

**STATEMENT BY H.E. RAFET AKGÜNAY  
DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
AT THE 14<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

**4 December 2006, Brussels**

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,

It is a great honour and pleasure for me to be among you, representing my Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Gül, at this distinguished forum.

OSCE is the largest security organization in the world. The understanding of comprehensive security, that forms the basis of every step taken by our Organization in more than 30 years, is what makes it relevant vis-à-vis the ever evolving and complex security environment in the world we live in. OSCE contributes to promote an atmosphere of democracy, respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, greater confidence, transparency and integration. OSCE also contributes to building patterns of co-operation in the Pan-European and Trans-Atlantic spheres. The culture of dialogue and working together within the OSCE is a constant source of inspiration for other parts of the globe, including through its meaningful interaction between the Organization and its Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation.

Mr. Chairman,

It is once more the time to take stock of our achievements and to consider whether we have lived up to the expectations of our citizens and advanced their interests.

Our score card for the year is broadly positive. This is on account of the active and able Belgian Chairmanship against the backdrop of the difficult times we are passing through, beset by challenges and risks to our security as well as to the cohesion of the OSCE community.

I would like to take this occasion to make the following observations;

First, the Belgian Chairmanship was confronted by such a challenge that threatened to divide the OSCE community early on in the year, when the cartoon crisis erupted. We hope that the decision on tolerance will be the point of culmination of the hard work of the Belgian Chairmanship in elaborating our common response in the face of this thorny issue. If adopted, the decision will equally bring our contribution to the enhancement of dialogue and harmony between our citizens and beyond. We hope it will also reiterate our resolve to contribute to the "Alliance of Civilizations" initiative and to its implementation. The presentation in Istanbul of the report of the High Level Group to the UN Secretary General marks the beginning of the all important implementation stage within the Alliance of Civilizations initiative. As elaborated on by the OSCE's initial contribution, on June 2006, our organization is extremely well-placed to support the aims and goals of this important and timely initiative. We look forward to a rapid

and effective contribution by the OSCE to the implementation of the recommendations contained in the High Level Group's Report.

We are equally convinced that the re-appointment by you Mr. Chairman, of the three personal representatives on combating the various forms of intolerance and discrimination encountered in the OSCE area has raised the visibility of the OSCE significantly in the international community including among civil society. We hope and expect the incoming Spanish Chairmanship will extend their appointment to ensure the continuing and active engagement of the OSCE to this egregious human rights violation.

Second, we are heartened that the climate of co-operative dialogue which emerged last year, underpinned by a politically expressed readiness to re-dedicate ourselves to our common objectives has proved to be an enduring one. There is no doubt that the readiness of participating States to remain engaged in the reform process has been one of the catalysts in this regard. The process will surely bear its fruits. Our continued common efforts on reform this year, we hope, will be rewarded by the adoption of several decisions on the two part Ljubljana remit. A sense of reinforced confidence in our ability to adapt and to keep the Organization in a good state of repair will increase its effectiveness and its international stature. In the longer haul, the Organization should pursue efforts and remain engaged in a process that will ensure its relevance to a changing international environment.

Third, terrorism with its clear links to organized crime, including narcotics, arms and human trafficking has rightfully remained high on the agenda with an unprecedented number of conferences and workshops. We appreciate the contributions and engagement of the Anti Terrorism Unit. Another tragedy was thankfully averted when terrorists were thwarted from carrying out their heinous plans in London. This has once again highlighted the increasing vulnerability of our democratic societies to terrorist groups and our need to enhance our co-operation on all levels. We thank the incoming Spanish Chairmanship for having selected the scourge of terrorism as a special topic.

Fourth, trafficking has also been among the hallmarks of 2006 under the Belgian Chairmanship. The OSCE, bringing together countries of origin, transit and destination, is well placed to take a holistic approach to and devise effective measures for eradicating this modern day slavery. We look forward to adopting the draft decision on combating trafficking in human beings and look forward to further cooperating with our partners for its implementation.

Fifth, migration and its inseparable element integration, are issues of particular concern to Turkey as it should be for the entire OSCE community. We commend the Belgian Chairmanship for having followed up on the Ljubljana remit, for having prepared the draft report on OSCE Migration Activities and the draft Ministerial Statement. They will shed light to the course the Spanish Chairmanship may take in pursuing the migration and integration agenda in 2007.

Sixth, Turkey believes that in 2006, the FSC equally registered a deepening of dialogue on issues of concern to participating States, some of which have matured into draft decisions for our approval. We appreciate the efforts of the FSC in seeking ways to address the danger of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. I believe, this will pave the way for the OSCE to make its meaningful contribution to the efforts of the international community on this extremely important subject. We continue to attach particular importance to the prevention of illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, as well as sensitive technologies. Special emphasis needs to be given on preventing terrorist groups' access to them. The extensive work that our Organization has been carrying out in this sphere is no doubt exemplary. The FSC

should continue to be a leading venue for dialogue in the politico-military dimension. The High Level Seminar on Military Doctrine also provided us with a number of useful results with regard to the evolving security environment within the OSCE geography and possible future ways to address its peculiarities.

The third CFE Review Conference was another significant event of the year. This provided an occasion for the States parties to express their views on CFE's implementation and future. Turkey is committed to the CFE Treaty as a cornerstone of European security and to the early entry into force of the Adapted Treaty, once the remaining Istanbul commitments regarding the Republic of Georgia and the Republic of Moldova are fulfilled.

Seventh, the Belgian Chairmanship has also deployed energetic efforts with a view to enhancing the economic and environmental dimension, by giving a special emphasis on transport dialogue. In our view, transport is another area where the OSCE's broad membership and political remit can bring value added, primarily by acting as a catalyst in sensitizing international financial institutions to the needs of participating States in transition, in particular on their infrastructure needs.

Finally Mr. Chairman,

In light of the recent briefing by the Co-chairs of the Minsk Group in Vienna, we are heartened by the continuing enhanced dialogue between Azerbaijan and Armenia. We are pleased to record expression of optimism, albeit with a dose of caution, that the prospect of a political resolution in the history of this conflict has never been so close. We hope 2007 will go down in history as the year of breakthrough.

In contrast, we are disheartened that the momentum created last year at the Ljubljana Ministerial Council on South Ossetia-Georgia could not be maintained in 2007. We call on our neighbours Georgia and the Russian Federation to remain engaged in constructive dialogue. This would help to overcome present tensions, thus creating a positive environment conducive to politically resolving the South Ossetian conflict in line with the peace plan of President Saakashvili. We reject the recent referendum in South Ossetia. We believe that such unilateral acts that do not conform to international law, do not contribute to the settlement of the conflict. In a similar vein, we are concerned with the recent developments in Abkhazia that culminated in renewed escalation of tension between the Russian Federation and Georgia. We call upon all parties to exercise restraint and remain engaged in a constructive dialogue, with a view to seeking peaceful means to resolve the Abkhazian conflict.

We likewise did not recognize the referendum held in Transnistria on 17 September 2006. Turkey continues to regret the stalemate in the resolution of the conflict in Transdnier-Moldova and hopes that the positive climate evinced during the recent OSCE high level visit to Moldova will prevail and create the much needed impetus for a resolution in 2007, based on the territorial integrity, political unity and sovereignty of Moldova..

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I would like to thank you for all your efforts and welcome the incoming Spanish Chairmanship and assure them of our full co-operation.

Thank you.