

Statement by the delegation of Israel

Vice prime minister and minister for strategic affairs

Moshe Ya'alon

On the occasion of the OSCE summit Astana 1-2/12/2010

Excellencies , Ladies and gentlemen,

I'm honored to represent the state of Israel in this very important summit. I would like to start by thanking our host, his Excellency, the president of the republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, for organizing and hosting this summit. This summit is a realization of an idea that was raised a little over a year ago and with many efforts and hard work has become a reality today in Astana.

11 years after the Istanbul summit, the leaders of all member states and the partners states, gather here in the capital of Kazakhstan, to commemorate 2 important dates in the history of the OSCE and to widen the look at and the vision of its future.

65 years have passed since the end of the 2nd world war, a war that has changed Europe and the world when the forces of freedom and democracy defeated the evil of Nazism and Fascism. The dark regimes wanted to oppress others by destroying hope and human rights which resulted among other terrible things in the most horrific genocide in human history. 6 million Jews perished in the Holocaust, a tragedy that made it clearer than ever that the Jewish people have to have a state of its own. In 1947 the UN has voted for the establishment of an independent Jewish state in the ancient home land of the Jewish people. But the founding of the state of Israel has not ended the suffering and 62 years later we still have to fight for our survival, for our independence and protect the lives of our citizens.

While we discuss here in Astana the security of the region between Vancouver and Vladivostok and form of cooperation with the OSCE and its Asian and Mediterranean

partners, there are still those who call for the destruction of Israel, declare that they will continue to fight the Jewish state and are attacking it in every possible way, including firing of missiles, all kinds of terror actions and with diplomatic and economic warfare. We are confident that the international community will not allow extremists like the Iranian regime, Hezbollah and Hamas to win this war, that the OSCE will emerge from this summit in a better position to face security challenges and promote peace everywhere , including the Middle East. Israel will continue to defend itself by itself but at the same time will continue to seek a peaceful solution through negotiations. We have proved that we are ready to make difficult decisions, hoping that others will do the same.

We are willing to reach compromises with the Palestinians and our Arab neighbors, but not such that would jeopardize our existence, as it is security and prosperity for the future generations that we seek for us and for the whole region.

The second event this conference commemorates brings us to the main issue of this summit. 35 years ago the Helsinki final act was signed. The final act was, is and will be the most basic document of the OSCE and the core of its vision, its concept and its cooperation policy. The three dimensions of the work of the OSCE – the political military dimension, the economic environmental dimension and the human dimension were all defined in this declaration.

This important document has defined, already in 1975 the close links between peace and security in Europe and in the Euro Asian and Mediterranean regions. Other elements like the promotion of fundamental rights, economic and social progress and the well being of all peoples, were also defined in the final act.

This historic document also referred to the geographic, historic, cultural, economic and political aspects of the relations between the OSCE region and non participating Mediterranean states. These matters are still very relevant today to the security and stability of Europe that are strongly intertwined with those of the Mediterranean region.

We, in Israel, have been therefore an active member of the Mediterranean partnership, ever since its establishment. We believe in the relations between our region and the OSCE, which is also the reason for our participation in all the activities that were organized for the partner states and many others to which we were invited.

When the Corfu process was launched, we expressed our interest to become better informed about and more active in that process. Today, as partners, we follow it, we acknowledge its

importance and we look forward to continue to participate in this substantial debate on the future of the OSCE region.

We believe this summit is not the end of the Corfu process, but rather its continuation. We hope that after the summit, the political will and readiness will be constituted, to continue this important discussion concerning the future of the OSCE, the security and stability of the international system, the structure and activities of this organization and most important better and safer future for us all.

Thank you.