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Delegation of San Marino

**STATEMENT BY THE
REPUBLIC OF SAN MARINO AT THE OSCE CONFERENCE ON
COMBATING DISCRIMINATION AND PROMOTING MUTUAL
RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING**

Bucharest, 7 and 8 June 2007

Mr. Chairman,

I wish first of all to thank the Government of Romania for the splendid hospitality that it has shown us and to commend the excellent organization of the Conference, whose deliberations will permit another step forward in the combating of discrimination and the promotion of mutual respect and co-operation.

The OSCE, from the outset, has attached fundamental importance to the subject that we are discussing today, and I shall try to make a small contribution to this debate by giving you a brief account of the action taken by the Republic of San Marino in this area and the efforts that it intends to continue to support, in a spirit of constant co-operation with this Organization.

In the six-month period from November 2006 to May 2007, as you are aware, my country was in a particularly favourable situation to contribute to these endeavours as it occupied the chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

During the period of its chairmanship, San Marino selected and pursued three objectives in particular which I think it would be useful to recall because they are all closely related to the themes of this Conference: respect for and the promotion of human rights, inter alia through an improvement in the functioning of the European Court of Human Rights; the promotion of intercultural and interreligious dialogue, which is one of the issues before this Conference; and co-operation among international organizations.

Starting with this last point, I should like to refer to the fruitful high-level meeting between the Council of Europe and the OSCE held in Madrid on 3 May 2007, in which the then Chairman of the Committee of Ministers, Mr. Fiorenzo Stolfi, and the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE, Mr. Moratinos, took part along with the Secretaries General of the two organizations.

On that occasion, in addition to a reaffirmed commitment to constantly improving co-operation between the two organizations, particular importance was given to the promotion of tolerance and non-discrimination, and it was agreed that, with the support of the

“focal points” with responsibilities in the area, co-operation in this field should be further strengthened.

In connection with the promotion of intercultural and interreligious dialogue, which will be discussed during tomorrow afternoon’s plenary, allow me to recall the contribution made by my country through the organization of the European Conference on “The Religious Dimension of Cultural Dialogue”, which took place in San Marino on 23 and 24 April 2007 and in which a representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office also participated.

At the San Marino conference, we devised an original and effective formula for promoting dialogue, bringing together representatives of States and of non-governmental organizations, and experts, with spokesmen from the three main monotheistic religions represented in Europe. On this occasion, a place of meditation and prayer open to all, free of religious symbols, was inaugurated in San Marino as a concrete sign of the desire of my country to foster dialogue and religious knowledge.

The San Marino conference, from which an important final declaration emerged calling for a continuation of the dialogue between cultures and religions, produced another result: a decision by the Council of Europe, by way of experiment, to hold an annual meeting on the religious dimension of the intercultural dialogue as from 2008.

These results, combined with efforts to elicit the necessary support for an improvement in the functioning of the Strasbourg Court, make us hopeful for the future of the process of constructing the Europe of dialogue, of respect for minorities and of non-discrimination and mutual understanding that we all want to see.

Even a small country like mine — small but proud of its tradition of respect for others — has thus been able to make a contribution to this process, and this Conference gives us a further opportunity to reaffirm the commitment of San Marino, within the OSCE, to the objectives that that Organization seeks to pursue.

My country, to the extent permitted by its modest dimensions, intends to continue to live up to these commitments by contributing its own thoughts on these subjects at the main meetings organized by the OSCE and other international organizations that are stepping up their efforts to promote dialogue at all levels and social cohesion as an essential basis for peace-building. Our contribution is linked to San Marino’s traditional devotion to the cause of peace, which is reflected in its history and makes it an ideal venue for encounter, dialogue and mediation in disputes.

I wished to draw attention to these recent international activities by San Marino because, in spite of being a small country as I have said, it has done its best to assume an active, creative role on the international stage.

I think that this example may be of some utility in encouraging the collective determination of all the countries that participate in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe to continue to work together for the future of our common European home.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, my delegation would wish to join others in expressing the hope that this Conference and its conclusions will remain within the ambit of the agreed language of the OSCE with regard to tolerance.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.