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Delegation of Switzerland

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND AT THE
846th (SPECIAL) MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

13 January 2011

**In response to the inaugural address by Mr. Audronius Ažubalis, the
OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania**

Mr. Chairperson,

Switzerland congratulates Lithuania on its assumption of the OSCE Chairmanship in 2011. We warmly welcome Foreign Minister Ažubalis to the Permanent Council and thank him for his substantive inaugural address.

We welcome the priorities set by the Lithuanian Chairmanship and see in them a promising point of departure for the systematic continuation of the process to restore confidence and strengthen security in the OSCE area and beyond. Just like you, Mr. Chairperson, we favour a pragmatic and constructive approach, which further develops the ideas of the Corfu Process and the preliminary work and results of the Astana Summit and turns them into concrete measures.

With this in mind, I should like to emphasize five points:

1. Switzerland supports your approach to the settlement of existing conflicts. This involves both the resumption of formal 5+2 negotiations and the re-energizing of the process of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmen. Particularly important is the continuation of dialogue within the framework of the Geneva talks and the re-establishment of a meaningful OSCE field presence in Georgia. The latter appears to lie within the realm of possibility given a certain willingness to compromise by the parties.
2. We welcome your programme to consolidate the OSCE's work with respect to the conflict cycle. The strengthening of the executive structures, institutions and field missions is of particular concern to us. In this context we are also in favour of establishing mediation capacities within the Secretariat in order to support the Chairmanship in the best possible way and with reliance on a broad institutional memory in conflict mediation.
3. One of Switzerland's declared goals is to strengthen the arms control regime and confidence- and security-building measures. In this connection it is a matter of particular concern to us, as to the Chairmanship, that the updating of the Vienna Document in 2011 should be pursued as vigorously as possible.

4. The central role of the human dimension for security was confirmed in the Astana Declaration. It is now up to us to help implement the commitments assumed and create the necessary confidence to proceed with the realization of specific proposals contained in the Action Plan, on which there was a near consensus. As the Chairperson of the Human Dimension Committee I can assure you that I will do my utmost to work to this end.

5. Just like you, Mr. Chairperson, we support the resumption of the negotiations to endow the OSCE with a legal framework so as to provide the Organization as soon as possible with a legal personality of its own. In this context we would welcome the start of a serious process to create a legal charter.

Mr. Chairperson,

The last few years in the life of the Organization have been marked by the restoration of mutual trust among the participating States. At this point we should like to thank once again the Greek Chairmanship of 2009 and the Kazakh Chairmanship of 2010 for their systematic work towards this goal. With a view to continuing the work of the past two years we particularly welcome the further pursuit of informal discussions within the Corfu format. We must achieve further concrete results in 2011 in order to strengthen our Organization and adapt it to the challenges of the day.

Mr. Chairperson,

We wish Lithuania every success in guiding the work of the OSCE in 2011 and look forward to constructive collaboration with all delegations under the new Chairmanship.

Thank you very much.