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Statement by Mr. Andrej Benedejčič, Minister Plenipotentiary, Deputy Head of Mission, on Decision on the 2004 Mediterranean Seminar at the 520th Meeting of the Permanent Council, 29 July 2004

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Chairman of the Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, I would like to thank the delegations for adopting the decision on the agenda and organizational modalities for the OSCE 2004 Mediterranean Seminar.

I would also like to extend the heartfelt gratitude of the Chairman of the Contact Group to Ambassador Ramzy of Egypt and the Government of Egypt for the kind offer to host the Mediterranean Seminar this year in Alexandria, on November 17 and 18. We see this as yet another important building block in our relationship. It is, indeed, important that the Mediterranean Seminar will take place again this year in a Partner State, because partnership is a two-way street, with Partners playing an essential role. The readiness of Egypt to host the seminar is therefore an inspiring example of willingness to cooperate. Moreover, as mentioned at the fourth meeting of the Contact Points on July 26, it will give us all the opportunity to corroborate the veracity of the old saying “Masr umm iddunya”; namely, “Egypt is the mother of the world”.

Mr. Chairman,

The decision on the agenda and organizational modalities of the Mediterranean Seminar reflects the informal consultations, which we have held over the past weeks and months, in particular with the host country and other Partner States. Delegations have taken note of the theme “Addressing Threats to Security and Stability in the Twenty-first Century: Interaction between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation”. The agenda highlights three main topics of mutual interest – international co-operative security, tolerance and non-discrimination and migration. The event thus promises, *inter alia*, to complement efforts being undertaken this year in the working group on the implementation of PC. DEC/ 571.

Details on the practical arrangements, for example, venue and accommodation, will be circulated by the OSCE Secretariat in due course following an advance trip to Egypt to include meetings with MFA officials and other representatives to ensure the smooth organization of the event.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I wish to invite delegations to inform us of their interest in participating actively in the seminar. We would welcome suggestions for keynote speakers, moderators and rapporteurs. In this context, I wish to kindly request delegations to contact me or my colleagues at the Slovenian Mission.

Thank you all for your cooperation.