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**STATEMENT BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY DIDIER REYNDERS,  
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS, FOREIGN TRADE AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS OF THE  
KINGDOM OF BELGIUM, AT THE NINETEENTH MEETING OF THE  
OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Dublin, 6 and 7 December 2012

Mr. Chairperson,  
Mr. President of the Parliamentary Assembly,  
Mr. Secretary General,  
Representatives of the OSCE executive structures,  
Colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

I should like to join others in expressing my sincere gratitude to our host, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland, for the exemplary organization of this Ministerial Council and for his warm welcome in the beautiful city of Dublin. My delegation is also very grateful to his entire team for all the work they have accomplished and the diverse efforts to achieve consensus on the various documents being considered by us.

I should also like to take this opportunity to welcome the Republic of Mongolia. Its admission demonstrates that the OSCE has lost nothing of its appeal to countries concerned to promote security and stability through dialogue, co-operation and transparency.

The geographical scope of the OSCE, which today comprises 57 participating States extending from Vancouver to Vladivostok, presents a remarkable opportunity but also a challenge. It is important for the Organization to adapt to present-day realities, in particular by developing its complementarity with other international actors. The abiding aim must remain the search for effectiveness and the judicious utilization of resources.

The effectiveness of the OSCE will also depend in particular on the will of each of us to work together to develop this vision of common security based on our values, principles and commitments that have been repeated on many occasions in the three dimensions in which the OSCE works.

In that context, and as already mentioned by the High Commissioner Ms. Ashton in her introductory statement on behalf of the European Union, which I unreservedly support, I hope that the Helsinki+40 initiative on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Final Act of 1975 will indeed give the new political impetus required for the development of our Organization and the concrete implementation of the strategic objective determined by our

Heads of State or Government in Astana of creating a “free, democratic, common and indivisible Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community”, a community “rooted in agreed principles, shared commitments and common goals”.

Mr. Chairperson,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Thanks to its comprehensive, multidimensional and inclusive approach to security, the OSCE contributes in a unique manner to the security of our region.

Confidence-building measures have been one of the successes of the OSCE in the past. I am pleased to see that these same measures are now being used to respond to the new transnational threats like terrorism, illicit trafficking of different kinds (human beings, drugs, arms, etc.) and cyberthreats.

Even if progress remains too slow and we would be legitimately entitled to expect more, the OSCE and its instruments continue to generate important results in terms of the prevention and settlement of conflicts, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation and the establishment of strong institutions, in particular through its field missions.

I welcome especially the decisive role played by the OSCE in facilitating elections in Kosovo in May 2012, an achievement that only it could have accomplished. The same applies to the sensitive and high-quality work performed by our OSCE institutions such as the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Representative on Freedom of the Media, institutions that are available to and at the service of all of the participating States in our Organization.

Mr. Chairperson,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

We are regrettably obliged to note that several subregional differences continue to exist in the OSCE area and that they not only remain a source of instability but also hinder economic and democratic development in the regions concerned. We know that the solutions must be achieved above all through agreement between the conflicting parties, but the OSCE must continue to play its role in calming the tensions between the parties and helping them to find negotiated and lasting solutions.

Do I need to recall here the OSCE’s vital responsibility to defend human rights and democracy? We are all duty-bound to make every effort to implement the commitments, principles and norms that we have agreed upon in these areas.

In that spirit, Belgium will continue to militate for the abolition of the death penalty and will support initiatives such as the one announced by Mr. William Hague to combat sexual violence employed as a weapon of war.

The relevance of the OSCE is not confined to the human dimension alone but is also to be found in the important politico-military dimension. In this regard, Belgium notes with regret and concern that our Organization’s three arms control instruments are in great difficulties today. I remain convinced of the importance of this regime for guaranteeing security throughout our region. I therefore call for us to establish together the basis for an

arms control regime that takes account of the new environment of the twenty-first century. Belgium reiterates in this regard its commitment to giving a new stimulus to the Vienna Document so as to make it more effective and better adapted to modern-day military realities and to guarantee the improved functioning of the Treaty on Open Skies.

There is an increasing need for multilateralism. The past has amply demonstrated that when States withdraw into themselves, it aggravates crises rather than resolving them. I hope that the new Ministerial Council held in the country of the shamrock will bring luck to our Organization and help progress to be made on the road to stability and security.

We should not lose sight either of the larger international context in which we are evolving and which reminds us every day of the importance of close dialogue and effective co-operation with our partner countries.

Mr. Chairperson,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Belgium is looking forward with interest and confidence to the forthcoming Ukrainian Chairmanship of our Organization. I have no doubt that Ukraine will take advantage of this difficult position to consolidate the reforms that will enable it to fully realize its Euro-Atlantic aspirations and that it will be intent on serving as an example. We wish it every success.

Thank you for your attention.