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

**In response to the address by the Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE, H.E. Ivica Dacic,
First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia**

(1033rd Special Meeting of the Permanent Council, 15 January 2015)

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

We are delighted to welcome First Deputy Prime Minister Dacic to the Permanent Council as the new Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE and thank him for his comprehensive and insightful presentation.

2015 is the year that we have been referring to over the past few years when we say “Helsinki+40”. It is a year that begins under the shadow of a multitude of crises. We will strive together to convert these challenges to opportunities. There are, however, certain thematic pre-requisites to achieve this.

I am particularly encouraged by your emphasis on “Rebuilding Trust and Confidence in order to create a positive Agenda for the Future”. Turkey has been long advocating the need to develop a new culture of engagement in order to restore confidence among participating States.

We also need to look into elements that taint the atmosphere in which we operate. First and foremost among these are the protracted conflicts. These continue to erode security and stability in the OSCE area and take away from the credibility of the Organization. We have to work more creatively in order to generate political will and momentum to advance towards sustainable solutions. We stand ready to support the Serbian Chairmanship in its efforts to make progress in the ongoing processes within agreed formats.

I wish I could use optimistic words about the crisis in and around Ukraine to peter out and steadily abandon the prominent place it has been occupying on the OSCE’s agenda. The situation on the ground unfortunately precludes me from doing so. As this is another issue to which I will return to later this meeting, I will make use of this occasion only to reiterate Turkey’s well-known view that the solution to the ongoing crisis lies within a political settlement respecting the independence, sovereignty, political unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine. We also do not recognize the illegal and illegitimate de facto situation in Crimea, which we continue to consider as part of Ukraine, and remain gravely concerned by the human rights violations of minority groups, particularly the Crimean Tatars, on the peninsula.

The Vienna document is a key tool to enhancing stability, predictability and transparency in the military field, contributing to overall security and confidence. We remain ready to work with the upcoming Forum for Security Cooperation chairs towards modernizing the Vienna Document to bolster its effectiveness.

Transnational threats have been incessantly assuming additional dimensions posing new challenges. It is with an attitude further sobered by this fact that we have to address questions relating to cyber-security, counter-narcotics and policing. Such concepts as violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism, Foreign Terrorist Fighters, Kidnapping for ransom have begun assuming an ever-more centralized place in our counter-terrorism efforts. The heinous attack in Paris last week has grimly reminded us how our security, values and principles are at risk. In countering terrorism we have to step up our cooperation. I take this opportunity to express our heartfelt condolences to our French friends for the tragic losses of lives of innocent people who fell victim to this terrorist attack.

I also wish to underline my conviction on how this horrific situation should lead us to re-arrange and re-harmonize some of our priorities to advance in a number of key areas during the year ahead. First, we need to bolster our stand against terrorism by building upon the sound foundations laid by the 2012 Consolidated Framework for the Fight against Terrorism, and the two decisions we adopted last month in Basel on Foreign Terrorist Fighters and Kidnapping for Ransom. We should also, in parallel to this exercise, further address tolerance and non-discrimination issues by delving deeper into the causes and ramifications of marginalization and radicalization resulting from discrimination on religious grounds, focusing this time on Islamophobia and discrimination against Christians, drawing from the decision we adopted again in Basel on Anti-Semitism.

Mr. Chairperson,

We continue to argue that the second dimension needs to be bolstered, if we are to honor the OSCE's fundamental underlying concept of indivisible security. We need to enhance the OSCE's capacity to act in every single instance where economic and environmental issues display relevance for peace, stability, conflict prevention and confidence building. Some themes that come to mind at this juncture are migration, energy security, transport, good governance, climate change and disaster risk management.

We support the theme of the Economic and Environmental Forum Meeting cycles. As in the past, we will actively participate and contribute to the forum meetings. A vital yet limited resource for people, ecosystems and the development of countries, the efficient use of water needs to be promoted and ensured. The OSCE's work on trans-boundary water issues should be in tune with that of principal fora, and be very cautiously crafted in light of the nature of some of the issues that cause divergence among countries, including some participating States.

Mr. Chairperson,

The effective implementation of our commitments in the human dimension is a vital yardstick to measure our Organization's ultimate success. Thus, as with the previous Chairmanship, we fully support the Serbian Chairmanship's focus on strengthening the implementation of all existing human dimension commitments.

On the other hand, we attribute particular importance to addressing the urgent challenge posed by the alarming rise of racism, xenophobia, intolerance and discrimination in the OSCE region. These pose a serious threat not only to our security, but to the common values that underpin our commitments and our Organization as a whole. In this context we would like to

express our appreciation to the Chairperson-in Office for the reappointment of Prof. Talip Küçükcan as his Personal Representative on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims.

We also wish to underscore yet again that we must take care not to approach our human dimension agenda in a selective manner, and to avoid artificial hierarchies between human dimension topics.

Gender equality is another issue to which Turkey has been devoting particular attention within the OSCE and will continue to lend its support to few pending work in hand for them to become deliverables of 2015. We remain ready to finalize the Draft Addendum to the 2004 OSCE Gender Action Plan which we consider a strategic document in this field. We also wish to express our hope for the adoption of the draft OSCE-wide Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security we have been co-sponsoring with Austria, Finland and Kazakhstan, that enjoys the support of an overwhelming majority of participating States.

On the cross-dimensional front, our engagement with Afghanistan is for us another topic of key importance. Afghanistan has fared very well indeed in 2014. This provides us with further incentive to continue our support to the Afghan nation.

Mr. Chairperson,

While concluding let me return to the first theme that I evoked in my statement, namely the Helsinki+40 process. Let me express my sincere wish to see significant progress be made therein under the Serbian Chairmanship. Let me also wish success to the newly established panel to dwell upon European Security as a Common Project. Both endeavors have important potential to contribute to the work and success of the Organization, and more importantly, to the lives of the people living in the OSCE geography.

In all these areas and more, including issues relating to the Balkans, we wish you, Mr. Deputy Prime Minister, and your teams in Belgrade and Vienna the greatest of success. Indeed, our perspective is that the Chairmanship's success is ultimately our collective success. This is an additional reason why you may rest assured of Turkey's full and unwavering support.

Thank you.