate General for Enlargement of the European Commission to observe the sea changes sweeping across Europe and to oversee the transformation processes of so many countries, as they move towards closer association with and hopefully eventual accession to the European Union and to accumulate the credit rightfully accruing to the EU for being one of the engines of change.

And perforce, the inevitable impact this has on the OSCE, almost half of whose participating States are already also EU members, with more to come in the near future.

Reforms are the order of the day in all of the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions and organizations to which we are members. The tasks of respective European and Euro-Atlantic organizations which were once so well demarcated and the unique niches equally well defined are becoming more and more opaque, sometimes even at the risk of progressively blurring as memberships in these organizations begin to coincide ever more. It is for this reason that respective organizations in the Euro-Atlantic space need to devote more time, energy, personnel and resources to increased coordination and enhanced co-operation in order to avoid duplication and mutually enhance the implementation of our norms and values. Yet even more perilous a consequence of neglect and failure to understand and address the ongoing dynamics is the further division and fragmentation within the OSCE. Things must not and cannot be allowed to take their course. Great responsibility falls on the EU in this regard.

The EU is as much a guarantor of stability as it is a strong stimulus for change. We have always felt that the stabilizing hand was necessary and mutually complementary with our efforts in the Caucasus. An exercise, given its common goals, conducted with mutual appreciation between Turkey and the EU. We congratulate the EU for having concluded ENP Action Plans with the Caucasus States, thereby obtaining a more reassuring and institutionalized character to its presence in that critical geography which bears substantially on the interest of my country.

Lastly, availing myself of the presence here of Mr. Leigh and his references to EU enlargement, some of which naturally impact on Turkey as a country which has started accession negotiations, I cannot but fail to briefly outline our position. This is despite his brevity and circumspection on the state of play of the accession negotiations with my country. I know this is on the minds of a number of us as the EU Summit approaches. We have noted with satisfaction that in the Enlargement Strategy Document of 8 November it is confirmed that the EU will adhere to its commitments vis a vis Turkey. Within the framework of this commitment and the understanding deriving thereof, the accession process remains on course. Turkey, on her part will continue also to fulfill all its commitments. However, political issues, as opposed to legitimate political criteria, which are not and cannot be part of the accession criteria should not be allowed to interfere in or even overshadow the negotiation process which, by nature, is technical. We expect the EU to take this process forward. Pact Sund Servanda as an indispensable principle in which our relations are anchored cannot be the exclusive turf and must not remain in the monopoly of Turkey. In the end, the decision to be taken by EU leaders in December will be the manifestation of their vision for the future. Let us render this a common vision which shall give its parties a sense of pride to be shared enthusiastically. In closing also, let the record of this meeting show that I withheld comment on this newly crafted term or rather euphemism of “capacity to absorb”.