



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

**53rd Joint Meeting of the  
Forum for Security Co-operation and the Permanent Council**

**4 March 2014**

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

I would like to express my appreciation to the Chairmanships of Switzerland and Malta for organizing this timely joint FSC-PC meeting on Ukraine. The events that are unfolding in Ukraine, particularly in Crimea, have serious implications for European peace and security, as well as for confidence, trust and cooperation among participating States. In that respect, we are grateful for this opportunity to discuss both political and military aspects of the question today.

The very existence of the Forum for Security Cooperation as a decision-making body to discuss concrete measures aimed at strengthening security and stability throughout Europe indicates the high expectations that we, as participating States, placed in our founding documents. One of the main instruments in our politico-military toolbox is the Vienna Document on Confidence and Security Building Measures. The declared aim of the Vienna Document in its preamble, “to give effect and expression to the duty of the participating States to refrain from the threat or use of force in their mutual relations” is as relevant today as ever.

We are deeply concerned about the risk of escalation of the current situation. In that respect, we welcome Ukraine’s efforts to increase military transparency and diffuse tensions by making use of the Chapter III of the Vienna Document related to “Risk Reduction”. This mechanism for consultation and co-operation as regards unusual activities provides participating States with necessary tools to address military activities that may raise concern. We hope that the activation of Article 18 of the same Chapter by Ukraine as of yesterday can facilitate de-escalating the situation and easing tensions on the ground. We encourage Ukraine to continue to seek a political solution to the ongoing crisis through dialogue and to use existing measures, including the full use of the principles and mechanisms of this organization.

At the same time, it is important that the OSCE can deploy a monitoring mission in Ukraine. We fully support the ongoing efforts in this direction. Our motto should be “constructive engagement” at all times, especially at this difficult moment.

Mr. Chairperson,

The regional dimension of the issue is of particular concern for Turkey. Restoring internal peace and political stability in Ukraine is of crucial importance not only for Ukraine but also for the entire region. In this context, we wholeheartedly believe that the peaceful coexistence of all ethnic and religious groups in Crimea is essential for the prosperity of the peninsula, for the welfare of Ukraine as a whole and for the overall peace in the Black Sea region.

Once again, I take this opportunity in strongly emphasizing that it would be indispensable for any solution to the current crisis to be based on the territorial integrity, sovereignty, independence and political unity of Ukraine. We believe that all sides should act with restraint, respect the principles of international law and OSCE commitments, as well as bilateral and multilateral agreements, and intensify their efforts in reaching an understanding through effective dialogue, while refraining from taking steps which could aggravate the already tense situation on the ground.

To this end, Turkey will continue to provide the broadest possible support.

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.