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**SPEECH BY H.M. THE KING OF SPAIN AT THE LUNCHEON DURING
HIS OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE OSCE**

Vienna, 21 November 2007

- Non-official translation -

Ambassadors,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It fills me with a special sense of satisfaction to be back in Vienna, visiting, for the first time, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, during the year in which Spain holds the Chairmanship of this Organization.

During this visit, I will also have the honour and the pleasure of inaugurating, together with the Federal President of the Republic of Austria, the new headquarters for the OSCE Secretariat and the Representative on the Freedom of the Media.

This splendid building responds to the Organization's practical and representational needs, whilst also symbolising OSCE's commitment to seeking better ways to project its values and principles, and to greater efficiency in carrying out its work.

I should like to extend my warmest greetings to all the Ambassadors present here today, and to the Secretary-General of this Organization, as well as my thanks for your very kind welcome.

During its existence, OSCE has forged a relevant role based on perseverance, hard work, and, above all, on the value of words in the service of peace and security, of prosperity and democracy.

Since 1975, the history of OSCE has been that of ongoing negotiations, of an open dialogue that serves a community of values, which has constituted a cornerstone of Europe's shared security, and a stimulus to greater democratization on the part of the participating States.

However, the challenges that the Organization faces remain considerable.

These challenges range from stability in the Balkans, the fight against terrorist barbarity, or the preservation of the levels of security achieved on our continent, to co-operation on economic and environmental issues, as well as effective respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, in democratic and plural societies.

Far from being worried by these challenges, their very existence demands that we all face them together.

Spain, whose recent history has been closely linked to that of the Organization, has always underlined OSCE's special value. Indeed, our transition towards a fully democratic society took place in parallel with the birth and development of OSCE.

Upon assuming the Chairmanship of the Organization in 2007, Spain aimed to enrich its legacy, and strengthen its political foundations.

From the beginning, the Spanish Chairmanship has been marked, by the constant drive to strengthen and raise the profile of the work being carried out in Vienna, Warsaw and Copenhagen, as well as OSCE's different Field Presences, further heightening this Organization's character as a forum for dialogue and negotiation.

The Spanish Chairmanship is now approaching its culminating moment.

In a few days, the Ministerial Council will be held in Madrid. We hope that all participating States will speak with a single voice, identifying common points of interest and paths to overcoming obstacles, as well as the OSCE's priorities and ways to achieve them.

In this Organization, Spain has attributed particular importance to the fight against terrorism and to the assistance for its victims—the subject of a Conference which we sponsored—. We have also tried to reinforce our respect for the environment and its connection to security.

Regarding the Human Dimension, the Madrid meeting could be an ideal opportunity to continue our collaboration on such issues as the fight against human trafficking or the promotion of tolerance.

Within this framework, we can place the Conference on Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims, recently hosted by Spain in Cordoba.

The vision of a united Europe, at peace with itself, has yet to be fully fulfilled. Great objectives, however, have been achieved. We have the collective obligation to preserve them, and to go even further.

The checks and balances and confidence building measures that have been so painstakingly reached amongst our States remain irreplaceable. Let us work together to maintain and to strengthen them.

Likewise, the stability of some regions within our Organization, such as the Balkans, should be reinforced.

We must not falter in this commitment, nor in those already made, regarding protracted conflicts in a security area which, collectively, we have set about to create.

On the other hand our common space cannot be disassociated from relations with our Mediterranean and Asian co-operation partners, whose contribution is increasingly important, and whose closer rapport with OSCE has been promoted by the Spanish Chairmanship.

OSCE's success, and the challenges before us, show that this is an Organization just as necessary today, as it was when it was born.

My thanks to the Secretariat of OSCE, to its Institutions, to the Parliamentary Assembly, to the Personal Representatives of the Chairman-in-Office, and to OSCE Field Missions, for their efforts and their dedication during this year. Likewise, I wish all the best to Finland during its upcoming Chairmanship.

Ambassadors,
Mr. Secretary-General,

In this palace, with such deep historical meaning for Europe, and in this capital, so united to Spain through close, centuries-old ties, I would like to thank you, once again, for your kind welcome, to which I would like to respond with an expression of my support for OSCE and my best wishes for its success in its very important tasks.

In this spirit, Ladies and Gentlemen, let me raise my glass to OSCE, to its valuable work, and to all of you.

Thank you very much.