



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE HOLY SEE
TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

**STATEMENT BY MONSIGNOR MICHAEL W. BANACH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE HOLY SEE,
AT THE 779th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

5 NOVEMBER 2009

**RE: ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION OF CROATIA
H.E. MR. GORDAN JANDROKOVIC**

Madam Chairwoman:

1. The Holy See also joins previous Delegations in warmly welcoming H.E. Mr. Gordan Jandrokovic to the Permanent Council.

2. Croatia is a land rich in Christian traditions. By drawing on this incorruptible religious patrimony, Croatians will continue in the future to build their history. Croatia's progress towards membership in the European Union will also contribute to the process of democratic reform not only within the Country, but also in the other nations in that area of the Continent which are moving with strong hope towards European integration.

The Croatian people's commitment to fostering dialogue, reconciliation and peace in the Country is also a manifestation of that universal aspiration to justice and co-operation that always motivates it. It is, of course, primarily the task of those responsible for the institutions to identify practical and technical ways to express these aspirations in legislation and in political initiatives. In recognizing the on-going efforts of Croatia to address the problem of refugees and exiles, my Delegation is confident that with the continued engagement on the part of the

Government, the return of one and all will be effectively permitted and facilitated.

3. After the sad experience of totalitarianism, Croatia is now on its way towards harmonious progress, giving proof of patience and the readiness for sacrifice and persevering optimism as it tenaciously strives to create a better future for all its inhabitants. Stable social and economic development cannot fail to take into account the cultural, social and spiritual needs of the people, just as it must appreciate its noblest resources and popular traditions. It must do this, aware that the growing phenomenon of globalization worldwide could only negatively affect, in Croatia as well, the leveling out of social and economic diversities and accentuate the present imbalance between those who benefit from the ever greater possibility of producing wealth and those who are left on the fringes of progress.

4. Croatia boasts of a long tradition of useful cooperation between the ecclesial and secular communities. In the recent past, the Church has also played a positive role in reconciliation and in solving many problems. The Holy See is confident that the good relations which exist between the Government and the Church in Croatia will facilitate every further step to increase mutual understanding for the benefit of all citizens.

In this regard, I would like to recall the inscription found above the doors of the Great Council Hall in Dubrovnik: "*Obliti privatorum, publica curate*" - a Roman political saying which reminds that the common good should be given priority over private matters for any person having a responsibility in the State. The Holy See is confident that the commitment of the leaders of Croatia, inspired by true values, will always be seen as a generous and disinterested service of the human person and of society. It must never be bent to serve ends contrary to this supreme goal.

5. In conclusion, I would like to assure Minister Jandrokovic that the Holy See both values its diplomatic links with his country, marked by very visible signs of Christianity incarnate in the life of its people, and that, in accordance with its own specific mission, will work together with Croatia in promoting peace, mutual respect and the advancement of individuals and peoples.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.