

**20th OSCE Ministerial Council
Kiev, 5-6 December 2013**

Address by the Deputy Foreign Minister of Portugal Mr. José Cesário

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to join others in expressing my congratulations to the Ukrainian Chairmanship for its leadership of our Organisation during the current year. We are grateful for all the work the entire Ukrainian team has accomplished and for their tireless efforts in building consensus on the documents before us.

Portugal fully subscribes to the statement made by the representative of the European Union.

At the same time, considering recent events, we recall the special responsibility of Ukraine, in its capacity as Chairmanship in Office of the OSCE, in fully respecting the principles and commitments we have all subscribed to, in particular freedom of assembly and freedom of expression. In this context, we call on the government and the opposition to refrain from any violence and to engage in dialogue.

Mr. Chairman,

From the outset, I extend my best wishes to the upcoming Swiss and Serbian Chairmanships. The coordinated strategic approach of Ukraine, Switzerland and Serbia in steering the **Helsinki plus 40 process** reinforces the promising prospects for this process for the next two years. We welcome the desire of the upcoming Chairmanships to obtain a clear direction from us and look forward to working with them in shaping the future of our Organization and in making the OSCE more effective. We stand ready to pursue our common long term vision of a comprehensive, cooperative and indivisible security community as agreed in Astana.

Portugal attaches great importance to all efforts aimed at preserving, strengthening and modernizing the **conventional arms control regime** in Europe, and in particular at overcoming the current stalemate in the CFE Treaty. We remain convinced of the importance of a modernized, effective and verifiable regime that takes into account the new environment of the twenty-first century.

By promoting greater transparency, confidence and predictability we are enhancing our collective security. Substantive changes to the Vienna Document 2011 would also concur to this goal.

On the other hand, ensuring a safe and secure cyber environment should be a priority for us all. We highly value that the OSCE is the first regional organization to adopt a **set of Confidence Building Measures in the field of information and communication technologies**.

We need to tackle the challenges of the **Second Dimension** efficiently if we want to achieve our common goal of building comprehensive and lasting security in the OSCE area. We should therefore strengthen our action in those areas where the OSCE can bring an added value, involving civil society and the private sector on matters of mutual interest and concern.

Mr. Chairman,

The OSCE's concept of comprehensive security comprises the notion that the respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law are prerequisites to attain sustainable peace and security. The OSCE has a substantial *acquis* of commitments in the **Human Dimension** that have to be implemented in a consistent manner by all participating States in order to create a free, democratic, common and indivisible security community.

This year we celebrate the **20th anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action**. The Declaration expressly mentions that "all human rights are

universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated” and must be treated “in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing, and with the same emphasis.”

Portugal is committed to the promotion and protection of all human rights, whether civil and political, or economic, social and cultural. My country opposes any narrative that could undermine the principle of the universality of human rights, namely based on culture, tradition, religion or for national security reasons.

We commend the Ukrainian Chairmanship and the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for their tireless efforts regarding the adoption of the **Decision on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings**.

Combating trafficking in human beings in its multiple forms is a strong commitment of the Portuguese government. The recently published OSCE country visit report represents an opportunity to continue a long-term close cooperation with the Office of the Special Representative in view of the next Portuguese National Action Plan against trafficking in human beings.

Promotion of gender equality, including through the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 is another area where Portugal has been engaging in a fruitful dialogue with OSCE Institutions. In this regard, we strongly believe that the adoption of an **OSCE-Wide Action Plan on women, peace and security** would be an important tool to help us implement our agenda in this area.

Mr. Chairman,

Portugal remains committed to working closely with the OSCE’s Partners. An important issue in this respect is the organization’s continued commitment to **Afghanistan**.

Afghanistan is not only a Partner for Cooperation, but also a neighbour of our Central Asian participating States. On the eve of the withdrawal of coalition troops

from the country, it is key for the OSCE to reaffirm its engagement in all three dimensions and contribute to the overall efforts of the international community in providing long-term security and stability to Afghanistan and the region.

The security of the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian community is closely linked to that of adjacent areas, namely of the Mediterranean region. The enlargement of our partnership should proceed in a way that reflects our concept of comprehensive and inclusive security. In that spirit, we welcome the application of Libya to become a Partner for Cooperation. It is our view that the OSCE should engage with Libya so as to contribute to the critical transformation process of the country. Portugal will fully support the efforts of the incoming Chairmanship in this respect.

Mr. Chairman,

Consolidating the collective security in the OSCE area requires our political will to strengthen our commitments in all three dimensions. Given the current challenging economic environment, it is also necessary that the OSCE pursues an efficient and strategic **budgetary policy** to underpin our joint efforts. Optimizing the use of scarce resources should remain our common objective.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I want to convey our best wishes and support to the **Swiss Chairmanship**. We are confident that under the skilful leadership of Switzerland we will be able to build upon the good work of the Ukrainian Chairmanship and take the Organization forward.

Let me assure you of Portugal's resolute and continuous commitment in this common endeavor.

Allow me, Mr. Chairman, to convey our most sincere appreciation for the warm welcome we had in Kiev and for the commendable organization of this Ministerial Council.