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At the request of the OSCE Delegation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia the attached statement delivered to the 15th Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council, Madrid, 29-30 November 2007 is being distributed to all OSCE delegations.

Republic of Macedonia
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

ADDRESS

By

H.E. ANTONIO MILOSOSKI

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia

at the

15th MEETING OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

MADRID, 29-30 November 2007

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me join the previous speakers in congratulating the Spanish chairmanship on the results achieved in leading our organization throughout 2007. This has not been an easy task. We have made many balanced decisions after long hours of negotiations. Despite occasional skepticism regarding the role of the OSCE in today's Europe, I may note and I trust you share my opinion that our lively debates are in fact a confirmation that the OSCE has not lost its significance as a forum for a continued dialogue on different aspects of security.

The Food for thought paper "The road to Madrid" of the Spanish Chairmanship has been a useful and guiding tool which enabled us to prepare thoroughly for the 15th Ministerial Council. This document presents a realistic stocktaking of the accomplishments and challenges our organization faced in the past months.

The Spanish Chairmanship has invested much effort in building upon the results achieved by the previous chair and making the decisions of the Brussels Ministerial operational. The new consultative mechanisms, embodied in the so-called three Committees structure has been confronted with a lot of difficulties of political and institutional nature. However, the experience we gained is valuable and indicative for the future action on strengthening the effectiveness of the Organization and on balancing its dimensions. We are proud that the Republic of Macedonia has given its contribution to this process with the chairing of the Economic and Environmental Committee by the Macedonian Ambassador to the OSCE, His Excellency, Arsim Zekolli.

Let me stress, in this context, that the Government of the Republic of Macedonia continues to be strongly committed to working closely with other Participating States to improve the performance of the OSCE and make it more responsive to the new security challenges.

For the Republic of Macedonia the OSCE remains a delicate political instrument for dealing with the complex, existing and emerging challenges. To respond appropriately we need to strengthen our dialogue based on our shared values. We need to further improve transparency and decision making process and to ensure long term coherence of our priorities and actions. We need to foster further the sense of ownership. We must continue to foster the cooperative and multidimensional approach to security and

work on enhancing the flexibility of our response to emerging challenges and crises of various types.

The Republic of Macedonia strongly supports the work of OSCE institutions and field operations. We have benefited from the OSCE presence, which in close partnership with the Government, supported our reform efforts. Close partnership in identifying national priorities, I must underline, is key to success of any OSCE field presence.

Mr. Chairman,

We must continue to strengthen our cooperation with partner organizations. Much has been done to avoid overlaps and duplication of efforts, but we need to further improve the complementarity. In this context, I wish to remind that the Republic of Macedonia holds the presidency of the 62nd General Assembly of the United Nations. Our top priority is to enhance the effectiveness of multilateral action.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me briefly touch upon the developments in the Republic of Macedonia. Over the past year, the Government designed and pursued active and efficient policies in all sectors of society. We worked hard to implement the Ohrid Framework Agreement, in some sectors going beyond it. Functional multi-ethnic democracy is our primary goal. To that end, we foster political dialogue on all outstanding issues. We continue to fight corruption and organized crime; we made commendable efforts in promoting the rule of law, to reform the judiciary, to fight human trafficking, corruption, to reform the economy and provide sound business environment for foreign investments. All this helped us attain tangible results in pursuing our strategic goals of EU and NATO integration. Our aim remains to be setting the date for the start of accession negotiations with European Union. Furthermore, we rightfully expect the invitation to join NATO at the next summit in Bucharest.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The issue of Kosovo has been in the focus of our region and beyond. The Republic of Macedonia has been continually supporting the efforts of the international community in the status process. Our main priority, irrespective of the outcome of the current negotiations, is that the final settlement contributes to regional stability and does not undermine our individual and collective accomplishments. The region of South-Eastern Europe has come a long way over just a decade. We all share a common

goal of European and Euro-Atlantic integration which is a strong motivating factor for reforms and final stabilization.

Mr. Chairman,

The Helsinki process has provided the participating States with a standing channel of communication and a code of conduct in their relations, what created conditions for strengthening the stability and for peaceful changes in Europe. We now have a unique opportunity to build a united Europe in which the common values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law will prevail. We all share a strategic interest in averting new divisions in the OSCE region. In this context the OSCE's role should be further consolidated as one of the pillars of European security.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I will conclude by wishing every success to our future Chairman, friendly Finland. I assure them of our full support in carrying out the complex tasks ahead of us.

Thank you for your attention.