

Statement

ENGLISH only

**By H.E. Mr. Kristian Vigenin,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria
at the 20th OSCE Ministerial Council**

5 – 6 December 2013, Kyiv

Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to start by addressing words of gratitude to our host H.E. Leonid Kozhara, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, and his team for their leadership, dedication and constructive work at the OSCE Chairmanship in 2013.

Aligning fully with the statement made on behalf of the European Union earlier today, I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we approach the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act and the establishment of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe, its worth mentioning that the Organization has played a crucial role in bringing together the East and West, in managing the change in Europe and in overcoming the post-Cold War confrontation. But beyond any doubt, the OSCE has been a major contributor in creating a common space of peace and democracy on one third of the globe.

Having said that, we should not shy away from admitting that like many other international bodies, the OSCE needs re-adaptation. In times of continuing economic downturn, social unrest and growing instability in the neighbourhood of Europe, we could not afford further erosion of trust and decrease in quality of our political dialogue. This common understanding stood behind the launch of **the Helsinki+40 Process** last year in Dublin as a collective endeavour to transform the OSCE from an Organization defined in terms of geography into a security community. The adoption of a strong document on Helsinki+40, would give the necessary political impetus to the whole process, towards the achievement of the desired outcomes, while preserving the cross-dimensional approach to security and reconfirming our full adherence to the common *acquis*.

With regard to **protracted conflicts**, we consider that they remain among the major threats to security and stability in the OSCE area. We hope that the Helsinki+40 Process would result in strengthening the capacity of the OSCE to provide adequate response on the whole spectrum of conflict-related situations.

The OSCE has pioneered in developing and implementing **the concept of cooperative, comprehensive and indivisible security** through a balanced approach and activities in its three dimensions - politico-military, economic and environmental and human.

The set of documents tabled for discussion by the Ukrainian Chairmanship is balanced and realistic, and has Bulgaria's support.

In the Politico-Military Dimension, we share the need to restore the trust and the confidence among the OSCE participating States and remain committed to all constructive efforts in this regard. Our common endeavours should lead to the

strengthening of our instruments, thus allowing for the OSCE to adapt itself and remain relevant to changing security environment. We commend the Ukrainian Chairmanship for initiating this year the general discussions within the Forum for Security Co-Operation on the need to revitalize and modernize Arms Control and CSBMs Regimes, so that they continue to serve as one of the pillars of the European security architecture. We strongly support the substantial up-date of the Vienna Document as a major instrument for maintaining military transparency, predictability and stability in the region. Furthermore, we welcome the overcome of the impasse with regard to the Open Skies Treaty working bodies.

With regard to the Economic and Environmental Dimension, we are convinced that the OSCE can play an important role in addressing the economic and environmental challenges to security. Guided by the principles of good governance and transparency, enshrined in the Dublin Declaration, we have made collective efforts throughout this year to implement them with a number of effective activities, thus promoting energy sector transparency, energy security, efficiency and sustainability, women's participation in natural resource management, as well as enforcing accountability with transport corridors to increase cross-border trade and regional cooperation.

When it comes to the Human Dimension, we highly value the key role of the OSCE autonomous institutions, providing unique expertise and support in upholding our OSCE commitments. We look forward to adopting a meaningful decision on the Protection of Journalists given the importance of freedom of expression and media freedom. The decision on the Freedom of Religion or Belief should further strengthen our engagement to promote this essential individual right. Ten years after the adoption of the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti, a new political impulse is needed to enhance its implementation. We support the effort to update the Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings in the light of the new challenges.

The **Mediterranean and Asian Partnerships** are certainly one of the assets of our Organization with increasing importance as part of our joint security. We call on our partners for cooperation to take full advantage of the experience of the OSCE in handling democratic transition, thus benefiting from its assistance in matters of security, arms and border control, promotion of human rights, media freedom, etc. Such approach would be the best recognition for our values and principles and for their relevance to building peace and stability.

In terms of conclusion, let me thank once again the Ukrainian Chairmanship for its warm hospitality and dedicated work to achieve progress in all OSCE dimensions, and to wish success to **Switzerland** as the next Chair of our Organization.

Thank you for your attention.