



**STATEMENT BY  
H.E. Mr. EVANGELOS VENIZELOS  
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC**

**AT THE 21<sup>st</sup> MEETING OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

**Basel, 4 December 2014**

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

I would like to join previous speakers in thanking our Swiss hosts for their warm hospitality and in congratulating Minister Didier Burkhalter on the excellent organisation of this OSCE Ministerial Council.

Let me also state that Greece fully aligns itself with the Statement delivered by the Head of the European Union Delegation.

It is beyond any doubt that our Organisation is being faced with one of its most challenging years. In this respect, I commend the Swiss Chairmanship for its tireless efforts to guide the OSCE with commitment and creativity, in particular with regard to the crisis in and around Ukraine.

Our vision is to reverse the current mistrust, restore confidence and reconsolidate European security by enhancing mutual understanding through an open and all-inclusive dialogue which should be based on genuine political will. The OSCE remains, in this regard, the appropriate forum for a comprehensive security dialogue that should aim at building the foundation for a mutually beneficial co-operation on the basis of agreed principles and norms.

I am convinced that, under the current circumstances, reviving the dialogue on European Security within the OSCE is of paramount importance. The reappearance of

dividing lines in Europe would be detrimental to all of us and would demonstrate a collective failure of responsibility and commitment.

I recall, in this respect, the experience gained, as well as the wide-ranging proposals made within the Corfu process of 2009 - 2010, which created a valuable aquis for strengthening security in Europe. In this cooperative spirit, we should move forward with the Helsinki plus 40 Process.

The crisis in Ukraine has profoundly affected the European security agenda. Peace and stability must be restored without delay on the basis of international law and the respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Implementation of the Minsk Protocol and Memorandum is instrumental towards achieving a sustainable political solution to the crisis.

Greece supports the efforts of the Trilateral Contact Group and of the Special Monitoring Mission to address security and humanitarian challenges that affect all people of Ukraine, regardless of their nationality, language, ethnic origin or religious affiliation. In that vein, we actively participate in the SMM.

Today, more than ever, we need to continue addressing the core problems of our security in a comprehensive manner. Unresolved tensions and conflicts, terrorism and transnational crime, social repercussions of the financial crisis, an unprecedented flow of irregular migrants and refugees are common security issues that require to be urgently and thoroughly tackled by all OSCE participating States.

It goes without saying that security is inconceivable without respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Human rights violations and intolerance, religious extremism, racism and xenophobia affect negatively security and stability in our countries.

Our Organisation is also expected to deepen its dialogue and co-operation on migration issues, particularly on the growing problem of illegal migration.

A sustainable European security should include a viable and functioning arms control regime. Greece is committed and remains actively engaged in revitalizing conventional arms control in Europe. We support renewed efforts in addressing the stalemate in this regard.

Greece welcomes the Decision for the transfer of ownership to the Parties to Article IV, Annex 1-B of the Dayton Agreement. We are confident that the parties will continue to implement their commitments in good faith and comply fully with all aspects of the process established under the Agreement. We will continue to support them in political and practical terms.

Let me also stress that Greece, for many reasons, including its geographical position, highly values the co-operation with OSCE Mediterranean and Asian OSCE Partners and believes that it should be further enhanced to address common threats and challenges to security in the wider OSCE region.

Dear colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I hope that the outcome of our Meeting here in Basel will provide a firm basis to continue the work on consolidating European security ahead of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act. A lot of hard work lies still ahead and we should spare not efforts to

engage in a result-oriented process. The OSCE should be provided with all necessary means to fulfill its mandate and tasking in all of its three dimensions

In closing, I wish to extend my best wishes to the incoming Serbian Chairmanship and assure it of our full support and cooperation. I also congratulate Germany and Austria that will assume the OSCE Chairmanship in 2016 and 2017 respectively.

Thank you for your attention.