

**Statement by H.E. the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of Cyprus Mr. Markos Kyprianou at the 17th
Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council,
Athens, 1-2 December 2009**

Mr. Chairman, dear Colleagues,

At the outset, I would like to join others in expressing our appreciation and in praising the Greek Chairmanship for guiding us so skillfully throughout the year. Our thanks go also for the warm hospitality extended to us here in Athens.

Further to the EU statement to which we fully subscribe, I wish to offer some additional comments, on the work accomplished since our last Ministerial Meeting, and the prospects of giving the OSCE a strong political impetus in order to adapt our shared vision of co-operative, indivisible and comprehensive security to the present context.

The OSCE continues to be today as relevant as it has been since its inception. On the basis of its core values and commonly agreed principles and commitments, it has developed an important number of tools and mechanisms.

However, mistrust still persists between our states, tensions are on the rise, and conflicts remain unresolved. We are even witnessing the erosion of the arms control regimes, and this, in a context of emerging new threats and challenges.

Against this background, the proposal of the President of the Russian Federation for a new security architecture, generated a renewed dialogue that was taken up by the previous Finnish Chairmanship and was given a shape under the competent leadership of Greece.

Today, we are called to demonstrate the political will to adopt an ambitious Declaration to move the Corfu Process forward.

The OSCE is in a perfect position to make a considerable contribution to the wider security *in* Europe and the security *of* Europe.

In this perspective, we share the view that we should make better use of the Platform for Cooperative Security so as to strengthen our joint response to global threats and challenges.

The transnational nature of these challenges has led us to reaffirm the interdependence between the security of the OSCE region and its adjacent areas. As a Mediterranean country, Cyprus acknowledges the significance of deepening the cooperation between the OSCE and our Mediterranean Partners.

The Corfu Process should also aim at revitalizing our Organization and reinforcing its capabilities, in order to reestablish the confidence in its toolbox, and address in a more effective way the security needs of its participating states.

The fields of confidence-building, arms control, crisis management and new threats, require a strengthened cooperation.

The CFE Treaty, the Vienna Document and the Treaty of Open Skies, have been success stories of the OSCE. We are concerned about the continuing deadlock surrounding the CFE Treaty, and we are open to the proposal of reviewing and updating the Vienna Document.

We wish to reiterate at this opportunity our regret that the application of Cyprus for accession to the Treaty of Open Skies is still being blocked.

Mr. Chairman,

In the OSCE, during the last year we have witnessed an enhanced dialogue with promising prospects of setting our relations on a new basis of renewed trust and closer cooperation. We believe that we should demonstrate the political will and determination to maintain the positive momentum established last year, and set an ambitious agenda for the next year.

In this regard, we support the intention of the incoming Kazakh Chairmanship to convene an OSCE Summit in order to give a strong political impetus to the Organization and its work.

We are confident that Kazakhstan will guide us in an impeccable way in the year to come. We would like to wish Minister Saudabayev every success, and assure him of Cyprus's full support and cooperation.