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**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF ITALY AT THE 1026th MEETING OF THE
FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

19 October 2022

Armed forces and environmental protection

Mr. Chairperson,

Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union and wishes to add a few comments in its national capacity.

First of all, we should like once again to thank the Belgian Chairmanship for organizing this Security Dialogue on armed forces and the environment, and the OSCE Secretary General and the other speakers for their interesting statements. In the current context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine – which we continue to call for an immediate end to – dialogue on the issue of strengthening environmental security is more necessary and urgent than ever, particularly in the light of the impact of the conflict on the environment and the protection of biodiversity.

Italy is also committed to strengthening national security in relation to environmental protection. This commitment is based on the recognition that the pursuit of typical military aims cannot be dissociated from the need for behaviour with a minimal environmental impact. Our armed forces, where they are not directly involved in preventing and suppressing environmental crimes, as in the case of the Carabinieri or the army in the recent "Strade Pulite" operation, directly assist in monitoring the territory, in co-operation with the other responsible institutions.

Environmental protection is an important factor to be taken into account when planning and implementing the activities of the armed forces. In accordance with the Strategic Concept of the Chief of the Defence Staff of Italy, the armed forces contribute to the goals of environmental sustainability and the fight against climate change through Green Defence initiatives, with the search for efficient and sustainable solutions to reduce the energy and environmental footprint while preserving full operational capability.

These actions are part of the implementation of the Defence Energy Strategy Plan, which, for the period up to 2030, is designed to pursue national sustainability, efficiency improvement and emission reduction goals, and to increase the level of energy supply security. In that context, an Energy Area Defence Task Force has been set up at the Italian Ministry of Defence to simplify procedures by acting as the armed forces' single point of contact for energy matters. Among the initiatives being implemented are the major infrastructure projects of the individual branches of the armed forces, which are gradually renewing the

defence infrastructure according to the Smart Military Districts model, applied to barracks, ports and airports, and initiatives in the transport sector, including sea and air transport, through the experimental use of biofuels.

Mr. Chairperson,

In reaffirming the importance of this issue, we should like finally to recall Italy's vigorous support for the OSCE's role in environmental security, in particular through the extrabudgetary project on climate change, and for the decision to devote a specific detailed study under this project to the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and its impact on the environment.

Thank you.