



**Report on the meeting between the OSCE Ministerial Troika
and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation
on the margins of the Dublin Ministerial Council**

The annual meeting between the OSCE Ministerial Troika and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, with the participation of the OSCE Secretary General and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, took place on 7 December 2012, on the margins of the Dublin Ministerial Council. The meeting was chaired by Joe Costello, Minister of State of the Department of Foreign Affairs of Ireland.

Minister of State Joe Costello opened the meeting by noting Ireland's commitment during its Chairmanship to deepening the OSCE engagement with the Partners, including by encouraging the three Committee chairs to invite Partners to relevant meetings. He also noted the Partners' active participation in the 2012 OSCE Mediterranean Conference. A key element in the Conference's success had been the prominent role of the Partners in shaping the agenda and the scope of the discussions. He commended and supported the Secretary General's efforts to enhance the dialogue with the Mediterranean Partners, both through informal consultations and high-level meetings, with a view to identifying areas for initiating concrete co-operation activities and encouraged Partners to formally express their interest for further engagement with the OSCE. In conclusion, he noted that the Helsinki+40 process offered an important opportunity for the OSCE to adopt a more strategic approach, of which a stronger Partnership should be an essential element.

The OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier briefed about his engagement in promoting more practical co-operation as well as high level political dialogue with the Mediterranean Partners. He informed about projects to be implemented in early 2013 on anti-terrorism, combating human trafficking and sustainable energy and stressed the importance of involving the Mediterranean Partners in the Helsinki+40 process.

Ambassador Ihor Prokopchuk, the Ukrainian Chair of the Mediterranean Contact Group, stated that interaction with the Mediterranean Partners had been intensive and result-oriented in 2012. Ukraine's main focus had been to enhance political dialogue and exchanges of experiences as well as practical co-operation. Meetings of the Mediterranean Contact Group were marked by interesting presentations by most Partners and interaction with experts from the OSCE and other international organizations. Ukraine supported the upcoming initiatives in the areas of combating human trafficking, anti-terrorism and sustainable energy. The interest expressed by Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria to enhance their co-operation with the Organization was deemed particularly encouraging. The 2012 OSCE

Mediterranean Conference had been particularly successful in forging a better understanding on the nature of the OSCE's assistance to its Partners.

Secretary of State in charge of European Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tunisia Touhami Abdouli assessed positively the goals and the tailored approach of the OSCE to relations with the Partners. He stated that the OSCE had a vital role to play in assisting democratization processes, especially with regard to elections. He strongly advocated a higher involvement of the civil society and suggested creating an action plan to this end.

Ambassador of Israel Aviv Shir-On stated his country's interest and readiness to enhance co-operation with the OSCE and with the group of Partners. He noted that the OSCE was rooted in the promotion of dialogue despite political differences and this constituted a useful example in the Middle East context.

Ambassador of Morocco Ali El Mhamd appreciated the promotion of informal dialogue and concrete co-operation initiatives by the Secretary General. Morocco looked forward contributing to the Helsinki+40 process and to develop further practical co-operation, including on Track II initiatives. He further mentioned that a mechanism to ensure follow-up to the Mediterranean Conferences' outcomes would be needed.

Ambassador of Jordan Makram M. Queisi stressed the importance of practical co-operation and Jordan's readiness to co-operate across the three dimensions of security. He announced that Jordan would elaborate a proposal for co-operation on inter-cultural and religious dialogue.

Ambassador of Algeria Mohamed Benhocine briefed about Algeria's concern about the security threats stemming from the situation in Mali. He supported a closer engagement of the Partners in the Helsinki+40 process and mentioned that Algeria would welcome a positive response by OSCE participating States to the application for Partnership submitted by the Palestinian National Authority. Algeria was ready to participate in the upcoming regional initiatives on anti-terrorism, combating human trafficking and sustainable energy and was interested in pursuing closer co-operation with the OSCE on responding to transnational threats.

Ambassador of Egypt Khaled Shamaa stated that co-operation could be usefully expanded to areas related to social development and the empowerment of civil society, including women. He supported the upcoming regional workshop on sustainable energy, noting that the OSCE could serve as a platform for dialogue and co-operation in such field. Egypt also supported the inclusion of the Palestinian National Authority in the OSCE Mediterranean Partnership.

Ambassador Heidi Grau, Head of the Swiss Task Force and incoming Chair of the Mediterranean Contact Group, appreciated the positive new impetus within the Mediterranean Group. She stated Switzerland's determination to advancing regional and bilateral co-operation in the region as well as high level political dialogue. Switzerland would promote a practical and result-oriented working method based on dialogue. Switzerland also hoped to consolidate the partnership with civil society and with other international

organizations in strengthening the effectiveness of the OSCE Mediterranean Partnership, including with the League of Arab States and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Areas of co-operation of particular relevance for Switzerland included anti-terrorism, transnational threats, border management, migration, fight against trafficking in human beings, democratic election, and empowerment of population.

Mr. Gustavo Pallares, Deputy Secretary General of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, noted the importance attributed by parliamentarians to the Mediterranean dimension. He commended the deep and broad interaction, including also with the Palestinian National Authority and Libya at the 2012 Mediterranean Forum, which he expected to be continued at the next Annual Session to take place in 2013 in Istanbul.

Ambassador of Lithuania Giedrius Čekuolis concluded by praising the progress being made towards a more result-oriented co-operation with the Mediterranean Partners.