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**Statement by H.E. Feridun Sinirlioglu,  
Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,  
19<sup>th</sup> OSCE Ministerial Council, Dublin, 6 December 2012**

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for the excellent hospitality extended to us in this beautiful city of Dublin. Tanaiste and Minister Gilmore, together with your competent team of collaborators, you have guided our Organization admirably throughout 2012.

Turkey attaches importance to this organization with its unique capacity to contribute to co-operative security in all three dimensions. We value the OSCE as a forum for political dialogue and believe that the Organization's inclusiveness constitutes its primary strength.

The accession of Mongolia is a clear manifestation of the OSCE's continued relevance. This is a welcome development that is mutually beneficial.

The Dublin Ministerial meeting is an opportunity to chart our future course in realization of the vision set forth at the Astana Summit. Turkey is ready to engage in this dialogue with a new strategic approach culminating in a landmark document at the fortieth anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act in 2015. We hope that the "Helsinki + 40" process to be launched at this Ministerial will equip the OSCE with the necessary tools to respond more effectively to the requirements of the new security environment.

In Astana, eleven years after the Istanbul Summit, we re-committed ourselves to OSCE principles, commitments and goals. Our Heads of State and Government also reiterated their joint political will to overcome differences and work together in solidarity, based on common OSCE commitments, to contribute to the realization of a qualitatively enhanced cooperative security environment – a security community. In view of the profound changes to the nature of security challenges we all face, a reinvigorated and strengthened OSCE has become a necessity.

Mr. Chairman,

While speaking of a security community, I cannot but fail to stress my strong conviction that this vision will not transcend to reality if the OSCE cannot settle the protracted conflicts which it was mandated to resolve. Despite the renewal of our commitments made at the highest level during OSCE Summits, both in Istanbul in 1999 and in Astana in 2010, no tangible progress has been made so far.

Injection of additional impetus, ingenuity and courage to the conflict resolution mechanisms of the OSCE are required for overcoming the deadlocks. We believe it is incumbent upon all to contribute to develop new ideas and approaches towards this objective. Let there be no doubt about our motives in this regard. Turkey has a vested

interest in the security, stability and prosperity of the southern Caucasus and we shall strive with determination towards this end, while firmly committed to the OSCE Minsk Process.

The status-quo in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is unacceptable. The effective utilization of the Minsk Group in order to foster creative ideas and projects that will bring new prospects for settlement is imperative.

In this respect, we welcomed the latest meeting between the Co-Chairs and the Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan on October 28 in Paris, as well as the visit of the Co-Chairs to both countries. This expression by Azerbaijan and Armenia to continue to work together in order to reach a peacefully negotiated settlement must be further promoted through win win projects targeting regional integration.

As we mark the fourth anniversary of the start of the Geneva discussions for a just and lasting settlement to the conflict in Georgia, we believe that the positive momentum must not be allowed to falter.

We equally note with satisfaction the encouraging developments taking place in the settlement of the Transdnistrian conflict. The further consolidation of trust and cooperation between the parties will, we hope, lead to a speedy resolution.

Mr. Chairman,

The progressive achievement in all areas in the Central Asian states deserve our special appreciation and enhances the positive outlook this geography rightly deserves. The successful transition processes in the Central Asian countries require our further support. There is no doubt that Euro-Atlantic security and stability cannot be complete without its complementary Eurasian component.

Another area whose stability and security is inexorably linked with that of the OSCE area is no doubt the Balkans. A strong promoter of all efforts towards the consolidation of reconciliation in this region, Turkey considers the integration of all the countries of the region to the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions a necessity and continues to support all efforts to this end. We commend the valuable work of OSCE field missions in this regard, most notably the OSCE facilitation efforts during the Serbian elections this year enabling Kosovars to cast their votes.

Mr. Chairman,

Turkey embraces more openness, transparency and predictability in the politico-military dimension. While continuing to build upon our collective achievements, however we must equally strive for consistent implementation of agreed commitments. We stand ready to further update the Vienna Document. But it is essential to restore the regime in its area of application in full.

Let me also say a few words on the need to update and modernize the European security architecture by taking into account the changes in the politico-military field. Such an exercise should certainly respect the fundamental principles of “comprehensive security” and “indivisibility of security”. The importance of these principles can hardly be over-emphasized. The security conditions across the OSCE area are uneven and we believe that it will not be in our common interest to compartmentalize the OSCE region into different levels of security. To this effect and bearing in mind the complexity of reaching a meaningful common denominator among participating states on the hard security issues, we continue to be committed to the CFE Regime which is overwhelmingly interlinked with the other pillars of European security and ready to engage with all its states parties in a result oriented dialogue.

Combating terrorism, drug trafficking, organized crime and other transnational threats remain major challenges for the international community. Today the OSCE has become one of the leading international organizations in this regard. With its impressive security acquis and wealth of experience it stands at the vanguard of international efforts to understand these challenges, conceptualize them and devise the necessary tools and instruments for their eradication. The formation of operational units in South Eastern Europe and Central Asia are a testimony to the practical and substantive value added the OSCE can bring to international efforts.

Throughout the years, Turkey has never stopped extolling the potential of the economic and environmental dimension in enhancing confidence among States and contributing to the realization of the broad security objectives of our organization. It is with this conviction that we support the topic selected in this dimension as one of the possible deliverables of the Ministerial Council. The adoption of a document on “Good Governance and Combating Corruption, Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism” will no doubt contribute to our consolidated efforts in this dimension.

The human dimension occupies no less a central role within the comprehensive security concept of the OSCE. The participating States continue to benefit from the extensive body of commitments which provide essential standards for the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The OSCE’s specialized institutions give invaluable support to the participating States.

Nevertheless our Organization must be more active if we are to successfully overcome both long-standing and evolving challenges which continue to confront us. Discrimination against Muslims, which is closely associated with the deplorable new form of racism called “Islamophobia”, is a key challenge in this context. Anti immigrant sentiment is fueled by populist rhetoric and biased media portrayals. Intolerant public discourse against Muslims and Islam must be countered by our political leaders through proactive intervention. Consolidation of a culture of tolerance and better understanding about Islam must be a key objective of this Organization. Therefore, we wholeheartedly support the Irish Chairmanship’s timely initiative for a Ministerial decision on strengthening efforts to combat racism and xenophobia.

Mr. Chairman,

This year has witnessed the continuation of democratic transitions in regions adjacent to the OSCE. The biggest challenge for these countries is to consolidate the reforms in such areas as politics, economy, and security simultaneously. Democratic institutions need to be rendered functional. Our Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation, undergoing such transition, can certainly benefit from the OSCE experience and tool box. Nevertheless our endeavours to assist these countries should be a demand-driven process, based on the stated needs and priorities of the Partner countries tailored to their specific needs.

In the last couple of years, the ordinary citizens across the Middle East and beyond have shown that dignity, freedom, and prosperity are aspirations for all people. Their power to change the course of history demonstrated the rightness and relevance of the comprehensive security concept that is at the heart of the OSCE.

The “Arab Spring” does not promise quick success stories. Despite its irreversible nature, it is not uncommon to observe strong resistance particularly by the regimes whose legitimacy and survival are at stake. The most striking example of such resistance has been adamantly displayed by the regime in Syria.

The social and inter-communal cohesion and coexistence is also in grave danger. The prolongation of the conflict carries with it a serious potential of ethnic and sectarian strife as the Regime continues to abuse the sensitivities among the society through various means. While arming terrorists and extremists, it also fuels the fears of religious minorities by promoting the idea that the survival of their faith would solely depend on the future of the Regime. Syrian stockpiles of chemical weapons and agents and access to them by non-state actors is a matter of concern for Turkey and all countries in the region.

We, in Turkey, opened our doors to every Syrian who runs for safety, regardless of his or her religion, sect or ethnicity. Now, the number of Syrians we accommodate has exceeded 200 thousand. We urge all members of the international community to join and contribute to international efforts to address this humanitarian crisis.

I believe that we all subscribe to the same objective which is the peaceful and speedy completion of the transition process towards democracy in accordance with the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people. Unless the current situation of chaos comes to an immediate end and the people of Syria achieves what they deserve, peace and stability in Syria and in the wider region would remain elusive.

Work towards a secure and stable Afghanistan has reached a pivotal moment. The Istanbul Conference witnessed the setting up by the countries of the Heart of Asia of a new cooperative scheme, similar to the model offered by the OSCE, centered on Afghanistan and based on regional ownership. The OSCE should remain engaged and available to further lend support when required.

Our dialogue at the OSCE with Asian Partners for Co-Operation is an equally important avenue for exchanging views and creating stimulus towards enhancing global security. The Conference on Interaction and Cooperation in Asia – CICA- draws much from the OSCE and constitutes a bridge between the OSCE and Asia. We are supportive in an inclusive manner of all regional cooperation initiatives that can contribute to strengthening dialogue and mutual understanding.

Mr. Chairman,

In closing my remarks, I wish to thank the Irish Chairmanship and Tanaiste and Minister Gilmore for his stewardship of the organization and wish the incoming Ukrainian Chairmanship, to whom we pledge our full support, the best of success.

Thank you.