



Representação Permanente de Portugal
junto da OSCE

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Address by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Portugal
Mr Luis Brites Pereira
OSCE Ministerial Council – Vilnius, 6 December 2011

Minister Azubalis, Ministers, Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

First of all I would like to fully support the Statement by the EU.

Mr Chairman,

We gather here in Vilnius one year after the Astana Summit set the strategic objective of building a Security Community to face the challenges of the new century, according to a common vision of inclusive and indivisible security.

2011 was a remarkable year. New serious challenges, at global level, unfolded in parallel with the renewed hope brought about by the wave of democratic change that swept across the Southern Mediterranean.

It was also a year of intensive work for the OSCE community laying the ground for this Vilnius meeting under the able and committed steering of the Lithuanian Chairmanship. It is now our collective responsibility to fulfil the Astana mandate and adopt the decisions that hopefully will represent the first solid steps towards our strategic objective. In this regard, I would like to react right away to the initiative just announced by Germany, adding Portugal's support and willingness to engage actively in it.

2011 was also the year when once more Portugal was called to bear the responsibility of being a non-Permanent member of the UN Security Council. Our efforts in performing this task have been guided by our strong belief in effective multilateralism as the essential instrument in the promotion of peace and security, a perspective that highlights the important role to be played by the OSCE as a regional organization, under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter.

Mr Chairman,

Protracted conflicts continue to represent the most significant threat to security and stability in our area and are at the origin of some of the most acute problems we face in achieving the common aspirations of OSCE participating States. We congratulate the parties in the 5+2 process for resuming formal talks in that format here in Vilnius, hoping that this development may bring progress towards settlement.

Furthermore, we remain confident in this organization's potential to contribute positively towards all phases of the conflict cycle. The adoption of a decision ensuring that the OSCE maintains a state of the art set of capabilities in this domain, should be a key deliverable of this meeting.



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Portugal believes that respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law are preconditions to achieve sustainable peace and security as recognised in the OSCE's concept of comprehensive security.

The exercise of many of these rights and freedoms can be facilitated by the use of the new digital means – including digital media. But they are still the same rights and freedoms enshrined in our common commitments. And it is still incumbent on all of us to protect them.

For my country, arms control and confidence-building measures remain key aspects of our common security architecture. Portugal is committed to preserving, strengthening and modernizing the legally binding conventional arms control regime in Europe according to the established principles of limitations, verification and transparency. At the same time, the highest importance should be attached to the pursuit of efforts aimed at updating the Vienna Document on military CSBM's.

We welcome the progress achieved with the 2011 Vienna Document and reiterate our commitment to intensifying this process in order to adapt our military confidence-building measures to the evolving security environment.

Mr Chairman,

Recent events have again confirmed the inextricable link between the security of the OSCE area and that of adjacent areas, as was so clearly expressed in the Astana Declaration. It is our firm belief that the decisions on Partners for Cooperation and Afghanistan will create the conditions for a more intense two way cooperation, respecting the priorities set and the choices made by our Partners, with the valuable expertise accumulated by the OSCE's executive structures playing an important role.

We are open to the enlargement of our partnerships in a way that can reflect more adequately our concept of comprehensive and inclusive security.

Mr Chairman,

Portugal supports the aspiration of our Partner for Cooperation Mongolia to acquire the status of participating State. We recognize Mongolia's efforts in voluntarily implementing the OSCE's commitments, as well as the significance of its potential contribution for the pursuit of our shared objectives. We are ready to join a possible consensus on this matter here in Vilnius.

It is also our view that a decision on the Chairmanship for 2014 should be taken without further delay. I would like to express Portugal's full support to the solution formally proposed by Switzerland and Serbia which has just been eloquently presented by the Serbian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Mr Chairman,



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In conclusion, allow me to convey our best wishes to the incoming Irish Chairmanship. We trust that, under their leadership, we will continue to register progress in gradually turning our shared vision of a Security Community into concrete reality. Please let me assure you once more of Portugal's determined and continued engagement in this common endeavour.

I thank you Mr Chairman.