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**STATEMENT BY Mrs DORA BAKOYANNIS,
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF GREECE,
AT THE FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Madrid, 30 November 2007

Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

"It is a great pleasure for me to participate in the 15th Ministerial Council of the OSCE.

Along with my warmest thanks to our host the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs, my dear friend and colleague, Miguel Angel Moratinos and his team for their warm hospitality, I would also like to congratulate them for their organizational proficiency in skillfully orchestrating this complex endeavor.

Congratulations are also in order for our Secretary General, Monsieur Marc Perrin de Brichambaut and the entire staff of the Secretariat, whether working in the Institutions or in the Field Missions.

Greece, needless to say, fully subscribes to the statement delivered by the Portuguese Presidency on behalf of the EU.

Allow me to address certain points of particular interest to my country.

We are convinced that the OSCE remains an important regional forum encompassing the vast majority of North America and Eurasia. Our common efforts of cooperation within the OSCE framework are rooted in the principles of joint consultation, dialogue and fruitful cooperation among participating states, in a spirit of transparency and equality.

We recognize the valuable contribution of **OSCE Field Operations to host countries** in capacity and institution-building in the framework of the established principles of our Organization.

Especially in South Eastern Europe, the role of OSCE Field Operations has been pivotal in democratization, institution building and promoting stability and prosperity across the entire region. The continuation of OSCE presence in the area should therefore be assured in an unhindered fashion. In this spirit, I would like to place special emphasis on the need for the continuation of OSCE presence in **Kosovo** to further promote democratic values and human rights. Flexibility, understanding and the principles of good neighborliness are all the more

important when we face delicate situations. My country continues to firmly stand by these principles and urges all countries in the region to intensify their efforts in this respect.

We share the concerns of all our partners about the persistence of a number of conflicts and disputes in various regions of the OSCE area. Such phenomena undermine our joint efforts for peace, security and stability. We fully support the diplomatic efforts undertaken by the Chairmanship in Office and participating states, by means of existing fora and negotiating mechanisms, aiming at peacefully resolving these conflicts, with a view to reaching results acceptable by all parties involved.

We fully support the series of Ministerial Decisions in this field that we are going to adopt today, at the end of this Council, and we stand ready to contribute effectively to their prompt implementation.

The **Forum for Security Cooperation** remains a valuable mechanism for free and open dialogue with the purpose of establishing confidence-building measures, reducing tension and preventing conflict. At the same time it is the guardian for the implementation and improvement of the Confidence and Security Building Measures, as provided for by the Vienna Document.

At this juncture, I would like to make special reference to the **CFE Treaty**, which lies at the very heart of the "Confidence and Security Building Measures" in the Euro-Atlantic region. The CFE has provided over seventeen years of unprecedented security, stability, predictability and transparency and remains the cornerstone of the European Security Architecture. Over the past months, we have had the opportunity to declare, and demonstrate our willingness to safeguard, update and indeed enhance the CFE regime. Our common aim is twofold: first, the speedy ratification and entry into force of the Adapted/CFE Treaty. Second, its subsequent review, as far as it is deemed appropriate. We commend the coordinated efforts of all CFE Signatories, both at multilateral and bilateral levels, to address the current difficulties and find mutually acceptable solutions. All our actions and decisions, taken individually or collectively, should be taken in the spirit of partnership.

Greece welcomes the continued successful implementation of the **Treaty on Open Skies**. We encourage and welcome any new accession to the Treaty and we regret that the application for accession of Cyprus is still pending.

We welcome the **Strategy on Environment and Security**, which has been proposed by the Spanish Chairmanship. It is our fervent hope that it will further enhance the cooperation amongst OSCE Participating States on environmental issues.

We support **the 2008 Unified Budget Proposal** for the OSCE Secretariat, Institutions and Field Missions and we hope that it will be approved in a timely fashion.

In the continuous process of implementation of the political commitments, undertaken in the **area of the Human Dimension**, OSCE has at its disposal valuable instruments to assist and advise Participating States.

Greece fully supports the adoption of the **Convention on the International Legal Personality, Legal Capacity and Privileges and Immunities of the OSCE**.

Greece encourages all efforts to further improve the relationship and strengthen the dialogue between the Partners for Cooperation and the participating States on areas of common concern. We welcome the active participation and engagement of the Partners in the work of the OSCE and call on them to promote the OSCE's norms, principles and commitments in their region making the best possible use of the Organization's experience and acquis. Hence we particularly welcome the OSCE's active engagement in promoting border security and management in Afghanistan.

Last but not least, Greece's approach to the OSCE is based and indeed driven by our values. We are firmly committed to our shared vision. We are committed to strengthening the role and relevance of the OSCE. It is in this context and in this spirit that my Government wishes once more to re-iterate its readiness to assume the Chairmanship of the OSCE.

Mr. Chairman,

The European security architecture of the 21st century poses a challenge to us all: to prove, individually and collectively, our determination, our political will, to continue with the implementation of the commitments undertaken within in this Organization since 1975. To re-affirm our firm belief in the OSCE's continued ability to adapt. Our firm belief in the OSCE's ability to take advantage of the opportunities and respond to the common threats we face.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.
