

Delegation of Switzerland

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND AT THE
949th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

25 April 2013

**Information on the meeting of the Contact Group with the
Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation on 19 April 2013**

Mr. Chairperson,

As Chairperson of the Contact Group with the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation, I should like to inform the Permanent Council of the last meeting of the Group held on 19 April 2013. The main topic of the meeting was mediation in the Mediterranean region.

Two high representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Morocco and Spain were invited to present their joint initiative on mediation in the Mediterranean region. This initiative is the result of a United Nations General Assembly resolution on strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution presented by the two Ministers for Foreign Affairs in New York in September 2012.

Speaking on behalf of Spain, Mr. Juan José Escobar, special ambassador for Mediterranean affairs, highlighted the potential of mediation in interreligious and intercultural dialogue and the importance of education in this area for all age groups. He also underscored the need to develop a peace infrastructure specifically in the Mediterranean region. The role of women and the importance of activities at the local level were also stressed.

His Moroccan counterpart, Mr. Azzedine Farhane, director for the United Nations and international organizations, is responsible for promoting the follow-up to this process, including the organization of the next meeting in Rabat this July. He explained that Morocco and Spain took this initiative to involve the Mediterranean countries in the strengthening of their national institutional capacities and to implement the United Nations General Assembly resolution in a regional context. One of the aims of the meeting in Rabat will be to establish a mediation network in the Mediterranean region so as to develop a new approach to national dialogue in countries in transition. The OSCE will also be invited to this conference in Rabat.

Mr. David Lanz, representative of the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) responsible for mediation, stressed that mediation is not only effective but has also made a real

contribution to reducing the number of conflicts. Since his appointment as focal point for mediation, the CPC has been involved in numerous training and coaching exercises both for heads of mission and special representatives and for field missions. The demand surpasses the CPC's capacities as a result.

During the discussion, the speakers underscored the importance of mediation for the OSCE and expressed an interest in exploring new paths for co-operation between the Moroccan-Spanish initiative and the OSCE.

The next meeting of the Contact Group, co-organized with Israel, will take place on 17 May 2013 and will be devoted to trafficking in human beings.