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**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR TACAN İLDEM
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY**

**In response to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr. Thorbjørn Jagland
(968th Meeting of the Permanent Council, 24 October 2013)**

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

I would like to join the previous speakers in warmly welcoming Secretary General Jagland back to the Permanent Council, and to thank him for his instructive, thought-provoking presentation.

Mr. Secretary General, you aptly pointed out that in these challenging times, the OSCE and the Council of Europe are needed more than ever. We wholeheartedly agree with that. They are needed for their decades-long dedicated efforts to protect and promote the core values around which both Organizations revolve, namely human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

Turkey welcomes the ongoing efforts to strengthen the dialogue and institutionalized cooperation between the Council of Europe and the OSCE in a complementary and mutually reinforcing manner. We attach great importance to the four areas of enhanced OSCE-Council of Europe cooperation. Cooperation in these fields allows us to efficiently address matters of cross-dimensional nature, filling loopholes and creating synergies. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our support for further coordination between our two Organizations and enhancement of joint activities while maintaining complementarity and avoiding duplication, as you also rightly underlined in your statement.

Of the four enhanced cooperation areas I now wish to briefly dwell on two due to time limitations.

Promoting tolerance and non-discrimination has long been among my country's priorities within both the OSCE and the Council of Europe. One prominent dimension of the "challenging period" that you referred to, Mr. Secretary General, is certainly the rise of racism, xenophobia, intolerance and discrimination. At this juncture, let me state that we subscribe to every word in the statement you made this Monday at the "High-level Conference on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Intolerance in Europe" held in Yerevan. You have very eloquently drawn attention to the threats posed by the numerous aspects of these evils, as well as to key factors that are critical for overcoming the current alarming situation. Today you have dwelled upon these challenges in a succinct way as well. We are particularly concerned that Islamophobia is increasingly rearing its ugly head and anti-Muslim sentiments are becoming more and more vocal, as also demonstrated during this year's Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. Against this backdrop, ODIHR's cooperation with the Council of Europe in the field of tolerance and non-discrimination is becoming ever more relevant. The joint development, along with UNESCO, of the 2011 "*Guidelines for Educators on Countering Intolerance and Discrimination*

against Muslims: Addressing Islamophobia through Education” is just one valuable example which springs to mind in this regard. At the same time, we agree with your statement that we need political leadership as well as efforts in taking necessary legislative steps and in law enforcement.

We also appreciate the continuing cooperation between the two Organizations on issues related to combating terrorism and its financing. We are pleased to note that our cooperation has deepened over the last year in promoting the implementation of the international legal framework against terrorism, enhancing international legal co-operation in criminal matters related to terrorism as well as combatting financing of terrorism and money laundering. Taking this opportunity, I would also like to announce that Turkey is hosting together with the Council of Europe an international conference on national and international coordination in counter-terrorism in Istanbul today and tomorrow. The OSCE TNTD/ATU and ODIHR are also among the participants of this meeting.

It would be remiss if I did not refer to women’s rights, which you also highlighted in your written presentation, as an area where Turkey is striving to break new ground within the OSCE framework through the draft Ministerial Council decision on the OSCE-Wide Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, which we are co-sponsoring with Austria, Finland and Kazakhstan. Let me also add that Turkey was the first country to sign and to ratify the “Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence”.

In conclusion, Mr. Secretary General, we look forward to the continuing and increasing cooperation between our Organizations and wish success for tomorrow’s Coordination Group meeting.

Thank you.