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STATEMENT BY THE TURKISH DELEGATION

In response to the address by the Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE, H.E. Didier Burkhalter, President of the Swiss Confederation and Head of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

**980th Permanent Council
16 January 2014**

It is both a pleasure and privilege to welcome President Burkhalter to the Permanent Council as the Chairman-in-Office of our Organization. We express our thanks and appreciation for his comprehensive presentation.

Mr. Chairperson,

In addressing transnational threats, we share your assessment that we need to support the initiative to further develop the OSCE's contribution to cyber security. Developing an additional set of CBMs in this area, while duly implementing the already agreed commitments in the field of transnational threats, such as counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics and police-related activities remains one of the main priorities of my country in the first dimension.

We are committed to increasing military stability, transparency and predictability in the OSCE area, through the full implementation of the Vienna Document as well as its update and modernization. We welcome the Swiss Chairmanship's interest in this topic and look forward to cooperating closely also with the Maltese, Moldovan and Monegasque FSC Chairmanships.

The discussions in the economic and environmental dimension will shed further light on the added value the OSCE can bring in disaster risk reduction, effective risk management, natural hazard-triggered disasters and technological accidents. We fully support the theme of the economic and environment forum meeting cycles. As in the past, we will actively participate and contribute to the forum meetings, with a view to exchanging and sharing experiences and best practices.

The substantial body of human dimension commitments produced by the OSCE over the past decades forms an integral part of our Organization's comprehensive security concept. Their effective implementation constitutes one of the most important yardsticks to measure the OSCE's ultimate success. We therefore fully support the Swiss Chairmanship's focus on the implementation of existing commitments in the human dimension.

I would be amiss if I did not underline the challenge posed by the current rise of racism, xenophobia, intolerance and discrimination in the OSCE region. It is also a fact that the economic crisis has been exacerbating the negative perception of migrants in a number of participating States. We therefore warmly welcome the Swiss Chairmanship's selection of "human rights in economic crisis" as one of the themes to be focused upon in the human dimension.

Let me also re-iterate our conviction that it is important not to approach our human dimension agenda in a selective manner, and to avoid artificial hierarchies among human dimension topics. We must keep in mind that fundamental freedoms cannot thrive in an environment polluted with intolerance and discrimination – they are two sides of the same coin.

The effective participation of civil society in the OSCE's activities is an invaluable component of the human dimension and one of the foremost strengths of our Organization. We thus welcome Switzerland's prioritization of enhancing the involvement of civil society, and youth in particular, across all three dimensions. The remarks we listened to earlier from the youth representatives gave us a vivid flavor of their strength, determination, optimism and idealism, highlighting the accuracy of the Swiss Chairmanship's approach.

Protracted conflicts in the OSCE area continue to erode regional security and stability, while raising questions about the credibility of the Organization as a whole. We concur with the Swiss Chairmanship that we all have a collective responsibility to contribute to the settlement of these conflicts. On our part, we will continue our quest to provide an impetus to reenergizing the ongoing processes in their established formats.

As an active member of the South European Cooperation Process, we welcome the Chairmanship's objective of fostering security and stability while advancing regional cooperation in the Western Balkans. You can count on our support in your efforts towards this end.

Among cross-dimensional topics, reinforcing the tool box of the OSCE across the conflict cycle is a priority that we fully support.

Issues related to women, peace and security also deserve our constant attention. We continue to believe that our organization, with its comprehensive approach to security, is uniquely placed to bring a significant added-value in this area. Let us not forget that MC Decision 3/11 on the conflict cycle requires us to take the work forward in this field as well.

The OSCE's engagement with Afghanistan is another cross-dimensional topic to which my country attaches great importance. We expect the OSCE to be able to forge ahead with its strong long-term commitment to the ongoing efforts, especially this year which is crucial for Afghanistan. It is a fact that our constructive engagement, complementing other international and regional organizations, will effectively contribute to improving the situation in this country.

We fully support the Helsinki+40 Roadmap of the consecutive Swiss and Serbian Chairmanships, with a view to creating a new culture of engagement, increasing trust among participating states and strengthening the OSCE's capacities. We already know that, despite differences of approach on some issues, our determination to work together on the basis of common values can indeed produce tangible results. Greater effectiveness of the OSCE is one of those results that my country is looking forward to achieving within this process.

Mr. Chairperson,

Expectations from the Swiss Chairmanship are high. The conviction that these expectations will be met is strong. Turkey's support to you in this regard is fully dependable.

With these thoughts and considerations, I will conclude my remarks by wishing our new Chairman-in-Office every success in his important and demanding task. We also extend these wishes to the competent Swiss teams both in Bern and here in Vienna.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.