Dear Foreign Minister Moavero Milanesi, Dear Secretary-General Gremminger, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Once again - thank you, Enzo, and your team for your work as Chair 2018. We are grateful for Italy’s commitment and engagement and for your hospitality during these past 2 days in Milan. And these were very valuable days. We heard the current state of affairs assessed, challenges defined, concerns expressed. But we also heard a lot of messages of ambition, unity and positive examples. Overall – these 2 days provided a good sense of mood and visions of participating States as we prepare for the year to come.

In Slovakia, we are looking forward to our Chairmanship. We have chaired the Mediterranean Contact Group, we are at the helm of the budget negotiations for 2019 and we are ready to responsibly and professionally carry out our OSCE Chairmanship.

Over the last couple of months, I have visited many capitals and together with my team, we have consulted a majority of participating States. And once again, we listened carefully to all expectations of the OSCE partners.
We will present Slovak priorities for 2019 in detail on 10 January in Vienna. But I can already tell you what kind of Chairmanship Slovakia wants to be:

1. **Useful** – Bringing more ease and contribute to improving every-day lives of the innocent people stuck in the midst of conflict.
2. **Ambitious but realistic** – Minding the potential of the OSCE, while objectively assessing the realities and challenges we face.
3. **Promoting dialogue** – Supporting multilateralism and compromise while respecting consensus.
4. **Forward-looking** – Engaging the youth not as our future, but rather as our present.
5. **Fair and honest** – We want to be a fair partner and honest broker. For all. The organization, the participating States, and mostly for all our people, especially people affected by conflict. After all, they are the reason why we are all here and why we are doing this work.

*To conclude,*

I want to thank our partners in Troika – it has been an honour to work with Austria and Italy. In this regard, I want to commend Albania for formalising their aspiration to hold the OSCE Chairmanship in 2020 - and let’s keep in mind that 2021 is closer than we think! Last but not least – thanks go out to the Secretary General Greminger, OSCE Secretariat, field missions and institutions, and to all of you – - for your cooperation and support in our preparation for 2019. *Thank you all.*