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## Opening of the Maltese Chairmanship of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation

### **Statement by the Hon. Dr. George W. Vella Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Malta**

742<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation  
24 January 2014

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to welcome you to the opening session of the Maltese Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co-operation. We will strive to ensure that the four months ahead of us will be interesting, engaging and a time where in a spirit of camaraderie and common interest we can build consensus and move forward together.

After a successful Ministerial Council in Kiev, a challenging year lies ahead of us in the Forum for Security Cooperation. We were able to reach consensus on two important decisions in Kiev, one on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition, and the other on updating the OSCE principles governing non-proliferation. However in spite of the tireless efforts of the Luxembourg FSC Chairmanship, regrettably, it was not possible to reach agreement on a Ministerial Council Decision on issues relevant to the FSC. In an effort to reflect the interest of the participating States, we have planned a number of Security Dialogues on issues pertinent to these two Ministerial Council Decisions during this Chairmanship and we will welcome continued discussions in the relevant working groups.

This Forum also received another important task from the Kiev Ministerial Council, which derives from the Declaration on Furthering the Helsinki +40 process. This group has been called upon to contribute to the Helsinki +40 process and in this respect, we plan to have a Security Dialogue dedicated to a discussion on how the FSC can contribute to this process, thereby giving the participating States the opportunity to express themselves on this important matter.

I am pleased to note that this year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Code of Conduct on politico-military aspects of security. This is one of the most forward-looking documents of the OSCE and it is my pleasure to inform you that we will explore ways and means to enhance its effective implementation. I note that some interesting ideas were aired during the

\*) redistribution due to change of distribution status, text remains unchanged

Seminar held in Malta last September on this topic, and during the very first Security Dialogue under Malta's Chairmanship next week will try to build on these findings.

Indeed, Malta will continue to give its contribution to build on the work of previous FSC Chairmanships, including on existing documents, and to stand ready to assist in monitoring their implementation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Together with Moldova and Monaco, the other two participating States holding the FSC Chairmanship this year, and with the assistance of the FSC Support Section, we have compiled a tentative annual work programme of the FSC for 2014, which has been circulated under reference FSC.INF/3/14. I take this opportunity to thank Moldova and Monaco as well as the FSC Support Section for their excellent cooperation, and I wish to assure them that they too will find us ready to assist them.

The main reoccurring event in the first trimester will be the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting on 4-5 March. Another initiative that promises to be interesting is the Security Day on 14 March organized by the Secretary General, on "the Way Forward in the Politico-Military Dimension – the role and relevance of OSCE Instruments of co-operative security".

As an island at the heart of the Mediterranean, where we so often speak of being at the crossroads of civilizations, Malta has always been a firm supporter of the Mediterranean Dimension of the OSCE, and from the very inception of this organization has always purported the notion of the indivisibility of the security of Europe from that of the Mediterranean. Indeed, Malta has made a focus on the Mediterranean Region its overarching priority for its FSC Chairmanship. Under this umbrella, and with our Mediterranean Partners in mind, we will focus in particular on the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military aspects of Security as mentioned, in particular on the issue of Democratic Control of Armed and Security Forces. Another area of concern for us which falls under this Forum concerns anti-trafficking measures related to arms and this Chairmanship shall also seek to have a discussion in this regard.

As can be seen in our indicative schedule of plenary meetings under the Maltese FSC Chairmanship, which has been circulated under reference FSC.INF/2/14, we have dedicated a number of Security Dialogues to these topics, and invited several high-level speakers to share their insight with us. In further pursuance of our overarching priority, we would like to engage further the Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation in the work of the FSC, with a view to enhancing their contribution to this Forum and vice versa. While we continue to speak of a Euro-Asian and a Euro-Atlantic dimension to the OSCE, as I myself remarked during my speech at the Kiev Ministerial last December, the Organisation has to widen its angle to include a Euro-Mediterranean dimension in its work. We cannot speak of security in Europe if we ignore the real and present threats on Europe's southern flank. That is why

Malta feels very strongly that we need to engage with our Mediterranean partners more decisively and more comprehensively. And that is why we will look forward to engaging with the Mediterranean Partners in a constructive spirit on issues of mutual interest in this forum. In this respect, I am also pleased to note that the joint meeting of the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Cooperation on 19 March will focus on the topic of “Security Challenges in the Mediterranean Regions”. May this be just one of several such meetings still to come.

That said and bearing in mind that in this day and age no issue affects one region in isolation, I am certain that the topics to be discussed will also be of interest for our Asian Partners for Cooperation, whose engagement will be very much welcomed. We will look forward to hearing their views. Hence, we are pleased to continue the tradition of previous FSC Chairmanships, in inviting our Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Cooperation to the FSC, thereby giving them the opportunity to express their views.

The Maltese FSC Chairmanship will also strive to ensure continuity in the work of the two working groups, and stands ready to accommodate constructive discussions. In particular, we stand ready to accommodate interest by the participating States on the modernization of the Vienna Document.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In agreement with the members of the FSC Troika and the Conflict Prevention Centre, I am pleased to confirm the mandates of following FSC Chairmanship coordinators:

- Dr. Pierre von Arx – Co-ordinator of the FSC Chair for the Vienna Document;
- Lieutenant Colonel Detlef Hempel – FSC Co-ordinator for the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security; and,
- Ms. Bilge Koçyiğit – FSC Co-ordinator on matters relating to UNSCR 1325.
- Lieutenant Colonel Mark Barlow – FSC Co-ordinator for Projects on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition;

I am equally pleased to announce the following new appointments:

- Mr. Raimonds Oškālns – FSC Chairperson’s Co-ordinator on Non-proliferation Issues;
- Major Magín Álvarez Arribas - Chairperson of the Informal Group of Friends on Small Arms and Light Weapons; and,

- Mr. Robertas Rosinas - *chef de file* of the FSC for the 2014 Annual Security Review Conference.

I take this opportunity, on behalf of the FSC Troika, to thank the co-ordinators for volunteering to undertake these important tasks. We count on their expertise and professionalism and are convinced they will be an asset to the FSC Troika.

Excellencies,

Malta takes on this role of Chair with deep respect for the work of the OSCE. We assume this responsibility in full appreciation of its importance as a place of dialogue and for confidence-building between our participating States. The coming four months will certainly be hectic ones, but I am certain that with your collaboration, they will also be fruitful ones.

In concluding I wish to thank the outgoing Chair, Luxembourg, for their commitment which made their Chairmanship a success. I also wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Conflict Prevention Centre, in particular to the FSC Support Section for their sterling work and invaluable assistance in preparation for our Chairmanship. And while warmly welcoming Moldova as incoming Troika member, I assure them of our assistance and cooperation in the months ahead.

Thank you.