

PC.DEL/321/08
23 April 2008

ENGLISH
Original: FRENCH

**STATEMENT BY THE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ALGERIA
AT THE MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

17 April 2008

**In response to the address by His Excellency Mr. Amre Moussa,
Secretary General of the League of Arab States**

Mr. Chairman,

In my position as president of the Council of Arab Ambassadors in Vienna, I should like to thank you for allowing me to invite Mr. Amre Moussa, Secretary General of the League of Arab States, to address the OSCE Permanent Council for the first time.

I should like to take this happy occasion to extend a very warm welcome to him and to congratulate him on his address, in which he painted a realistic picture of the situation in the Middle East and of the prospects for co-operation between the League of Arab States and the OSCE. There are in fact fresh prospects in the light of the regional co-operation programme recently agreed between the Organization and the League of Arab States and also the establishment of a partnership fund, in the context of which I should also like to mention the Asian partners and the participating States.

I am confident that the planned regional co-operation will help to invigorate the partnership with the Mediterranean Arab States as envisaged by the Secretary General of the League of Arab States. It marks an important milestone in efforts to strengthen the Mediterranean dimension of the Organization, to which the Mediterranean partners endeavour to contribute in the three domains in which the OSCE operates:

- The security dimension, regarded as single and indivisible between the two shores of the Mediterranean and aiming at the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts and at concerted efforts to counter terrorism;
- The economic and environmental dimension, which aims at reducing the gap that separates the two shores and confronting the issue of water resources, desertification and sustainable management of the soil so as to ensure the stability, security and well-being of the people in the region;
- The human dimension in the framework of intensified dialogue with the partners on questions of common interest so as to overcome the problems obstructing the development of fruitful co-operation between the Arab and Western world.

In this context, the attacks on Islam and Muslims are a matter of concern. They call for a redoubling of efforts to combat all forms of intolerance and discrimination. I therefore repeat the appeal made to the OSCE by the Arab Mediterranean countries and supported today by Mr. Amre Moussa to issue a clear condemnation of Islamophobia and to ensure that this phenomenon, which incites hatred and extremism on all sides, is closely monitored.

On behalf of the Mediterranean Arab partners, I should like to take the opportunity of the presence of Mr. Amre Moussa to express our support for his call for an intensification of dialogue and the promotion of respect and mutual understanding that form the basis for the partnership and co-operation by the Mediterranean countries with the OSCE.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.