



Govern d'Andorra
Missió Permanent d'Andorra a l'OSCE
i als altres organismes internacionals amb seu a Viena

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Address
by the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe,
H.E. Mr. Gilbert Saboya i Sunyé,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Principality of Andorra
932 meeting of the Permanent Council of the OSCE
Vienna, 22 November 2012

Mr. Chairperson,
Mr. Secretary General,
Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Minister of Foreign Affairs of Andorra, I already expressed one year ago during the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Vilnius our support towards Mongolia joining the OSCE. In this regard, I would like to thank the Lithuanian and the Irish OSCE Chairmanship for leading the process. Andorra has aligned to today's EU statement on this issue. Additionally, allow me to extend my warm welcome to Mongolia as the 57 OSCE participating State

First of all, allow me to start by thanking the Irish Chairmanship for the invitation. It is an honor to speak for the first time before this distinguished forum in my capacity as Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

I would like to inform you about the priorities of Andorra in the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. I will

also refer to specific issues relating to cooperation between the two organizations and if you allow me, I will share with you in general terms in my capacity as Minister of Foreign Affairs of Andorra, my country's position regarding our participation in the work of the OSCE.

On November 10, 1994, Andorra became the 33rd member of the Council of Europe. Today, 18 years later, for the first time we assume the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

Our Chairmanship will be guided by the continuity of the previous presidencies and it sets as well joint priorities with the upcoming presidencies of Armenia and Austria. Therefore, we are planning to promote visibility and ensure effectiveness of the European Convention on Human Rights, in order to provide follow-up and implementation of the declarations and to the Interlaken and Izmir Brighton action plans, as well as to continue with the negotiations on the accession of the European Union to the Convention.

Andorra has always been an amicable country, a country with a long lasting culture of peace that has evolved as the result of the permanent contact with cultural diversity and multilingualism, as essential elements of social cohesion and identity. We have made it into one of our strengths, into an opportunity. It is not time for protectionism. It is not time to close up. It is time to open up and it is time for ambition.

That is why education and promotion of activities aimed at youth are our priority. Due to our unique three language education system: French, Spanish and Andorran, Andorra considers that the best legacy and investment is to give the children a chance to enjoy a free and plural education, enabling them to adopt the values of living together, teaching them respect for diversity and providing them with equal opportunities. Thus, we suggest launching

deliberations in the framework of the Council of Europe on education as an instrument to promote democratic values, respect for human rights, tolerance and intercultural dialogue.

Education in tolerance is itself a conflict prevention instrument and the basis to create a community of values that respects diversity and guarantees inclusion. It is, undoubtedly, the most effective tool to combat intolerance and discrimination. This debate will enable us to identify educational tools that could be used in education systems across Europe in order to set common guidelines to guarantee the respect for democracy and human rights.

To this end, we expect to identify skills and indicators that could guide the educators in this task. The results of this work will be presented at the Ministerial meeting on Education that will take place in Helsinki next April.

Andorra also reaffirms its commitment to the Council of Europe and its "acquis" and legal instruments. Complementary efforts are needed to ensure human rights in Europe. That is why the visibility of the Convention and the work of the Council of Europe are of paramount importance, in particular those activities related to tolerance and non-discrimination, effective justice, fight against corruption and trafficking in human beings.

Therefore, during our Chairmanship, we will proceed to the signing of the Convention on Cybercrime and its Additional Protocol, the Convention on the prevention and fight against the violence against women and domestic violence and the Additional Protocol to the Criminal Law Convention on Corruption. The Convention for the Protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse and the European Convention for the suppression of terrorism and its Protocol will be ratified.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The reform of the Council of Europe launched by the Secretary General Sr.Jagland two and half years ago will continue during our chairmanship with the aim of strengthening the role of the Organization within the European architecture, to make it more flexible and efficient.

In this context, the report presented by Professor Ulfstein in the Council of Europe and the one presented by Ambassador Lundin in the OSCE regarding cooperation among international organizations outline the comparative advantages of the joint cooperation of the two organizations and put forward good proposals to improve synergies.

We are convinced that such cooperation should be carried out in a coordinated and coherent manner. It should focus on strategies and concrete and pragmatic joint activities to avoid duplication. In this context, we expect that the Ministerial Council meeting in Dublin could advance in the vision of the security community, providing the Organization with a clear, concise and long-term strategy. The issue of cooperation among international organizations should be included as an integral part in the creation of the security community.

The opening of the Council of Europe office in Vienna is certainly a key factor in promoting cooperation between the two organizations. In this framework, we hope that the Council of Europe representative in Vienna could participate regularly in the meetings of the OSCE.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Foreign Minister of Andorra, I would like to briefly point out the importance that my country attaches to the OSCE. We do not belong to any security agreement, we have no armed forces and the comprehensive, inclusive and indivisible OSCE concept of security allows us to fit in the organization.

My country takes seriously, with rigor and humility its contribution to the Organization and strives to implement the compromises and recommendations of the OSCE, considering its administrative capacity.

Furthermore, the priorities of the Government of Andorra in international cooperation are education and protection of the most vulnerable, particularly women and children. We have therefore made various voluntary contributions in the framework of the OSCE to projects on combating human trafficking in Moldova, and in education in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Voluntary contributions have been also made to Afghan police training in the Border Management Staff Collage in Dushanbe and to the project of the Community Security Initiative in Kyrgyzstan.

In conclusion, less than two weeks before the meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Dublin, I invite you to reflect on the notion of commitment as a core value and pillar of any political action. A commitment understood as a deep belief in the values of democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. A commitment also understood as involvement and assumption of individual responsibility in a common project. A commitment understood as a pledge to dialogue and a capacity for understanding - we can not forget that we need to work together

to meet the challenges and find fair and strong answers. Only by doing so could we ensure peace, security and prosperity in the OSCE area for the good of all our citizens.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.