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【Check Against Delivery】

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR RYUTA MIZUUCHI,
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Japan
to the OSCE**

**On Address by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, H.E.
Ms. Elina Valtonen
Permanent Council, OSCE
19 September 2024**

Thank you, Madam Chair.

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the Asian Partner for Co-operation Australia and my own country, Japan.

Let us join in welcoming Her Excellency, Ms. Valtonen, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, to the Permanent Council. We look forward to working closely with you next year as the chair of 2025.

Madam Minister,

The international situation has changed dramatically over the past two and a half years. Russia's aggression against Ukraine affects not only European security but Indo-Pacific security and international security. Aside from terrible damage and loss of life in Ukraine, Russia's aggression is also compounding human suffering and propelling the global crisis in food and energy security.

Rules, norms and institutions are under increasing pressure, tensions over territorial claims are escalating, and disinformation and foreign interference are being used to manipulate societies.

The future of the Indo-Pacific has global ramifications. The Indo-Pacific is the key region of strategic competition, including Russia. Security challenges in the Indo-Pacific will inevitably affect that of Europe. With a strong sense of urgency that today's Ukraine could be tomorrow's East Asia, we recognize that in a complex and challenging international environment, it is more important than ever to strengthen relations with the OSCE, and other key partners who share the fundamental values, to maintain an open, inclusive and resilient world, underpinned by rules, norms and international law, where the rights and sovereignty of all countries are respected, regardless of size or power.

At the same time, the world faces a number of critical and pressing security challenges, such as climate change, economic security, including energy and food security, and the proliferation in scale and sophistication of cyber-attacks, to name a few. At this unprecedented time, we need to address these global challenges together with the OSCE, the world's largest regional security organization, which is committed to a comprehensive security agenda.

Madam Minister,

Let us reiterate the importance of the “partnership”, which shares fundamental values in this complex and challenging international

environment. The Asian Partners for Co-operation have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening the OSCE and the Asian Partners for Co-operation at the Ministerial Council in 2023 and have made concrete efforts to strengthen their partnership with the OSCE. In particular, through the identification of common thematic issues as Asian Partners for Co-operation, more coherent and comprehensive discussions have taken place at OSCE meetings, such as the OSCE Asian Conference and the OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation Group Meetings, as well as the consideration of measures to further enhance engagement at the political level, and increasing the visibility of the result of the Asian Partners' activities.

Madam Minister,

Next year marks the 50th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act. It is hoped that under the next Chairpersonship, Finland, the "partnership" will be reviewed and expanded, and that this will provide an opportunity to further deepen our relations. We look forward to supporting the new Chairpersonship in this area.

I thank you.

(End)