

**Statement by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, H.E.  
Ahmet Davutoğlu  
18<sup>th</sup> OSCE Ministerial Council  
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Mr. Chairman,

I would like to begin by thanking the Lithuanian Chairmanship for the warm hospitality extended to us. I should likewise be remiss were I not to convey my gratitude to Minister Azubalis for having steered our Organization, together with his competent team of collaborators, in a commendable way throughout 2011.

The Astana Summit, eleven years after the Istanbul Summit, was an important opportunity to reaffirm our agreed principles, shared commitments and common goals. Our Heads of State and Government also reconfirmed our joint political will to work together in order to create a security community. This Ministerial meeting is the first opportunity to assess our progress since the Astana Summit as well as provide political guidance for the coming year.

Mr. Chairman,

Despite the OSCE commitments undertaken at the highest political level, the conflicts which our organization is mandated to resolve unfortunately remain unresolved. This has a negative bearing on trust and confidence in our day to day work in the organization. Moreover, non-resolution of protracted conflicts now for almost two decades undermines the credibility of our organization. Hence the urgent need for action. With this understanding, while we support further strengthening of our Organization's capacity regarding the conflict cycle, we also bear in mind that enhancing the toolbox of the OSCE cannot be a substitute for the lack of political settlements.

I would like to reiterate that Turkey remains committed to contribute to the peaceful resolution of the protracted conflicts in the OSCE region on the basis of unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty.

A number of initiatives taken by the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group in order to give a boost to the settlement process of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict have so far not produced the long awaited result. While recognizing these commendable initiatives we believe that the work of the Minsk Group needs to be reinvigorated with the active contributions of the members of the Group to the settlement process.

The Geneva discussions constitute a comprehensive framework for addressing the conflicts in Georgia. We commend the efforts of the OSCE, as one of the Co-Chairs of the process, towards helping raise the standard of life of the local population by ensuring their access to the basic needs. Nevertheless, sustained efforts are needed for a lasting political settlement.

We are pleased to note the positive developments in the resolution process of the Transnistrian conflict. We commend the Lithuanian Chairmanship and countries of the "5+2" format for their dedicated efforts. We hope these developments will yield concrete results in 2012 and inspire vision for the other protracted conflicts.

Mr. Chairman,

The OSCE community has much to gain if the voices of the Central Asian states are heard more in the organization. The outstanding performance of the Kazakh Chairmanship last year has confirmed this. The successful transition processes in these countries requires our further strong support. Holding of presidential elections in Kyrgyzstan in line with the OSCE commitments is a remarkable achievement in this regard.

We are pleased to observe that the participating States in the Balkans are making strong progress both towards Euro-Atlantic integration and towards regional reconciliation. We believe that the OSCE has more to offer in this regard, including through its outreach capacity to local populations as a trusted and impartial international partner with a clear set of norms and principles.

Mr. Chairman,

The last time that our organization agreed to a new set of confidence building measures was the adoption of the Vienna Document 1999 at the Istanbul Summit. The further modernization of this Document in line with the requirements of the current security environment is necessary. However, we have to keep in mind that the transparency measures and predictability alone cannot provide adequate security guarantees. Moreover, the “grey areas”, including those around Turkey, decreases the value of the CSBM’s as well as other treaty body arms control measures. This issue has to be addressed in a satisfactory manner if we are to strengthen the mutually reinforcing conventional security architecture in Europe.

Although the CFE regime remains outside the purview of the OSCE, the future of this regime is so interlinked with the other pillars of European security that it inevitably forms part of our broad security agenda. In light of current politico-military conditions, we must try to preserve and modernize the CFE regime instead of negotiating a new arrangement. It is unlikely that any new arrangement will be as comprehensive and intrusive as the CFE regime. In view of the continuing suspension by the Russian Federation of the CFE regime, Turkey, along with other NATO CFE states, has ceased the operation of the Treaty and its associated documents vis-à-vis the Russian Federation. We will continue to honor our CFE obligations towards the other States Parties. We hope that the Russian Federation will resume the operation of the Treaty and its associated documents, including the Flank Agreement. We are committed to the CFE regime and its underlying principles and are prepared to engage with all its States Parties, including the Russian Federation in a result-oriented dialogue.

Mr. Chairman,

The main security concerns that our countries are facing today are of a transnational character and ways of addressing them has to be multi-dimensional. Terrorism is among the primary threats to global security and effective cooperation and solidarity is of crucial importance in combating this scourge. We welcome the new strategic guidance for the work in this field. We have to ensure that the OSCE’s work should be comprehensive, inclusive and geographically balanced.

Strengthening the effectiveness of the economic and environmental dimension both in structure and in capacity is a natural prerequisite for translating our comprehensive concept of security into reality.

Mr. Chairman,

The Human dimension has proven to be an indispensable component of the comprehensive concept of security of the OSCE. The dignity of the human being, democracy, rule of law, fundamental rights and freedoms require constant vigilance, protection and improvement.

This is valid not only in the participating States in transition but also in well-established democracies.

I have just come from Germany where I visited several major cities where Turkish community resides.

First of all, let me take this opportunity to express my thanks and appreciation to German authorities in condemning firmly the inhuman crimes of the recently uncovered terrorist cell that killed 9 innocent people, 8 of whom to be of Turkish and one to be of Greek origin with the motivation of far right extremism and hatred against foreigners. We are confident that our German friends will bring all those responsible before justice after a thorough investigation. During my visit to Germany I met the families of the victims and later on shared my thoughts and sentiments with German President Wulff, my distinguished colleague Mr. Westerwelle and other high level Federal and State Officials.

Having said this, I would like to dwell upon the growing racist, xenophobic tendencies in a number of participating States in Europe. The terrorist attacks with tragic consequences in Norway are a case in point. We share the pain of the Norwegian people. The attacks demonstrated that these threats are not only against migrant communities living in different parts of Europe, but target the population as a whole.

With the existing economic and financial difficulties, the socio-political environment unfortunately resembles the aftermath of Great Depression of 1929 while racism spreads with the increase in unemployment. This requires all of us, in the OSCE area, to be vigilant and take appropriate measures to prevent the radicalization of such extremist ideologies. Let us not forget that this is a serious threat to our common values and to the security and safety of individuals. I believe that this topic is relevant and important in terms of the activities of our Organization. No one can convince me that safety and well-being of migrants is less important than that of the others. Therefore I would like to urge all my colleagues, not to follow selective and hierarchical approaches in our human dimension agenda. We all need to mobilize efforts to curb such dangerous mentality which can be qualified as the scourge of our time. Violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism, intolerance and discrimination motivated by ethno-nationalism, racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia will need to be dealt with utmost urgency and seriousness with the aim of putting in place effective measures.

Mr. Chairman,

We have witnessed calls for reform, democracy and freedom followed by changes of regime in some of the Mediterranean countries. The historic chain of events across the region stands as a testimony of the triumph of human dignity over autocratic regimes. These democratic transformations have made the long-standing relations with our Mediterranean Partners all the more relevant. While offering the OSCE toolbox to our Mediterranean Partners we have to keep in mind that a reciprocal approach is needed. Our dialogue and practical cooperation should be a demand-driven process rather than imposing what we may think appropriate, and be based solely on priorities of the Partner countries and tailored to their specific needs.

Long-term security and stability in Afghanistan can only be built on the basis of local ownership, strong regional co-operation and long-term political commitment of the international community. The Istanbul and Bonn Conferences for Afghanistan were a significant steps towards this end. We appreciate the participation of the Secretary General in these Conferences and consider it as a sign of the continued engagement of the OSCE towards Afghanistan. In this regard, Turkey welcomes the new OSCE projects across the three dimensions.

And lastly, let us not forget the positive input we receive from our Asian Partners for Cooperation in our deliberations. We welcome the political will of Mongolia to assume the responsibilities of becoming a participating State. We are ready to support a decision on this matter.

Mr. Chairman,

The election of Ambassador Zannier, with his solid professional credentials, as the new Secretary General is an important achievement of the Lithuanian Chairmanship and we wish him every success in the conduct of his important duties.

Mr. Chairman,

In closing my remarks, I wish to convey my thanks to Minister Azubalis for his inspiring leadership. Finally, we wish the incoming Irish Chairmanship the best of success and pledge our full cooperation.

Thank you.