

**Statement by Ambassador Aleksi Härkönen,  
Head of the Finnish OSCE Chairmanship Task Force  
At the Closing Session of the  
Fifteenth Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council,  
30 November 2007**

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to thank you and other Ministers and Heads of Delegation for the kind words of congratulations and encouragement that you addressed to Minister Ilkka Kanerva as the incoming CiO and to the Finnish Delegation.

On his behalf I would also like to congratulate you, Minister Moratinos on your leadership at this Ministerial Meeting and in the OSCE as a whole in the course of the year. Spain's example will set a very high standard for any chairmanship.

Mr. Chairman,

At this meeting we have carried on a debate on some of the key issues of European security.

A number of decisions have been made here in Madrid. They will guide our work, when Finland takes over the OSCE Chairmanship next year. We will work for maximum transparency and co-operation with all participating States.

We have not been able to agree on everything. Participating States rarely agree on every issue. But our duty is to find common solutions to the problems that we are facing. I strongly believe that through constructive dialogue we can go forward.

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to congratulate Greece on its election to the OSCE Chairmanship in 2009. We are very happy that we can welcome Greece to the OSCE troika. We look forward to our close co-operation with Greece and of course with Spain in the troika.

I am also pleased to congratulate Kazakhstan and Lithuania on their election to the chairmanship in 2010 and 2011. This decision is an important step for the organization. The OSCE must be owned by the peoples from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

Mr. Chairman, Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

2008 will be a challenging year for the OSCE. We count on your co-operation. But it seems that we don't need to worry as we have now heard 55 promises of co-operation and support!

Mr. Chairman,

We hope that this spirit of co-operation will prevail. We are looking forward to seeing you all in Helsinki next year.

Muchas gracias!