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Permanent Mission of Greece
to the OSCE

**STATEMENT BY MR. NIKOLAOS DENDIAS, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF GREECE,
AT THE TWENTY-SIXTH MEETING OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Bratislava, 5 and 6 December 2019

Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished Ministers,
Mr. Secretary General of the OSCE,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since signing of the Helsinki Final Act, we all have been striving together to establish comprehensive and cooperative security.

Participating States are still faced with old and new security challenges.

The security landscape in Europe is becoming more and more complex and unpredictable.

We should step up our common efforts to act in line and not against the International Law and the OSCE principles and commitments.

In this context, Greece welcomes the “Bratislava appeal”.

Dear colleagues,

The ongoing crisis in and around Ukraine undermines the foundations of the European security. The recent positive developments on the ground justify some optimism.

Greece strongly supports OSCE’s efforts to address this crisis through its engagement in the Trilateral Contact Group and the Special Monitoring Mission on the ground.

We are also faced with a deteriorating situation in the Eastern Mediterranean that affects regional peace and stability.

We have been witnessing recently in the Mediterranean a number of illegal and provocative actions running against any sense of good neighborly relations.

Special attention should also be drawn to the possible impact of the constantly rising flow of refugees and irregular migrants.

Disproportionally burdened, Greece continues to do its utmost to tackle the crisis in a responsible and humane way.

At the same time we must not forget that the crisis is largely due to the conflicts in Syria and Iraq as well as to the civil war in Libya.

Therefore, we should rather deal with what has triggered it than merely discuss about it.

In this vein, we strongly support enhancing the OSCE’s cooperation with its Mediterranean Partners through a more pro-active approach.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I believe that the OSCE should further focus on efforts to strengthen border control, good governance and regional cooperation.

At the same time, we maintain our confidence to the current status of conventional arms control and Confidence Building Measures.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We also favor initiatives aiming at enhancing the economic and environmental dimension of the Organization.

As far as the Human Dimension is concerned, it goes without saying that we must step up efforts.

On this context, Greece has been particularly active in pursuing the Safety of Journalists.

On another front, we have organised, in Athens, the Regional Conference on the Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings.

Finally, I should mention the recent initiative of the Greek Prime Minister's Office to monitor and coordinate all relevant measures undertaken for the protection of unaccompanied minors.

Dear colleagues,

In closing my remarks, I extend my best wishes to the incoming Albanian Chairmanship as well as our sympathy for the suffering of the Albanian people because of the recent earthquakes. We assure them, on this occasion, of our full support and cooperation.

Thank you for your attention.