
Second day of the Twenty-Fifth Meeting
MC(25) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 7

DECLARATION ON SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

1. We, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the participating States of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, reaffirm that the security of the OSCE area is inextricably linked to that of the Mediterranean region, as acknowledged in the Helsinki Final Act, and affirmed in the 2010 Astana Commemorative Declaration and in the 2014 Ministerial Council Declaration on Co-operation with the Mediterranean Partners.
2. We recognize that, since our meeting in Basel in 2014, this link between security in the OSCE area and security in the Mediterranean region has become all the more relevant, as has our co-operation with our Mediterranean Partners, given the growing range of challenges and opportunities stemming from the Mediterranean region and beyond. We therefore call for Mediterranean-related issues to be clearly reflected throughout the relevant work of the OSCE across the three dimensions of comprehensive security, and for greater engagement in advancing a common approach in tackling the related challenges, many of which are transnational and cross-dimensional in nature, and in seizing emerging opportunities, in a spirit of genuine partnership, co-operation, and ownership.
3. Against this background, reaffirming the 2014 Ministerial Council Declaration on Co-operation with the Mediterranean Partners, we reaffirm the relevance and value of the OSCE Mediterranean Partnership and we welcome the high-level political participation in OSCE Mediterranean conferences, most recently in the 2017 Palermo Conference and in the 2018 Malaga Conference. We call for this engagement to be translated into enhanced action-oriented dialogue with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, defining a more strategic approach to ensuring the continuity and sustainability of the Partnership's achievements.
4. We look forward to the 25th anniversary of the Mediterranean Contact Group in 2019 as a timely opportunity to discuss and take stock of the Mediterranean Partnership, with a view to providing enhanced support to its mechanisms, including through the Partnership Fund, and collectively identifying areas of common concern that require sustained engagement over the medium to long term.
5. We call for the OSCE to intensify practical co-operation with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation in areas of common interest where the OSCE can bring added value. In particular, we appreciate the initiatives that the OSCE has developed in recent years in increasingly relevant areas for Mediterranean co-operation, such as migration,

environmental and energy co-operation, combating trafficking in human beings along migration routes, countering trafficking in cultural property, and addressing other challenges, including cyber/ICT security in a manner consistent with the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security. We support ongoing OSCE activities in these areas and would welcome further and stronger engagement with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. We also welcome initiatives aimed at fostering co-operation on Mediterranean-related issues between the OSCE and other relevant international organizations, in accordance with the 1999 Platform for Co-operative Security and in the spirit of the OSCE Mediterranean Partnership.

6. Strongly concerned about the links between illicit trafficking, organized criminal groups and the financing of terrorism, in this regard we welcome efforts undertaken by the OSCE and by the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation to prevent and combat all forms of trafficking, in particular trafficking in human beings and illicit trafficking in cultural property, including objects of religious origin. To this end, we encourage the OSCE to continue fostering co-operation among law enforcement and training agencies for combating all forms of trafficking, which pose specific challenges to security in the Mediterranean area.

7. We reaffirm our condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as it constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security, and our firm rejection of the identification of terrorism with any ethnicity, nationality or religion. We reiterate our resolve to intensify work with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation to combat this threat. In this context, we call for co-ordinated and action-oriented initiatives to prevent and counter terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism, while recognizing the leading role of the United Nations in the international efforts in this area. Moreover, as acknowledged most recently by the OSCE-wide Counter-Terrorism Conference held in Rome in May 2018, we reaffirm the need to tackle the growing threat posed by the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, returning or relocated, particularly from conflict zones to the countries of origin or nationality, or to third countries, in line with UN Security Council resolution 2396 (2017).

8. Noting the crucial role that sustainable development, economic growth and connectivity play in fostering common security, we note with appreciation the OSCE initiatives aimed at strengthening the dialogue with the Mediterranean Partners on economic and environmental issues, especially the recent ones on energy, based on the sharing of information and the exchange of best practices. We look forward to intensified engagement between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation in areas of common interest and concern, including the role of energy in fostering growth and co-operation, energy security and opportunities offered by renewable sources of energy, in line with OSCE commitments.

9. We underscore the continuing relevance of the respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms as an integral part of the OSCE comprehensive concept of security. We also draw attention to the important and positive role played by youth in enhancing security and stability in the OSCE area and in the Mediterranean region and encourage OSCE initiatives aimed at promoting youth participation and youth engagement, which foster dialogue and co-operation among Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation and OSCE participating States.

10. We welcome the interaction between the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Partners for Co-operation's parliaments as well as the organization of an annual

Parliamentary Forum on the Mediterranean. We also encourage the Partners for Co-operation to participate in these events.

11. We encourage the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation to voluntarily adopt and implement OSCE principles, norms and commitments. We welcome the interest expressed by Partners in raising the profile of the OSCE in their countries, including through co-operation on projects and other activities, and their higher-level representation at relevant OSCE conferences and events.

MC.DOC/4/18
7 December 2018
Attachment 1

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of the Russian Federation:

“In connection with the adopted Declaration on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean, the Russian delegation would like to make the following statement.

Russia joined the consensus on this decision, wishing to stimulate more active co-operation in the Mediterranean region, safeguard its security and contribute to combating the threats that arise there.

At the same time, we are disappointed that, because of the position of certain States, the document does not include an important provision on combating discrimination against Christians, Muslims, Jews and members of other religions. This is particularly relevant in the light of the religious persecution and interconfessional tension in the region. We would recall that the Mediterranean is the cradle of three world religions. The refusal of a number of countries to confirm the commitments in this area set out in particular in the Declaration on Co-operation with the Mediterranean Partners (MC.DOC/9/14) adopted at the 2014 Ministerial Council meeting in Basel is surprising and weakens the Declaration adopted today.

In view of the absence of corresponding provisions in the Declaration adopted here, we regard the aforementioned Declaration (MC.DOC/9/14) as the basis for work with the OSCE Partners for Co-operation in this area.

We once again recall the need to strengthen the OSCE’s instruments for safeguarding religious tolerance, including through the elaboration of separate ministerial declarations in defence of Christians and Muslims in accordance with the mandate of the Basel Ministerial Council.

The Russian delegation requests that this statement be attached to the adopted Declaration and to the journal of the day.”

MC.DOC/4/18
7 December 2018
Attachment 2

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

The delegation of Austria, in its capacity as EU Presidency, passed the floor to the representative of the European Union, who delivered the following statement:

“In connection with the Ministerial Council declaration just adopted on the security and co-operation in the Mediterranean, the European Union wishes to make the following interpretative statement under the relevant provisions of the OSCE Rules of Procedure (also on behalf of Montenegro):

The European Union joined consensus on this text in acknowledging that the security of the OSCE region is inextricably linked to that of the Mediterranean region.

At the same time, the EU wishes to underline the importance it places on gender equality in all work of the OSCE. We regret that the inclusion of language on the promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment did not meet consensus in light of the important role that they play for our common security.

I request that this interpretative statement be attached to the journal of the day and to the declaration in question.”