

**Statement of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal,
Augusto Santos Silva, in the 23rd OSCE Ministerial Council
Hamburg, 8-9 December**

Mr. Chairman,

I start by praising the German Chairmanship for steering the work of the OSCE during this challenging year.

Portugal subscribes to the statement delivered by the European Union High Representative.

Mr. Chairman,

At the opening session of the Portuguese Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Cooperation last September, I had the opportunity to evoke the twentieth anniversary of the OSCE Lisbon Summit.

I recalled that twenty years ago, OSCE participating States committed to tackle together the serious challenges to the European security. Since then, some of those challenges remain and others evolved in nature. But our commitments, which we reaffirm today, are the cornerstone to address them. Grounded on those commitments, more than ever we need to work with determination and restore confidence in order to build a free, democratic, common and indivisible security community.

These were the guiding lines of our FSC Chairmanship. We devoted particular attention to arms control and confidence and security building measures. I underline that the current Vienna Document 2011 and VD Plus decisions remain in force, its full implementation being of the utmost importance. Portugal will be engaged in the efforts to update and modernize its relevant provisions.

The discussions held at the FSC on the OSCE Framework for arms control reflect the importance of continuing this dialogue.

I also want to draw attention to the Ministerial Declaration we are adopting on OSCE assistance projects in the field of small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of convention ammunition, highlighting one of our most visible and effective contributions to security.

Mr. Chairman,

I will now highlight a few issues.

Three years have elapsed since the beginning of the crisis in and around **Ukraine**. Regretfully it remains of serious concerns. We commend the continued engagement of the OSCE in Ukraine and reiterate our support to the Special Monitoring Mission and to the implementation of the Minsk agreements.

In 2016 we were once again shocked by several **terrorist** attacks against participating States and Partners for Cooperation. Portugal joins others in strongly condemning terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. But fighting terrorism requires a sustained and comprehensive approach that fully respects human rights.

The large movements of **migrants and refugees** are a serious political and humanitarian challenge. The situation requires a global response grounded on the respect for international obligations, namely with regard to human rights, and on the principles of solidarity and shared responsibility. Dialogue between origin, transit and receiving countries should be enhanced.

Portugal values the work being carried by the OSCE on migrations across the three dimensions.

Many of the security challenges the OSCE participating States face are common to our **Partners for Cooperation**. We are sure that Italy – as the next Chair of the Contact Group for the Mediterranean – and Austria – as incoming OSCE Chairmanship – will continue working to enhance dialogue and cooperation with them.

I conclude by conveying Portugal's best wishes of success to Austria as incoming Chairmanship and by assuring our full support.

I thank you.