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**STATEMENT BY MR. MIGUEL ÁNGEL MORATINOS CUYAUBÉ,
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND CO-OPERATION OF
SPAIN, AT THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF THE
OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Athens, 2 December 2009

Mr. Chairman,
Ministers,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The year 2009 has been one of intensive activity for the OSCE, a year with light and shadow, but one in which we have embarked on a path of dialogue and consultation as to the future of the Organization.

During the year, our Organization, under the excellent Greek Chairmanship, has reaffirmed its commitment to dialogue and security. In spite of the crises and tense moments experienced since August 2008, it has not ceased to promote consensus, to build confidence and to reanimate its vision of indivisible and comprehensive security based on co-operation between Europe, Central Asia and the transatlantic link.

The OSCE, although it and many of its participating States are still very young, is indubitably changing, so that we are seeing more Europe in Central Asia and the Atlantic and vice versa.

This year our Organization has established the basis for far-reaching reflection on the security model that we want for Europe, which needs to be anchored securely in the principles set forth in Helsinki. I firmly believe, as it says in the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, that “the Ten Principles of the Final Act will guide us towards this ambitious future”.

Mr. Chairman,

My country supports the continued promotion by the OSCE of a comprehensive security model that ensures the unobstructed exercise of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, in which the fostering of a safe environment and sustainable development that generates prosperity play an important role; a security concept that offers solutions to the problems of poverty, the always difficult management of scarce and vital resources and the consequences of climate change, without sacrificing the legitimate expectations of citizens with regard to progress, liberty and good governance.

However, this model also calls for a solid basis of security in the traditional sense of the word and to achieve this we need to work first and foremost on revising and updating the politico-military aspects of security and on considering the new threats arising from terrorism and organized crime in all of its manifestations. The arms control treaties and confidence-building measures have led to mutual confidence, transparency and self-restraint as the bases for co-operative and non-exclusive security. The indivisibility of our security in the area from Vancouver to Vladivostok is linked with the increasing interconnectivity of our societies and economies.

The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, the Vienna Document of the Negotiations on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and the fight against terrorism are three areas in which we must be unreservedly open to dialogue and constructive debate so as to develop initiatives and activities in our common interests.

We must also concentrate our efforts on conflict prevention, management and resolution and, in particular, on finding solutions to protracted conflicts, a subject that continues to be a priority for our Organization.

In this regard, the closing of the OSCE Mission to Georgia is one of the shadows that I was referring to at the beginning of my statement, and we must continue to work to re-establish the Organization's presence in that country.

With regard to other conflicts, notably in Nagorno-Karabakh and Transdniestria, we must ensure that the doors remain open to progress and we must not squander our opportunities.

Mr. Chairman,

Another area in which the OSCE must work now and in the future is the strengthening of flexible, inclusive and effective multilateralism. This is a sphere in which the OSCE should be showing the way.

In view of its nature, objectives, structure and institutions, the OSCE should make dialogue and the search for consensus its guiding principle and management model. We live in an ever growing multipolar environment whose increasingly universal challenges cannot be confronted in the medium or long term without strong multilateral institutions.

Mr. Chairman,

The Corfu Process is designed to create a platform for European security dialogue that will make it possible to restore confidence. We must show the political will and determination to enable us to work in favour of this objective, putting behind us the period of "cold peace". After several months of fruitful discussion and reflection, I should like to believe that a window of opportunity has opened, which we must make the most of next year, showing flexibility and a practical sense. There is a discernible willingness for change, which is of great strategic significance and which needs to be kept up by the OSCE. This willingness for change will need to be translated into concrete actions. In this regard the Corfu Process is both a challenge and an opportunity to create a safer, more stable and more united Euro-Atlantic region in which we will be increasingly reliant on our Mediterranean

and Asian Partners for Co-operation. This also provides an ideal framework for considering and discussing the recent Russian proposal for a new treaty on European security.

Mr. Chairman,

The year 2010 marks the start of another fundamental process of great significance for the OSCE: the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, which reinforces the role of the European Union as an international actor not only in the economic and political sphere but also in terms of security and defence, an EU that has a central role within the OSCE commensurate with its own weight.

Spain will have an important function in the implementation of the Treaty of Lisbon as it will be the first country after its entry into force to occupy the rotating Presidency of the European Union, whose new internal co-ordination structures and external activities will give more coherence, scope and effectiveness to our outward profile.

Spain is determined to work towards the effective implementation of all of the Treaty's provisions as early as possible. We believe that a strong, dynamic and effective EU is an important stabilizing element in the Euro-Atlantic region. For that reason, a stronger EU has vital responsibility in sharing the political leadership to shape the future of European security.

Moreover, the development of the EU itself as an integrating force is a good example of the incentive that can be provided by co-operation and consultation as a means of stabilizing relations and enhancing security.

The same will to create bases for co-operation and consultation is also at the root of the Alliance of Civilizations initiative recently endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly in a resolution adopted by consensus and co-sponsored by a large majority of OSCE participating States. I expect the Alliance and in particular the regional strategies currently being devised for South-East Europe and the Mediterranean also to give rise to confidence-building measures and as such provide additional support to the OSCE's commitments and objectives.

Mr. Chairman,

The incoming Kazakh Chairmanship has a major responsibility and also great potential for continuing along the route embarked upon by its predecessors. As with previous office holders, this Chairmanship gives rise to great expectations but at the same time it is also a great and new adventure, since it will be taking place at an exceptional moment in the history of our Organization characterized on the one hand by the resumption of dialogue but also by the continued existence of challenges and a legacy of the past, as well as a good deal of uncertainty about the future.

Kazakhstan in particular and Central Asia as a whole are therefore called upon to help create the political will necessary to face up to the future of the OSCE in general and the discussion on the future of European security in particular.

As you will remember, the decision on the Chairmanship of Kazakhstan was adopted by all of us at the Ministerial Council meeting in Madrid in 2007. As a result, we feel

particularly close to Astana and repeat our offer to the Kazakh authorities to help ensure that the Chairmanship is a success, since its success will be a success for all of us.

In that context, I should also like to touch on the suggestion that a summit meeting be held at the end of the year – for the first time in ten years and 35 years after the birth of the Helsinki process.

I know that there are reservations about the summit, but after my experience in this Organization and after having been Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE I can say that if we want to make serious progress and if we are serious about our commitment, we are not going to be able to reach a solution at the ministerial level. We will need to hold a summit sooner or later. Not to do so would be simply to put off the decision and to show a lack of vision or ambition. All of the delays and all of the obstacles therefore only prevent the Organization from responding to the situation that we find ourselves in at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The prospect of including Afghanistan on the agenda could provide an additional strong reason for holding a summit.

We are willing to work with everyone to ensure that the summit marks a point of no return in the process of constructing a more effective OSCE – an OSCE plus, as the EU is demanding – as the focal point of reinforced Euro-Atlantic security.

Mr. Chairman,

I should like to conclude by thanking the Greek authorities for their hospitality and welcome. It is always a pleasure to return to the cradle of democracy.

Thank you.