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**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. FRANÇOIS ALABRUNE,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FRANCE TO THE OSCE, AT
THE 42nd JOINT MEETING OF THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY
CO-OPERATION AND THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

10 March 2010

Madam Chairperson of the Forum for Security Co-operation,
Mr. Chairman of the Permanent Council,

Permit me to say first of all that France fully agrees with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Spain on behalf of the European Union (EU), to which I should like to add the following comments from a national perspective.

I should like to thank you for organizing this joint meeting of the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation, which is particularly welcome as part of our deliberations in the framework of the Corfu Process. Today's meeting fits neatly into the sequence of events that began on 23 February of this year, and it is entirely consistent with the comprehensive discussion that we initiated last autumn on the role that we envisage for our Organization in the area of conflict prevention and resolution.

I should also like to thank Ambassador Salber in particular for his thought-provoking statement, which spurs us all to consideration and action. The proposals that he has just presented to us will unquestionably provide further support to our dialogue on ways of strengthening the OSCE's effectiveness in one of its primary missions, conflict prevention and resolution. These proposals round out the ideas which Ambassador Salber outlined on 20 October 2009, and for this reason they deserve our full consideration. To a large extent, they echo the proposals that France and nine of its EU partners circulated two weeks ago under the symbol PC.DEL/90/10. They also echo proposals made by other participating States. Various ideas presented on 23 February are complementary, and they constitute a fruitful basis for advancing our discussions and attaining consensus.

Our Organization rightly harbours great ambitions in the area of conflict prevention and resolution. In the early 1990s we witnessed a multitude of initiatives, which unfortunately were not necessarily accompanied by an equally ambitious examination of our structures and procedures. For this reason, the term used by Ambassador Salber, "cementing", is particularly welcome at this stage of our dialogue.

The work that we have commenced since last autumn, against the backdrop of specific situations like the conflict in Georgia in 2008, has only one objective, that of improving the OSCE's response at all stages of the crisis life cycle, from the early warning

phase to post-conflict rehabilitation. This is not only a matter of conceptual debate, in which it would be sufficient to identify general principles; rather, as Ambassador Salber rightly pointed out, we should approach conflict prevention and resolution through the implementation of practical and concrete measures, with awareness of a strong political commitment.

Ambassador Salber's proposal concerning a generic aide-mémoire that would enable us to identify, among the mechanisms and procedures in force, the most appropriate instruments for responding to different phases of crisis cycles undoubtedly stems from the need to use our toolbox to greater advantage. This suggestion, moreover, coincides with our proposal to carry out a review of the mechanisms and procedures in force. This exercise should be an opportunity to conduct an honest examination of the tools at our disposal, aimed at bringing to light both the advantages and the weaknesses of these tools and drawing the appropriate conclusions in order to add value to the OSCE's actions. This pertains in particular to politico-military instruments and confidence- and security-building measures. In this regard, I noted the provocative question raised by Ambassador Salber about the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty) regime. The CFE Treaty regime's continuing paralysis should not be a matter of indifference to us. Its revitalization could be on the agenda of a possible summit this year.

Examination of the tools at our disposal should lead us not only to clarify or redefine the level of ambition that the OSCE should have in this area, but also to suggest improvements in the working methods and functioning of our institutions. It seems to me essential for the Secretariat and, through it, the Conflict Prevention Centre, to be better and more quickly informed of the warning signs of a crisis and better able to report on it to participating States. This assumes that they are equipped with the necessary analytic capacity.

For my part, I also see great merit in the sequential approach envisaged by Ambassador Salber. At each stage of the crisis life cycle, there should be a corresponding response, the most immediate and appropriate one possible. When a given situation arises, we should be able to react immediately. No one can deny that our hesitation to activate our mechanisms and procedures has been prejudicial to our action up to now. This question also relates to the common understanding that we must have of our mechanisms, to which Ambassador Salber rightly referred in his remarks a few minutes ago.

Distinguished colleagues,

We are at a crucial stage in our deliberations on conflict prevention and resolution. In order to achieve tangible results, our work must now enter a concrete phase. We must ensure that we are as pragmatic as possible. As our Finnish colleague indicated on 23 February, we are not seeking to revolutionize the arrangements in force, but rather to improve and make better use of them, in a way that will enable the Organization to play a role fully commensurate with its primary missions and consistent with the expectations of our authorities and peoples.

We strongly encourage all participating States to contribute in good faith to this effort, which should be an open, transparent and flexible process. For its part, France intends to contribute actively to the initiatives taken by the Hungarian co-ordinator, whom we support in his task.

Thank you for your attention.