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**STATEMENT BY MR. FIORENZO STOLFI, MINISTER FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SAN MARINO, AT THE
FOURTEENTH MEETING OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Brussels, 4 and 5 December 2006

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Republic of San Marino, I should like to thank the Belgian Chairmanship for its excellent organization of the meeting and for the warm welcome accorded to us in this splendid city. I should also like to mention the highly stimulating role it has played during this year of intense activity, which has enabled the Organization to make significant progress.

I am also attending the Fourteenth Ministerial Council of the OSCE as Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, a position I assumed a few days ago, taking over from the Russian Chairmanship.

The Republic of San Marino, which has had the privilege of following and contributing to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe since its inception and which was one of the signatories to the historic Helsinki Final Act, finds itself this year for the second time in its history chairing the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe for the next six months.

I should like to recall that it was at the initiative of San Marino during its first Chairmanship in 1990 that the Council of Europe established permanent structured relations with the OSCE.

The programme of the San Marino Chairmanship focuses on three priorities as follows:

- Promotion of intercultural and interreligious dialogue;
- Defence and development of human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- Strengthening of co-operation with other international organizations, particularly the OSCE.

These are three important and indeed cross-cutting objectives, since they are also completely in line with the foundations on which the OSCE is based.

I should like to mention in this context that at the meeting of the OSCE/Council of Europe Co-ordination Group in Strasbourg on 29 September, San Marino, following on from the Russian Chairmanship, suggested adding a fourth priority area of co-operation between the two organizations, namely intercultural and interreligious dialogue and the religious dimension.

In fact, we all believe that there cannot be true and enduring peace without universal respect for human rights, harmonious economic development and equitable distribution of wealth, or a more profound “awareness of diversity” that would encourage dialogue between cultures and religions and strengthen international co-operation.

The third priority of the San Marino Chairmanship concerns relations between the Council of Europe and the OSCE, which we intend to pursue by following the path set out in the Action Plan adopted at the Warsaw Summit in 2005. I firmly believe that co-operation between the two organizations, the division of labour and harmonization of activities are not only desirable but also necessary in the completely new pan-European context that has emerged.

The OSCE has adapted to the developments that have taken place: it is structured and equipped to meet new challenges, it has adapted its institutional organization to confront the problems in a completely changed European context, a complex Europe in which we are called upon to monitor the development of democracies, balance economies, monitor military organizations and, at the same time, safeguard human rights.

As representative of my country, I can assure you that San Marino will continue to contribute to the Organization as far as it is able. As Chairman of the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers I should also like to state that we shall be completely available to implement all initiatives conducive to creating new synergies between the two international organizations, to strengthening the effectiveness in their areas of competence and to working together towards a Europe of peace, justice and stability.

To this end, I intend to propose a further meeting of the OSCE/Council of Europe Co-ordination Group before the end of San Marino’s Chairmanship and I should like to invite the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to the conference on interreligious dialogue, which we shall be organizing in San Marino in April.

Mr. Chairman,

A few days ago, I attended the official launch in Madrid of the Council of Europe campaign to combat violence against women including domestic violence, a very sad problem that no country is exempt from, not least because it unfolds unfortunately in silence and often within the home. My country, like many of the countries represented here, has launched a national campaign and will do its utmost to combat this terrible phenomenon.

I am sure that all the countries represented here and the OSCE, which has always been sensitive to the issue of violence against women and gender equality, will contribute to this campaign.

San Marino fully endorses the activities carried out by the Belgian Chairmanship this year, supports the OSCE's activities in the three dimensions and its traditional domains and will give its complete backing to the decisions adopted at this Ministerial Conference.

Moreover, San Marino would like to stress the importance of the OSCE's activities in the four priority sectors, with which it also co-operates with the Council of Europe: the fight against terrorism, protection of national minorities, combating trafficking in human beings, and fostering tolerance and non-discrimination.

Our country has made great progress in adapting its national legislation, creating new legal instruments to address the different forms of terrorism, bringing its laws into line with international standards and approving international conventions aimed at preventing and combating terrorism. It has also recently become a member of Interpol.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I should like to wish our friend Foreign Minister Miguel Moratinos, who will assume the Chairmanship next year, every success and can assure him of the full support and collaboration of my country.

Thank you.