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**STATEMENT BY THE
DELEGATION OF MOROCCO AT THE FIFTEENTH MEETING OF
THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Madrid, 29 and 30 November 2007

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a particular pleasure for me to offer my sincere congratulations to Spain for the excellent organization of this ministerial conference, which is in fact the crowning achievement of a year of work marked by remarkable dynamism, and to salute the efforts made by the Spanish Chairmanship of the OSCE and the Finnish Chairmanship of the Contact Group to strengthen the Mediterranean partnership.

The OSCE's relations with the Mediterranean countries go back a long way; the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 highlighted the foundations of its relations in stipulating that "security in Europe is closely linked with security in the Mediterranean area".

After Helsinki, the Mediterranean States were invited to make their written and oral contributions at successive meetings of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). In 1994, at the meeting of the CSCE held in Budapest, the Heads of State or Government decided, among other things, to establish a contact group with unlimited membership to strengthen existing contacts.

While the current state of the partnership does not meet all the aspirations of the partners, there is no denying that the desire to strengthen it is real — both on the part of the participating States and on the part of the partner countries.

This desire is dictated by common interests, notably those associated with common threats and challenges to security, such as the fight against terrorism, organized crime, illegal migration and trafficking in human beings.

The adoption of Permanent Council Decision No. 571, the remarkable work carried out by Ambassador Härkönen as illustrated by the report of the informal group of friends on the implementation of this decision, and the proposals of the Mediterranean countries with a view to promoting this partnership and improving mechanisms for dialogue encompass a range of measures which, if they are implemented, will make it possible to give visibility and fresh impetus to the Mediterranean dimension of the OSCE.

Concrete proposals aimed at raising the level of the partnership are therefore on the table, as you put it so well, Mr. Chairman, last year in your statement to the Permanent Council on the priorities of the Spanish Chairmanship. It is now a question of moving from the phase of thought and preparation of texts (decisions, reports, ...) to the decisive phase of implementation.

Implementation, as you will agree, is not a simple wish; it is in fact a critical and decisive step for the future of the partnership.

The recommendations on dealing with questions like migration development, for example, (the action plan and recommendations of the Rabat seminar on migration and development, the recommendations of the Sharm El-Sheik seminar, etc.) or indeed the proposal concerning the promotion of tolerance require greater commitment on the part of the OSCE participating States if they are to be translated into concrete measures.

In this connection, I should like to reiterate the proposal made by the Kingdom of Morocco regarding the establishment of a working group on migration and development.

With a view to giving greater visibility to dialogue with the partners, I should like to take this opportunity to recall the proposal made by the Moroccan delegation regarding the presentation by the chairmen of the contact groups of reports on activities concerning the partnership to the Permanent Council and an annual report to the Ministerial Council.

Furthermore, there is an urgent need to establish a fund to finance the partnership, a question which has been suspended since its finalization at the Mediterranean Seminar in Rabat in September 2005, specifically to ensure the participation of experts and non-governmental organizations in different seminars and workshops organized under the auspices of the OSCE.

I should also like to express the appreciation of Morocco for the high-quality work of the Personal Representatives of the Chairman-in-Office for combating discrimination and intolerance against Christians, Muslims and Jews.

In that connection, mention should be made here of the visit to Morocco from 2 to 5 November of this year by Professor Gert Weisskirchen, Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism.

In this same context, I should like to pay tribute once again to the initiative to organize the Chairmanship Conference on Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims, although it would have been preferable if it had been organized under the auspices of the OSCE as was the case for similar conferences, such as the conference on combating anti-Semitism, for example.

I might mention also the importance we attach to the strengthening of relations between the Moroccan Parliament and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and the visit of the President of the Parliamentary Assembly to Rabat, which is intended to promote links between these two legislative bodies, is in keeping with this view.

Mr. Chairman,

The subscription of Morocco to the Helsinki principles and its commitment to the consolidation of its relations with the OSCE were reaffirmed this year through its active participation in all the Organization's seminars, conferences and workshops concerned with the three dimensions (politico-military, economic and environmental, and human) and through the strengthening of the irreversible democratic process in my country, which shows — if that is necessary — that the principles that guide the partnership and the sharing of values and norms are expressed in the reality and experience of the institutional and political evolution of the Kingdom.

The implementation of His Majesty's comprehensive project for the promotion of a modern, democratic and open society was crowned this year by parliamentary elections with a seal of transparency, and this was also the view of national and international observers.

The electoral arrangements put into place enabled all Moroccans to express, in a completely transparent and free manner, their preferences in the selection of the members of the Chamber of Representatives.

The international observation mission made up of members from 19 different countries was able to monitor the entire election process and submitted a clear and detailed report on the democratic nature of the elections.

In addition, it should be pointed out that 2007 also saw the adoption of a number of reforms concerned with the raising of moral standards in public life, the institution of a mandatory property declaration for certain categories of civil servants (members of parliament, magistrates, and so on), the ratification of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the promulgation of a decree establishing the Central Corruption Prevention Office.

Fully aware that political reforms must be backed up by the economic development of the country and a reduction of disparities between regions, His Majesty, King Mohammed VI launched the Human Development Initiative (INDH) in May 2005. This initiative is devised to promote social justice, revenue growth and job creation.

Mr. Chairman,

Lastly, I have the pleasure to recall that in its interaction with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe as a Mediterranean Partner for Co-operation, my country will host on 12 and 13 December of this year a major seminar for the launch of the Mediterranean edition of the "Handbook on Establishing Effective Labour Migration Policies" published by the OSCE, the International Organization for Migration and the International Labour Organization.