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Statement by Ambassador Akio Tanaka,  
At the Ministerial Council of the OSCE

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December 2, 2009

Distinguished Minister Papandreou,  
Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to highly commend the strong leadership displayed by H.E. Prime Minister and Foreign Minister George Papandreou, throughout his tenure as the chair of the OSCE Ministerial Council.

Japan has been a longstanding partner of the OSCE and has worked together with it on a broad range of areas since 1992. On June 10 this year, Japan hosted the Japan-OSCE Conference in Tokyo. Around 110 participants from OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation, including Secretary General de Brichambaut, attended. I myself have attended and moderated one of the sessions and I found that the discussions were very fruitful.

It is my great honor to have the opportunity today to speak about the foreign policy of the new Japanese administration, which was inaugurated last September, as well as to touch upon how we will work in partnership with the OSCE.

<Japan's foreign and security policies>

Mr. Chairman, let me explain today the emphasis of the new government of Japan in the foreign and security policies.

First, Japan will deepen and develop the multi-layered Japan-U.S. alliance, which is the foundation of our foreign policy. During the recent bilateral summit meeting in November between Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and U.S. President Barack Obama, the two leaders reached agreement to strengthen cooperation not only to advance bilateral relations but also to deal with global issues and regional challenges in the Asia-Pacific, as well as to deepen the "constructive and future-oriented Japan-U.S. alliance."

Second, with regard to Asia diplomacy, the new administration has proposed a long-term vision of the establishment of an East Asia community, strengthening our partnership with China, South Korea, and the ASEAN countries while advancing open and transparent regional cooperation. With regard to Japan-Russia relations, Japan will continue to work vigorously to conclude a peace treaty. At the same time, we seek a partnership with Russia that can contribute to the stability and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region.

Third, Japan will actively address global challenges, such as climate change, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, reducing poverty and conflicts in Africa, achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and promoting the concept of holistic human security to assist developing countries. Today, one of the most critical issues facing the international community is bringing stability to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Last month, the Japanese government drafted an assistance package of 5 billion dollars to help improve the security capacity of Afghanistan's military and police forces, promote reintegration of insurgents into civil society, and assist sustainable development and self-growth of Afghanistan's economy. The Hatoyama administration has also announced our new strategy of supporting Pakistan which includes the prompt implementation of assistance measures that Japan pledged at the Donor Conference held in April this year. Having committed bilaterally to the assistance to the region, our government found multilateral cooperation through the OSCE useful and therefore contributed 2.72 million euros to the 5 of OSCE's projects strengthening border control capacity of the Central Asian countries at the border with Afghanistan.

Japan will also work on the issues surrounding North Korea in order to bring about a comprehensive resolution of all outstanding concerns. These include the abduction issue, the nuclear weapon development program and missile testing. The Government of Japan will also seek the normalization of diplomatic relations by sincerely settling the unfortunate past between Japan and North Korea. We call for an early resumption of the six-party talks. Japan will implement measures based upon the United Nations Security Council resolutions as well as national measures in close collaboration with other interested parties.

<Cooperation between Japan and the OSCE>

Mr. Chairman,

I have enlisted a while ago important areas of Japan's diplomacy. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, problem of climate change, poverty reduction, achievement of Millennium Development Goals, securing the safety of the global transportation network of energy resources, consolidating human rights and democracy. All those are challenges that transgress the regional border between Europe and Asia.

Japan would be happy to collaborate closely with European countries, which are major players in the international community, in order to address these challenges. At the same time, Japan can learn lessons from Europe with respect to deepening regional cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. The chronology of the European unification, which started from the establishment of coal and steel common market, shows us how the peace and stability of an entire region could be attained through the realization of peace and prosperity between individual countries in the region.

Japan can also learn a lot from the wisdom and experiences of the OSCE, a 35 years process of adaptation to changing world. Japan is a committed Partner for Co-operation

to the OSCE since 1992. We have been dispatching more than 200 election observers to various monitoring missions of OSCE. We have dispatched this year 6 observers to elections in Macedonia, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova.

To realize "a society where each and every person's life matters" is a distinctive aspect of Japanese culture and one of the goals that the Democratic Party of Japan stated in its election manifesto during the last general election campaign. It is also one of the promises that the new Japanese administration made to the Japanese citizens. Japan's assistance to developing countries places importance on the advancement of human security - putting people's life in the center.

Since the beginning, the OSCE has consistently dealt with security issues comprehensively, i.e. not only from the hard military point of view but also from the soft economic, environmental, human rights, and democratic perspective. Japanese people feel strong sympathy to this approach.

I would like to conclude my speech by reaffirming that the Government of Japan will continue deepening its collaboration with the OSCE and promoting peace and stability in the international community.

Thank you very much.