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**PERMANENT MISSION
OF TURKEY TO THE OSCE**

ENGLISH only

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR YUSUF BULUÇ
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**THE 38th JOINT MEETING
OF THE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION AND
THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
(18 February 2009)**

Madam Chairperson,

I should like to begin by confirming our alignment with the EU joint statement just delivered. We concur with the general approach charted in it in order to pursue the next stages of European security debate and the key principles that should underpin a potential process.

We likewise warmly welcome Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko to the joint meeting of the Forum for Security Cooperation and the Permanent Council. I should also commend the Chairman-in-Office, Greece and France, the Chair of the Forum for Security Cooperation for organizing today's joint meeting and hosting Deputy Foreign Minister Grushko as its illustrious guest speaker.

We consider this meeting to be an opportunity to follow-up on the substantive exchange of views on the future of the European security which took place at the Ministerial meeting in Helsinki, the outcomes of which have been so carefully and succinctly summarized in the EU

statement. We regard your presence here Deputy Minister Grushko as a clear sign of political will of the Russian Federation to remain engaged with all its partners on this matter.

Building on the EU statement, in my national capacity, I would like to underscore that this meeting is a further demonstration of the growing recognition of the OSCE, owing to its competence and credentials, as the forum uniquely suited and purposefully designed to conduct the discussion on the future of the European security. With its broad and internationally acknowledged acquis, in-house expertise and institutional memory, the OSCE is indeed the platform that would serve this goal well.

Deputy Minister Grushko is aware that the President of Turkey has, a few days ago, concluded a hugely successful state visit to the Russian Federation as the guest of President Medvedev. I think he too would find it useful if I were to share with the Council that the two Presidents formalized with their signatures a Joint Declaration. Relevant to our deliberations today and to follow-on stages of a possible process is a provision in the Joint Declaration which guides me as well as Ambassador Grushko to engage in a comprehensive dialogue to be conducted with the participation of all parties and institutions relevant to European security and in pursuit strictly of the goal of improving comprehensive and indivisible security in the Euro- Atlantic area. That is the overarching spirit in which I shall cast my subsequent comments. Hoping that they will be perceived as such by the Deputy Minister, let me assure him that they are meant to illuminate the way ahead for my Delegation and perhaps for others.

We are as generous as other participating States, repeating the sentiments of our Ministers in Helsinki to pay due credit to the Russian Federation for having taken a certain lead. But as Russia's partners we have already begun to introduce our own ideas so as to ensure that neither of the Parties would, on its own, determine the agenda nor seek to dominate the discussion. Equal and sovereign participation, avoidance of exclusive formats have been adequately emphasized in the EU statement.

Deputy Foreign Minister Grushko is right in identifying trust as the element that is in need of replenishment. Even if we were not facing a deficit of this factor, our quest for replenishing our stocks of trust and confidence should be constant endeavor. The indispensable first step to upgrade trust in international relations, Ambassador Grushko will agree, is to reaffirm that all existing commitments, be they political or legal, will be honored.

It is not surprising that protracted conflicts weigh heavily on our deliberations in this Organization and elsewhere, and have a significant impact on our understanding of where we are in the process which we have started in the 90s to build a new an undivided Europe free and free from conflicts. Therefore we see it pertinent and justified that your proposals also seek to address them. While the memories of the war in Georgia are still vivid in our minds, the grave consequences of this conflict remain and await attention and careful handling.

Although our search for finding the right answers for our troubles continues and our desire to provide timely and efficient responses to them has not diminished, we question the propriety and rationality of blaming the existing regimes and institutions for the failure to resolve conflicts and, more so, to prevent their eruption into full scale war. Focusing simply on possible adjustments in the tools at hand or even creatively designing new ones may not necessarily provide the much needed remedy that we are seeking. Without attempting to discard or to disregard the utility of reexamining these tools, we strongly feel that we should further embrace these existing instruments and reconfirm our resolve to use them with greater effect. Notwithstanding our broad and open mind, there is no hiding that we are skeptical on how the crisis prevention function of the current regime could be sharpened without equally sharpening our political will to use them and use them in such a way that principles of international law will be upheld and conflicts avoided. The Russian Federation seems to have the answer and Deputy Minister Grushko may wish to share his views on this matter with us.

We should not forget that the main source of authority and legitimacy of the OSCE as a regional organization, is the undergirding sanctioning of the United Nations, and the values and principles that it embodies. Any review of the existing commitments and mechanisms that have been so meticulously crafted in this Organization will continue to be based on these values and principles. The political nature of the OSCE commitments that we have developed since 1975, driven by the same set of principles, does not make them less important, less applicable and enforceable or less binding than any contractual undertaking of a legal character. In our observance we do not distinguish or prioritize between politically and legally binding commitments. This has always been the position that my country has advocated, as neither of these commitments could be ignored, suspended or breached with impunity. Then the intriguing question arises and Deputy Minister Grushko might volunteer a response as to how a new instrument could be developed that would be more binding than the existing ones, thereby creating a complex hierarchy of commitments. Does the scheme envisaged by the Russian Federation include the creation of an omnipotent, privileged and supranational

European body with authority to adopt and enforce sanctions? Discarding any illusions, we should more profitably focus on the rationale choice of creating a suitable working environment and developing a jointly expressed political will that should ensure that the provisions of the existing instruments are implemented in full and in good faith.

Our dialogue in the OSCE would yield optimal results if and when it is conducted without imposing on ourselves artificial time constraints and prejudged or predetermined outcomes. That principle equally applies to the organization of our debate. The choice should be bottom-up rather than top-down. As we always do, the process should offer opportunities for us to appraise our political leaders through interim reports at important milestones on where we are and how fast we are going.

Thank you Deputy Minister Grushko for being with us and wish you equal success for your presentation to our Parliamentarians who are eager to listen to you with interest.

Thank you Madam Chairperson