

**19th OSCE Ministerial Council
Dublin, 6-7 December 2012**

ENGLISH only

Statement of Portugal

(Check against delivery)

Minister Guilmore, Ministers, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to congratulate Ireland for an excellent Chairmanship, for its tireless efforts in implementing the demanding OSCE agenda and in upholding and promoting the Organization's wide *acquis*. Let me also express gratitude for the warm, generous and perfect welcome here in Dublin.

While expressing my full agreement with the Statement delivered by the EU, I will make a few remarks of particular importance to Portugal.

2012 has witnessed significant successes for the Organization. Last year, we supported Mongolia's wish to become a participating State as we recognize its efforts in implementing the OSCE's commitments and its significant potential contribution to the pursuit of our shared values. In this respect, we welcome the decision to confer to Mongolia the status of participating State. Today we are deeply pleased to congratulate and welcome Mongolia in our midst. This could not have happened without the Irish Presidency's efforts and guidance.

Let me also refer to the fulfillment of the mandate in Zagreb and, last but not least, the decision to assign the consecutive Chairmanships in 2014 and 2015 to Switzerland and Serbia, which allows for the development of a strategic vision for our Organization.

We trust that Ukraine, Switzerland and Serbia will work together towards our common goal of building a security community and, to this end, the Helsinki + 40 process is a key to our work in the future. We are ready to support the future Chairmanships in this endeavor.

We also note with great satisfaction Poland's interest in taking up the Chairmanship of our organization in the future.

The approval of Helsinki + 40 Decision is a major step forward for the future of our Organization.

In this occasion, it is time to reaffirm our principles, commitments and our readiness to shape the future of our Organization according to the goal of a comprehensive, co-operative and indivisible Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community, building on our *acquis* from the Helsinki Final Act up to Astana. In doing so, cooperation with partner organizations and representatives of NGOs and civil society, including academia, and contributions from "track II" initiatives are most welcome.

Portugal also supports closer cooperation between the OSCE and other international organizations, in particular the valuable partnership that is being developed with the United Nations in addressing security challenges.

As we conclude our mandate in the Security Council, we are even more committed to the principles that have guided our foreign policy – the primacy of International Law and the strong importance of effective multilateralism in promoting peace and security. In this context, we stress the significant role of the OSCE as a regional Organization, under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter.

Mr. Chairman,

Portugal is greatly concerned with the threat to security that protracted, unresolved conflicts in the OSCE continue to present. We are encouraged by the progress in the 5+ 2 talks on the Transdniestrian settlement process but we also stress the importance of achieving progress in Georgia and Nagorno Karabakh.

Portugal strongly believes that the security and stability of the OSCE area is based on the comprehensive security of its citizens. Respect for the inherent dignity and worth of each and every individual, without distinction whatsoever, peacefully enjoying their fundamental freedoms and human rights in societies guided by democratic principles and the rule of law. In this regard, we look forward to working to honor our shared commitments.

Portugal would like to pay tribute to the OSCE Institutions and Field Missions. In this context, we were pleased to receive last week the country visit of the Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. This visit represented an opportunity to meet all relevant players at institutional levels as well as civil society. We engaged in a very fruitful dialogue, shared best practices and established a long-term cooperation to prevent and combat human trafficking.

During the same week, the Senior Adviser on Gender Issues also visited Portugal. We hope that this visit will enable future co-operation on the promotion of gender equality, particularly regarding the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

These visits proved useful in contributing towards the development of guidelines for better action by strengthening cooperation with the OSCE.

We also reiterate our hope that discussions on the conventional arms control regime can be revitalized in 2013. A robust, effective and modern regime remains an indispensable element of the European security architecture and is crucial for the stability and security of the wider OSCE space.

We also consider that effective and relevant Confidence and Security Building Measures are essential, and in this sense we hope for more substantial steps in revising and modernizing the Vienna Document.

Finally, Mr. Chairman

We are committed to the implementation of a more intense two way cooperation, respecting the priorities and choices of our Partners, building upon decisions in Vilnius on Partners for Cooperation and on strengthening OSCE engagement with Afghanistan. We also are open to the enlargement of our partnership in a way that reflects our concept of comprehensive and inclusive security.

In conclusion, I would like to convey our best wishes to the incoming Ukrainian Chairmanship. We believe that under its able leadership we will continue to progress in transforming our common goal into a concrete reality for all of us.

Thank you.