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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE HOLY SEE  
TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY  
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

ENGLISH only

**STATEMENT BY MONSIGNOR MICHAEL W. BANACH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE HOLY SEE,  
AT THE 939<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

**31 JANUARY 2013**

**RE: PRESENTATIONS BY THE CHAIRPERSONS OF THE SECURITY  
COMMITTEE; THE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
COMMITTEE; AND THE HUMAN DIMENSION COMMITTEE**

Mister Chairman!

1. The Holy See congratulates Ambassadors Tacan Ildem, Ol'ga Algayerová and Vuk Žigić on their appointments as the Chairs of the three Committees of the Permanent Council and thanks them for charting the course of our work this year. I wish to assure my colleagues of the support of the Holy See which, in accordance with its specific nature, will seek to contribute constructively to the work of the three Committees.

2. In terms of the non-military aspects of security dealt with by the Security Committee, the Holy See values the efforts of the OSCE in strengthening co-ordination and coherence to address transnational threats, including the fight against terrorism; in combating the threat of illegal drugs and chemical precursors; in promoting a strategic framework for police-related activities; and in furthering measures in the area of cyber security, including through the development of CSBMs. These have inherent value as a contribution to the protection of the rights of human beings.

My Delegation will closely follow the initiatives concerning the contribution to the implementation of the UNSCR No. 1540 on Non Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. The OSCE no doubt has something original and valuable to offer to the international community and the

Holy See has repeatedly expressed its support for the OSCE document on non-proliferation.

3. The Holy See appreciates the choice of the environmental impact of energy-related activities, energy saving and renewable sources of energy as the major topic of the second dimension. These issues are closely connected and interrelated, as well as being directly linked to all the citizens of OSCE participating States, their prosperity, health, security. This is ultimately a question of sustainable development, an urgent security and human rights issue; hence the importance of increasing public participation in this regard.

Oftentimes the issue and abuse of natural resources are also directly related to migration and migrants who are often leaving their homes in search of safer environments and a more secure place to live. Hence, my Delegation would like to see continued attention given to the question of migrants, migrant workers and their families; responsible use of resources and its distribution against their uncontrolled use and wild race for profit; water and land management; promoting, initiating and supporting environmental cooperation as a tool for preventing conflicts and promoting peace between communities; development of strategies concerning access to energy which is a prerequisite for economic development; continued promotion and implementation of ethical behavior and code of conduct of public officials and politically elected persons.

Finally, we look forward to continuing discussions on the Review of implementation of the 2003 OSCE Strategy Document (“Maastricht Strategy”) for the Economic and Environmental Dimension. This could perhaps best be done within the context of the Helsinki+40 Process.

4. Regarding the human dimension, my Delegation expresses its readiness to offer its contribution in pursuing common goals and in fulfillment of the agreed commitments of the Organization. It is important to focus on the added-value of the OSCE in this dimension; we should not try to deal with everything in order to avoid by ending up achieving little or nothing

In this context, my Delegation commends the efforts planned in the field of the fight against trafficking in human beings. As long as this plague exists this topic should remain a priority for the OSCE, as there is always space to do more until it is fully eradicated.

My Delegation also believes that agreement could be reached on the freedom of expression and media and its legislative framework. This agreement will have to be the fruit of common interests and an objective approach from all parties in order to avoid finishing in a *cul de sac*.

Regarding tolerance and non-discrimination, the emphasis on youth education is no doubt both important and timely. The common good and common interests should not be overlooked because that should be the final goal of a secure and stable society. We welcome the invitation of Albania to host a Conference dedicated to this topic and we look forward to approving an agenda acceptable to all participating States.

A focus on quality education for Roma and Sinti is also welcomed by my Delegation. Such a topic coincides not only with the tenth anniversary of the OSCE Action Plan on Roma and Sinti, but seems to be a logical follow-up to a previous event on early childhood education for Roma and Sinti.

We are very glad that the freedom of religion is among the priorities of the Ukrainian Chairmanship and the human dimension committee this year. My Delegation would like to underline, however, that the main task of governments and international organizations is not to carry out inter-religious dialogue, which remains within the purview of the religions themselves, but to strive to create, ensure and guarantee conditions in which such a dialogue, as well as one between religious communities and secular society, is possible. In this context, the promotion of the OSCE commitments on working to stop intolerance and discrimination against Christians remains a priority for my Delegation this year.

**5.** In conclusion, Mister Chairman, my Delegation renews its best wishes and support to the three Committee Chairs, as well as its readiness to contribute constructively to the work of the Committees this year.

Thank you, Mister Chair!