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Opening Remarks
Remarques d'overture

10th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
10ème Sesssion Annuelle de l'Assemblée Parlemantaire de l'OSCE

*M. le Président de l'Assemblée Nationale,
M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères,
M. le Président en exercice de l'OSCE,
Vos excellences,
Mesdames et messieurs,
Chers collègues,*

C'est pour moi à la fois un plaisir et un honneur de vous souhaiter à tous la bienvenue, ici, à Paris, à l'occasion de la dixième session annuelle de l'Assemblée parlementaire de l'OSCE.

C'est un grand honneur pour l'Assemblée parlementaire de l'OSCE que de tenir la session annuelle qui marque son dixième anniversaire dans ce lieu historique qu'est l'Assemblée Nationale. L'Assemblée nationale française incarne aujourd'hui, comme par le passé, les principes fondamentaux de la démocratie et du droit ; et ce sont ces mêmes principes qui guident notre Organisation.

J'aimerais, de la part de tous les membres de l'Assemblée parlementaire, remercier nos hôtes français, la ville de Paris, l'Assemblée Nationale et le Sénat pour leur hospitalité et l'aide généreuse qu'ils nous ont apportée dans l'organisation de notre session annuelle.

L'engagement de la République Française dans la CSCE / OSCE n'est pas nouveau. Comme M. Forni, Président de l'Assemblée Nationale, l'a rappelé : « La France a toujours été au premier rang des pays qui entendaient faire de l'OSCE une véritable organisation internationale ». Je ne pourrais être davantage d'accord ; surtout si l'on se réfère à l'histoire du processus d'Helsinki ainsi qu'à celle de notre propre Assemblée parlementaire.

Dix ans déjà se sont écoulés depuis la création de notre Assemblée et c'est précisément ici, à Paris, qu'elle a vu le jour à la suite des décisions adoptées dans la **Charte de Paris pour une nouvelle Europe**. La *Charte de Paris* a marqué un tournant dans l'histoire d'une Europe divisée. Ce document en reconnaissant officiellement la fin de la guerre froide et de la division de l'Europe aura mis l'accent sur les valeurs partagées par tous les Etats participants tels que les droits de l'Homme, la démocratie représentative, l'économie de marché, le partage des responsabilités dans la protection de l'environnement. A travers la *Charte de Paris*, le besoin de construire et de renforcer la démocratie « en tant que seul système de gouvernance » dans tous les pays participants a été reconnu pour la première fois.

En adoptant la Charte de Paris, les Etats participants ont non seulement adopté une série de valeurs en tant que fondement de leur construction politique nationale, mais ils ont accepté en même temps

l'idée que tous et chacun sont membres de la même famille.

Les événements ultérieurs ont prouvé que les choses sont beaucoup plus compliquées. Les conflits identitaires-culturels et les disparités socio-économiques, la migration et le crime organisé, le trafic illicite et la corruption sont devenus des réalités quotidiennes dans l'espace de l'OSCE. C'est la démonstration - s'il en fallait une - que les années de séparation et de confrontation entre l'Est et l'Ouest ont laissé de profondes marques, en ce qu'elles ont engendré des décalages au plan du développement matériel, mais surtout des mentalités, de la manière de vivre des gens. Partant, une Europe simple, composée de deux blocs a été remplacée par une Europe complexe, celle d'une ample et souvent conflictuelle diversité. Par voie de conséquence, le Rideau de Fer a été remplacé par de nombreuses autres lignes de démarcation.

Aujourd'hui on assiste dans l'espace de l'OSCE à deux processus majeurs qui parfois se contredisent. Il nous faut reconnaître, en effet, que nous faisons partie de la même famille, dans le sens que nous empruntons tous la même rue. Quand même, parfois nous voyageons dans des sens différents. Ainsi, il s'agit d'un déplacement de l'Ouest vers l'Est, consistant dans un transfert culturel, législatif et institutionnel. Il s'agit d'une culture de l'intégration communautaire, du travail discipliné et efficace dans un cadre légal et institutionnel apte à défendre et à développer. D'autre part, nous avons à faire à un déplacement de l'Est vers l'Ouest consistant en aspirations nationales inaccomplies, sentiments d'insécurité, besoins existentiels arrivés au bout du désespoir, - tous intégrés à une culture du jeu à somme nulle. En d'autres mots, il y a une communauté de valeurs qui s'étend vers l'Est et une communauté d'appréhensions qui s'étend vers l'Ouest.

C'est l'impact de ces deux courants qui alimente les appréhensions de l'Ouest et anime les valeurs de l'Est. Malheureusement, l'Occident européen et euro-atlantique a décidé de se défendre en fermant ses marchés et ses frontières, faisant ainsi la preuve d'une sérieuse recrudescence du nationalisme et de l'égoïsme. D'autre part, l'Orient européen et euro-asiatique a décidé de se remparer derrière ses valeurs traditionnelles - heureusement redécouvertes mais, malheureusement, utilisées comme des mécanismes d'exclusion et non d'inclusion.

Ainsi il est clair que la démocratie, la liberté et la loi sans la prospérité, la stabilité et la sécurité sont en danger, tout comme la prospérité, la stabilité et la sécurité sans la démocratie, la liberté et la loi sont dénuées de sens. Il est tout aussi vrai que la sécurité est le meilleur oxygène pour la démocratie, et la démocratie le meilleur oxygène pour la stabilité et la stabilité le meilleur oxygène pour la prospérité économique laquelle, à son tour, renforce la sécurité. Il est regrettable qu'à présent un tel "cercle vertueux" soit remplacé par un "cercle vicieux" analogue, formé par l'insécurité, le déficit démocratique, l'instabilité et la pauvreté. Le rôle de l'OSCE et de son Assemblée parlementaire est justement de briser ce "cercle vicieux" et le transformer dans le "cercle vertueux" dont je viens de parler.

Afin d'accomplir une telle mission, l'OSCE ne devra plus recourir à la rhétorique de la guerre froide, pas plus qu'aux solutions du XIX^{ème} ou XX^{ème} siècles. Je nourris la ferme conviction qu'au début de ce millénaire les Etats de l'OSCE, lesquels couvrent la plupart de l'hémisphère nordique, ont le devoir de définir ensemble une nouvelle vision de l'ordre mondial, d'un nouveau système de droit international et d'une nécessaire réconciliation de l'Europe avec elle-même. Cela inclut l'association des vertus unificatrices de la globalisation économique et des contacts inter-humains, avec le droit à la diversité le droit à la solidarité, ainsi que le droit à la transparence et au contrôle populaire sur les décisions d'intérêt public. Une telle démarche implique aussi un changement de fond de la conception sur la souveraineté, la démocratie et la nation; un réaménagement des orgueils identitaires par leur transfert de la culture de l'indépendance dans la culture de l'interdépendance; une transformation de la "diplomatie distributive" en "diplomatie intégrative" et du jeu à somme nulle dans la stratégie des projets communs.

On ne peut pas faire la critique du XX^{ème} siècle en revenant au XIX^{ème} siècle, pas plus que l'on puisse construire le monde du XXI^{ème} siècle avec les idées du XX^{ème} siècle. Si l'OSCE ne sait trouver des réponses nouvelles aux problèmes concrets de l'actualité, elle sera condamnée à demeurer dans la crise dans laquelle elle semble sombrer avec chaque jour qui passe.

Cette crise n'est pas celle de l'inutilité, mais celle de l'adaptation. Une telle crise ne peut être surmontée que par une nouvelle vision politique et par une nouvelle impulsion politique. L'Assemblée parlementaire, en tant qu'institution éminemment politique formée des membres directement élus dans les circonscriptions nationales, a, par conséquent, la capacité et la légitimité d'être à l'avant-garde d'un tel renouvellement.

Le Sommet de Paris a aussi été le point de départ de l'institutionnalisation de la CSCE. Permettez moi de vous rappeler, encore une fois, que l'Assemblée parlementaire est née de l'initiative des Etats participants. Alors ne perdons pas de vue l'esprit de la *Charte de Paris*.

La compréhension exacte de cet esprit nous fait déclarer clairement que l'AP OSCE est la branche parlementaire de l'OSCE, et non seulement un club de parlementaires intéressés à l'histoire du processus d'Helsinki '75. Que l'AP OSCE est une institution politique égale, par son importance, à l'autre institution politique de l'OSCE, à savoir la Réunion ministérielle annuelle périodiquement relevée au rang de Sommet des chefs d'Etats et Gouvernements de l'espace OSCE.

Et encore, que, en respectant le principe de la séparation des pouvoirs entre l'exécutif et le législatif, l'AP OSCE est l'institution qui dispose de la plus grande légitimité démocratique dans le cadre de l'OSCE. Que l'AP OSCE est une expression de la volonté des Etats participants représentés au plan

international par les chefs de leurs exécutifs et que la source directe de leur force est constituée par les parlements nationaux de ces États.

Que, tout ceci pris en compte, l'AP OSCE n'aspire pas à la fonction d'inspecteur général de l'OSCE; elle veut être - et l'est - la principale source de valeur ajoutée aux efforts des institutions gouvernementales et le principal forum de débats sur la vision politique et la stratégie politique de l'OSCE. Ce statut n'est pas négociable et, sur ce point, on ne peut pas faire des compromis avec la "diplomatie bureaucratique" laquelle a envahi l'organisation ces dernières années. Ce statut ne peut pas faire l'objet de négociations procédurales dans le cadre des institutions techniques-diplomatiques de l'OSCE.

Chers collègues,

Aujourd'hui, au vingt-et unième siècle, l'Assemblée parlementaire est devenue une institution respectée et importante au sein de l'OSCE. Elle fournit à l'organisation un forum unique de dialogue parlementaire qui permet d'émettre de nombreuses idées et propositions sur l'avenir de notre organisation.

Grâce à nos réunions, conférences et séminaires, mais aussi à nos activités sur le terrain, nous donnons, en tant que membres de l'Assemblée parlementaire, davantage de visibilité aux actions de l'OSCE et nous leur conférons une dimension politique.

Les membres de l'Assemblée parlementaire ont, en recommandant certaines actions politiques, en définissant des lignes directrices et des standards démocratiques dans les déclarations et résolutions que nous adoptons, contribué de manière éminente à la consolidation et à la promotion de la stabilité et de la coopération en Europe, autour d'un ensemble de valeurs communes. Cela est encore plus vrai quand les membres eux-mêmes sont engagés dans la prévention des conflits et la gestion des crises.

Au bout de dix ans, il convient de reconnaître qu'il est inévitable de procéder à certains ajustements si l'on veut renforcer la crédibilité et l'efficacité de l'OSCE. À cet égard, il est indispensable que les gouvernements et les parlements des États membres s'engagent davantage dans l'Organisation afin d'en accroître la transparence et l'efficacité et d'en améliorer le fonctionnement interne. De plus, les relations entre les institutions doivent être renforcées afin d'améliorer la cohérence des stratégies et l'efficacité des coopérations en vue d'atteindre les objectifs de l'OSCE.

Cela suppose une atmosphère de travail fondée sur la confiance et le respect mutuels. Ce n'est qu'à travers une collaboration étroite entre ses

différentes branches que l'OSCE s'affirmera comme une organisation credible et efficace.

*Ladies and Gentlemen,
Distinguished colleagues,*

Many people ask which are the main parliamentary leverages for coping with crises and conflicts within the OSCE space. With special reference to the OSCE PA, it can be said that MPs and Parliaments have specific leverages, ways and means to address the various types of crises and conflicts, mainly when it is about the prevention and the post-conflict management. Direct parliamentary intervention in fighting crises and conflicts and parliamentary diplomacy could bring added value to the classical governmental diplomacy. When talking about conflict prevention and crisis management, one must bear in mind the following:

- **MPs can open doors that only politicians could open and which, accordingly, could not be opened by professional diplomats** (e.g. the peripheral anti-conflict strategies when trying to develop dialogue on democratic progress in Central Asia or on political depolarization in Albania);
- **MPs can open doors which diplomats and other governmental representatives, under certain circumstances, are not willing or allowed to open** (e.g. political talks with leaders from Belarus or Yugoslavia);
- **MPs can open public debates or make public statements for which diplomats and other governmental representatives are not yet prepared or which the latter are not able/allowed to make, thus testing the public opinion before certain political initiatives become official standpoints** (e.g. the "front door strategy" in Belarus aiming at putting an end to the constitutional crises in the country by way of a national dialogue at the round table, and not by going back to the 1994 Constitution);
- **MPs can pave the way for negotiations that do not yet benefit from proper conditions to be started, by holding exploratory talks** (e.g. the round tables gathering personalities representing the various sides involved in the Transdnistrian conflict or in the Belarusian constitutional crises);
- **MPs can prepare a favourable environment for the implementation of the solutions and agreements negotiated by professional diplomats** (e.g. the efforts directed towards building the civic society institutions in Kosovo);
- **MPs can promote political dialogue at the level of parliaments, political parties and civil society** (e.g. Albania, Transdnistria, Belarus, Yugoslavia, Macedonia, Kazakhstan etc.);

- **MPs can promote democracy through elections by election preparation and monitoring** (e.g. Albania, Belarus, Kazakstan, Azerbaidjan, Slovakia, Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Croatia, Kosovo etc.);

- **MPs can shape public opinion and mobilize political, legislative, human, financial and budgetary resources in support of conflict prevention of conflict management oriented international projects.**

In order to avoid either divergent actions or the waste of the added value that can be brought by MPs, a better coordination between governmental diplomacy and parliamentary diplomacy is of paramount importance. The only way to take advantage of MPs leverages in coping with crises and conflicts is to maintain a permanent contact between the international and national governmental and parliamentary institutions, to keep each other informed, to communicate in order to achieve the optimum burden-sharing and to strictly harmonize actions. In our international endeavours dedicated to the consolidation of security and stability, we have to be aware of the need for governmental and parliamentary diplomacy to move towards more cooperation and less rivalry.

Dear colleagues,

For the sake of brevity I will not describe here the numerous activities I have been engaged in since you entrusted me with the Presidency of the Assembly at the last Annual Session held in Bucharest.

I would like, however, to briefly address what have been, and will continue to be – if you agree to renew my mandate as President of the Assembly - my main political objectives and priorities as President.

They can be summed up as follows:

1. **increasing PA's role and visibility through greater involvement in crisis and conflict prevention and management and greater added value brought by MPs to governmental efforts** (e.g. the parliamentary dimension of the Stability Pact or the TransAsian parliamentary forum).

The Assembly, under my Presidency, has continued to promote parliamentary dialogue and to pursue the important objective of assessing the implementation of OSCE commitments by participating States, to develop and promote mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts; and to contribute to the development of the Organisation's institutional structures whilst working towards the development of fruitful relations and co-operation between existing OSCE institutions.

2. improving PA's cooperation with the other OSCE institutions while strengthening the institutional coherence of the organization;

The Assembly has continued to be active in the different political and institutional events of the OSCE . I had the honour to address, on behalf of all of you, the OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting held in Vienna last December. We have attended the meetings of the OSCE troika, and we have actively participated in the preparatory seminars for, and in the OSCE 9th Economic Forum. We have also contributed recently to an important seminar on election monitoring organised by the ODIHR.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has continued to develop its active programme for the monitoring of elections in the OSCE area, a major area of our work. The presence of parliamentary observers at elections during transitional periods emphasizes the importance of legislatures as institutions That must provide a balance to the executive authority.

Our co-operation agreement with the ODIHR continues to provide a very useful basis for the coordination of the election observation missions. Our special coordinators, appointed by the Chairman-in-Office, have been, once more, a reference for the international media on the outcome of the elections observed.

Since the Annual Session in Bucharest the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly has sent parliamentarians to observe parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Moldova, Montenegro and, most recently, Albania.

I would like to thank very much all of our members that have actively participated in the election observation missions during the past months.

3. developing OSCE's political dimension through closer ties and cooperation between the PA and the national Parliaments and enhanced dialogue between the PA and the executive leadership of the participating States;

The message I have tried to convey during this past year in my numerous visits to OSCE capitals is very clear and straight forward: the OSCE needs a new political vision and a new political impulse. An impulse that can only come by first, strengthening the involvement of national Governments and Parliaments in the processes of the organisation. And, second, by a much needed institutional rethinking and co-operation of all our institutions. Our institutions and structures need to work together and need to consolidate their mutual respect and trust.

As you all know, the Parliamentary Assembly has suggested on numerous occasions that the OSCE could improve its effectiveness and gain greater public visibility by improving its decision-making procedures and working

methods, and by developing procedures that would bring openness, transparency and accountability to the OSCE. I have proposed actions in our Parliaments to bring the attention of our Executives to this issue. I encourage you to be active in this process and to closely monitor your government's engagement in the OSCE process through parliamentary inquiries.

4. **strengthening cooperation between the OSCE PA and the OSCE field missions both by setting up the ad hoc committees and working groups** (Belarus, Moldova, Kosovo, Abkhazia) and by launching the project of the "contact groups". (Unfortunately, in the latter case the response from MPs has not been the one I would have wished for. I suppose the explanation can be found in the deficiencies of communication with national delegations.);

The ad-hoc committees of the Assembly continue to serve as an important tool in furthering the development of democracy and stability in the OSCE region. The Working Group on Belarus, the Parliamentary Team on Moldova, the Democracy team on Kosovo, and the recently created Ad hoc Working Group on Abkhazia, greatly contribute to promoting dialogue and seeking co-operation in areas in conflict. The groups have promoted in those different areas the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the assistance in the development of the legal and democratic institutions and processes by providing advice to the parties in conflict on legal, constitutional, and political frameworks.

The work undertaken by our colleagues in these groups has been highly praised by the OSCE, which, again, sees in our work and in parliamentary diplomacy a useful tool to reinforce the Organisation's conflict prevention and conflict management mechanisms.

5. **increasing the speed of reaction to events and developing political dialogue within the OSCE PA** (in this respect, the Rules of Procedure have been amended and presidential visits have been organized in about 25 OSCE participating countries; unfortunately, we were not able to organize the Group for monitoring the events, analysis and rapid reaction, as I have intended;

You have been informed of the outcome of the Standing Committee Meeting held in Vienna last February and the Expanded Bureau held in Copenhagen. During the Standing Committee a number of changes to the Rules of Procedure were adopted and the Winter Session was approved. I am convinced these changes will allow us to increase our effectiveness while facilitating our procedures.

6. **developing relations with the Mediterranean and Asian partners of cooperation** (in this respect, a special Presidential representative for Mediterranean affairs has been nominated, having as a task the examination of possibilities for organizing a Mediterranean Forum; moreover, a TransAsian Parliamentary Forum has been set up – an initiative which would

seek to involve the parliaments of the Partners for Co-operation States in discussion developments in Central Asia. The Thai Parliament has indicated an interest in hosting the first meeting of such a forum).

7. developing relations and cooperation with other European and Euro-Atlantic organizations having missions similar or complementary to those of the OSCE. In this respect, during my talks with representatives of the Council of Europe, the European Parliament and the NATO PA I made the following concrete proposals:

a. Parliamentary Co-operation in South-East Europe. Regarding Parliamentary Co-operation in South-East Europe, it is essential and necessary to promote parliamentary co-operation, within the framework provided by the Stability Pact, among the parliaments of the South-Eastern region. In this context, once again, the co-operation between the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the European Parliament, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, acting as a parliamentary troika have undertaken the sponsorship role for the Stability Pact Task Force on parliamentary co-operation. I welcome the fact that the first presidency of this troika has been undertaken by the European Parliament. The progress that has been made in recent months in bringing about co-operation between the parliaments in the region on the one hand, and the European Parliament and our two parliamentary assemblies on the other, will, I believe, help to achieve concrete contributions to the Pact's objectives, especially by, as Mr. Bodo Hombach has mentioned, monitoring the extent to which governments and international organisations adhere to the commitments they have made, and by pushing through the necessary structural reforms.

b. Parliamentary Troika on Election monitoring. As I had the opportunity to discuss with both the President of the European Parliament and the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, we must continue to find ways to join our efforts in election monitoring missions. The agreement we have reached in this field, to work as a tri-parliamentary troika will undoubtedly help to join efforts and to avoid unnecessary duplications, while giving a common message on the electoral processes. Again, as I mentioned before, the input of parliamentarians in election observation missions is a great asset to the overall evaluation of the processes in countries in transition.

c. Involvement in operational and conflict management activities: I presented you earlier the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's special committees dealing with regions facing particular political instability. It is in these activities that further co-operation between us and with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe should be explored. The results of our joint efforts in Belarus, for example, have been positive. The OSCE has an added value as most of the countries in these areas are members of the Organisation, and the OSCE has field missions deployed there. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will be shortly beginning a programme to involve our members in the monitoring of the activities of the OSCE field missions.

d. Involvement in EU enlargement debate. I have proposed the establishment of a working group between the European Parliament and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to study and analyses the prospects of the enlargement of the European Union and its effects for security and co-operation in Europe. I believe our Assembly, being more “inclusive”, can provide the framework to bring together those who are members of the EU, those who are candidates, and those who are neither members nor candidates in order to, on an equal basis, analyse the prospects and possibilities of EU enlargement, and its effects in the OSCE area.

e. The Parliamentary Dimension of the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) and the international dialogue aiming at establishing a model of cooperation between OSCE, NATO and EU in the field of collective security and defence. More dialogue between the OSCE, NATO and the EU is needed on this issue. Specifically, an institutional mechanism that requires attention, and is of particular relevance for consideration by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, is that of parliamentary oversight of the ESDI. Since EU-led interventions under the ESDI will directly and indirectly affect the OSCE region, there may be cases when the oversight provided by the European Parliament may not be sufficient to take into account the concerns of non-EU members of the OSCE. The Parliamentary Assembly could then become the ideal complement to the European Parliament in such a case. Furthermore, a system of inter-parliamentary dialogue may be viewed, from the perspective of the non-EU members of the OSCE particularly, as a positive contribution to the stability of the OSCE region. I have quoted this proposal from the draft report of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security, that under the title of *implications of the European Security and Defence initiative for the OSCE region* will be debated during the current Annual Session. Furthermore, I believe we should explore ways of co-operation with NATO institutions similar to those already existing between the OSCE PA and EU.

At the same time, I would like to inform you that we have established a system of periodical meetings with the leadership of the European Parliament; we have continued the meetings with the leadership of the PACE; we achieved, for the first time, a top level OSCE - CE meeting in a 3+3 format (i.e. leaders at governmental, parliamentary and technic-diplomatic levels);

8. spurring the internal reform of the OSCE with a view to its adaptation to the realities of the post-bipolar world. (In this respect, I have pleaded for overcoming the democratic deficit, for openness, accountability and transparency; I have constantly criticised the degeneration of the principle of consensus into an abusive practice of secret consensus and I agreed with the CiO that a wisemen group should be constituted in order to prepare a draft blueprint containing proposals for OSCE'S reform.);

The OSCE is facing today what could be defined as a “democratic deficit” implying a lack of transparency and a lack of accountability in the Organisation's decisions and procedures. There seems to be a lack of

political guidance from the capitals regarding the OSCE. I have the impression that many participating States are now questioning the benefits of belonging to the OSCE. In other words what do they get in return for belonging to this security and cooperation club? We must work hard to provide answers to these relevant questions.

A situation such as the one that occurred at the Ministerial Council held in Vienna last December when no decision on a final document was adopted for obscure reasons, clearly undermines the credibility of this unique European, trans-Atlantic and trans-Asian organisation. This unfortunate outcome of the Ministerial Council clearly shows that the role of the OSCE needs to be addressed. The Organisation needs to be redefined in order to adapt itself to the new Europe. This new Europe does not have the same needs and the same threats that existed during the Cold War and the bi-polar system. The OSCE has to adapt itself to the new realities, developing a new vision for Europe.

9. ensuring a thematic and geographical balance for OSCE activities; in this sense, I placed far greater emphasis on economic matters, with special accent on stability through development, stability through cooperation and stability through integration. At the same time I have tried to promote a more substantial political dialogue with the Russian Federation and with our transatlantic members (USA and Canada), in order to increase their commitment and their contribution to OSCE activities. We made efforts, as well, in order to bring the specific problems of the Central Asian and Caucasian countries towards the top of our agenda.

10. changing PA's rhetoric from one of confrontation into one of partnership, as well as speeding up transition from ideological approaches to pragmatic solutions. (Of course, protection of human rights and democratic progress have remained priority issues. Yet, they have no longer been considered from a standpoint of ideologic superiority, but from the perspective of building compatible institutions within every OSCE member State, using in each case the positive elements of the local traditions.)

*Distinguished colleagues,
Dear friends,*

At this point I would like to address the internal situation of our organization.

We have to note that, as the activities of the OSCE continue to grow, a substantive expansion of its bureaucracy follows, accompanied by a serious increase of budgetary expenditures. This money comes from the pockets of our national tax-payers who form our electorate. And we must remind everybody that in this case the principle "no taxation without representation" is still valid. The reason of State on which the discreet diplomatic activities of

the OSCE are supposed to be based could not be an excuse for a non-transparent and unaccountable budgetary policy. This is even more necessary since it is obvious that the OSCE's budgetary growth is not matched by an increase of effectiveness. After the failure in Kosovo in 1999, today's failure in FYROM is a sad proof of such a reality. This shows there is a greater need for parliamentary oversight of the OSCE budget.

Since up to now we have not been able to reach an agreement with the governmental side on this matter, we have initiated the parliamentary oversight of the budgetary exercise. For the first time in the history of the PA, we got access to the OSCE Audit Report and we asked our own auditors to give us an opinion on it. Sadly enough, we have discovered a number of major irregularities in the 1999 and 2000 exercises. We have informed the Permanent Bureau Members about this and we expressed our concern to the CiO and the Secretary General.

In future, the OSCE PA should continue to exercise any possible oversight of the OSCE budget, both ante factum and post factum. At the same time, we would ask our members to support, in their national parliaments, the budgetary allocations for the OSCE only in respect of those political actions about which we are consulted in advance.

I could not go further without expressing my appreciation for the Chairpersons-in-Office with whom we have cooperated since the Annual Session in Bucharest, namely Ms Benita Ferrero Waldner, Foreign Minister of Austria, and Mr Mircea Geoana, Foreign Minister of Romania. Our appreciation goes as well to Secretary General Jan Kubis. They have been most receptive to our proposals and ideas regarding the problems the OSCE is faced with. I look forward to the establishment of the "wisemen group" to analyse the political and institutional rethinking of our organization, in order to further our common work.

Nevertheless, there are still a few problems to be solved. We are still not consulted when various OSCE events are planned, no more on the modalities and dates. The confusion between the PA as an autonomous political institution and the technical-diplomatic OSCE institutions still persists. Finally, we have not succeeded in opening our contact office in Vienna (Hofburg), since we have not obtained a decent room for this purpose. We appeal to the CiO, Mr Mircea Geoana, to exercise his authority for all these problems to be overcome. The fact that the OSCE PA cannot have a contact point in Vienna is unacceptable and ultimately undermines our cooperation possibilities.

I would also like to thank the International Secretariat of the Assembly for their dedicated work and professional commitment. On this point I must say that in its tenth year of life the Assembly has reached a level of maturity and involvement which requires a higher degree of institutionalization of our International Secretariat. The romantic period of the beginning ought to be replaced by clear, functional structures, a strict labour division and a courageous delegation of responsibilities. Many of these could hardly be

achieved as long as the International Secretariat is so small and so badly financed. The fourteen members of the Secretariat are doing their best without having many of the posts normally included into the structure of similar international institutions. That is why they are not always able to implement our political decisions, thus leaving the impression to some of our parliamentary delegations that the Secretariat is unrightly challenging the political opinions of the Assembly. If we want a better Secretariat, we have to establish a balance between our budgetary expenditure and the budgetary expenditure of the OSCE governmental side. Fourteen people for 55 parliaments do not indicate that we are saving money, but that, without a huge amount of extra work, we might even waste money. A little bit bigger Secretariat would improve its institutionalisation and let it work better as a well structured group of professional civil servants.

Let me conclude, distinguished colleagues, by thanking all of you for your support during this past year. My contacts and exchanges with Heads of Delegation, Bureau Members, Committee Officers and many of you have been most fruitful and have contributed to the further enhancement of our role and of our activities.

Chers collègues,

J'ai tenté de vous dresser un bilan équilibré des activités de l'Assemblée parlementaire de l'OSCE au cours de l'année qui vient de s'écouler ainsi que mes impressions et expériences en tant que Président de cette institution unique. Je voudrais, si vous décidez de me renouveler votre confiance pour un second mandat, continuer à apporter avec votre aide, votre conseil et votre soutien, cette « valeur ajoutée » que l'Assemblée parlementaire peut offrir à l'OSCE dans son action en faveur de la paix, de la stabilité, de la sécurité et de la coopération pour les citoyens de tous nos pays. J'ose espérer qu'avec moi vous croyez que nous avons un rôle important à jouer, et que nous pouvons apporter notre plus grande contribution au succès de l'OSCE. Nous ne pouvons certes pas fermer les yeux face aux problèmes et nous devons nous attacher à les résoudre franchement, mais, en même temps, nous ne devons pas laisser les mauvaises influences et les différences qui nous séparaient nous éloigner de notre but commun, celui de construire et de renforcer l'OSCE, de garantir à nos compatriotes et aux générations de l'avenir la possibilité de vivre dans un monde plus sûr, plus stable, plus libre et plus prospère.