

MC.DEL/42/11
7 December 2011

ENGLISH
Original: FRENCH

**STATEMENT BY
AMBASSADOR GENEVIÈVE RENAUX, PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF BELGIUM TO THE OSCE,
AT THE EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE
OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Vilnius, 6 December 2011

Mr. Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I should like first of all to express my gratitude to the Lithuanian Chairmanship of the OSCE for its generous hospitality and for its efforts and determination that have made it possible for this Ministerial Council meeting to take place today in Vilnius.

Belgium fully subscribes to the priorities of the European Union for the OSCE of today and tomorrow.

The ministerial meeting in Vilnius constitutes the first step towards the implementation of the strategic goal agreed upon by our Heads of State or Government at the OSCE Summit in Astana in December 2010: the elaboration of a future security community where force would no longer have a place and where the participating States would spare no effort to respect and implement in full measure human rights and fundamental freedoms, all of which constitute guarantees of peace and sustainable development.

The specific measures that we must agree upon here in Vilnius and that have been elaborated on the basis of several years of work during the Corfu Process in 2009, the preparations for the Astana Summit in 2010 and the V to V Dialogue in 2011 are the first steps in the realization of this strategic objective. These first results will demonstrate the willingness of the participating States to engage in this process.

Belgium stresses the importance of strengthening the OSCE in the prevention and management of conflicts and crises – before, during and after their appearance – through an interdimensional approach, and the importance of the resolution of protracted conflicts. We welcome in particular the resumption of the formal negotiations to find a lasting solution to the Transdniestrian question.

Belgium welcomes the adoption of the Vienna Document 2011, which has just entered into force, and reiterates its willingness to give a fresh impetus to this endeavour in 2012. It also reiterates its hope that the regime of conventional arms control in Europe will be

updated on the basis of its key principles, in particular with respect to the consent of the host country and transparency.

A greater contribution on the part of the OSCE to combating transnational threats is indispensable and appropriate. The fact is that these threats concern both States and individuals, and close co-operation among all the actors concerned – national and international, public and private – is crucial. As an organization that has placed the co-operative approach to security at the centre of its activities, the OSCE has much to offer given its experience and assets in terms of confidence-building measures. It already serves as a source of inspiration to some in this respect. I therefore fully support the adoption of the draft decisions in this area.

Belgium also wishes to focus on the importance of the rule of law in ensuring the security and stability of the participating States and in guaranteeing the strengthening of our democracies. The confidence that the population has in the public institutions is an indicator of how the entire democratic system is functioning. Without the confidence of the public and civil society, the rule of law eventually ceases to function.

The year 2011 has also seen the development of movements bringing the hope of more democracy, especially in some of the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation. Belgium welcomes this new impetus brought about in particular by the young generation of men and women, who refuse to accept their lack of prospects for the future and who have decided to take their destiny into their own hands. The OSCE must be capable of making a specific contribution in response to their hopes.

Belgium also welcomes the strengthening of the OSCE's co-operation with Afghanistan and its expansion to the economic and environmental and the human dimensions. Following the Istanbul Summit and Bonn Conference on Afghanistan, which confirmed the transfer of responsibilities to the Afghan authorities in conjunction with a long-term commitment on the part of the international community, it would also be useful to further exploit the potential and experience of the OSCE in its co-operation with that country.

We hope finally to be able to welcome a new participating State, Mongolia, in the near future and are confident that it will make a contribution to stability and security in the OSCE area.

Mr. Chairperson,

I should like to warmly thank the Lithuanian Chairmanship for the valuable work it has accomplished and to wish the future Irish Chairmanship in 2012 every success in building a future security community from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.