

**STATEMENT OF H.E. MS. VESNA PUSIĆ, FIRST DEPUTY PRIME  
MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA**

**19<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL,  
DUBLIN, 6-7 DECEMBER 2012**

Mr. Chairperson, Distinguished Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honor and truly a pleasure to address the meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council here in Dublin. Allow me to begin by thanking the Irish Chairmanship for excellent organization of the meeting, as well as for their warm Irish hospitality. The skilful and pragmatic way that marked the Irish Chairmanship of our Organization, accompanied by dedication and perseverance of Irish diplomats both in Vienna and Dublin, deserve our praise and gratitude.

At the outset, I would like to warmly welcome the decision on the accession of Mongolia to the OSCE. I am confident that Mongolia will prove to be an asset to our organization, and Croatia looks forward to future mutual cooperation.

This year the OSCE continued its efforts in realization of the vision of a free, democratic, common and indivisible Euro-Atlantic and Euro-Asian security community stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok, which was set in the Astana Commemorative Declaration. The task before us has been great and challenging. Our divisions are still obvious and present in all spheres, though small - but meaningful - steps forward have been made. This challenge can be met by a strong effort to work together, with renewed vigour through The Helsinki plus Forty Process, an important initiative of the Irish Chairmanship, to mark the 2015 anniversary.

In order to achieve more, we need to show additional political will to utilize fully the OSCE comprehensive, multi-dimensional and indivisible concept of security, which is our biggest asset and greatest strength. In the core of this concept lay human rights and fundamental freedoms, because no world, no region, no country

or society can call itself fully free and secure if each and every of its citizens, regardless of their race, nationality, religion, political affiliation, gender or sexual orientation, can freely and in security pursue their life dreams and ambitions.

Especially important is to work on advancement of women, whose role in all aspects of our societies cannot be overemphasized. That include stronger role of women in all parts of conflict cycle and democratic processes. Thus, strengthened engagement of the OSCE in the implementation the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 – Women, Peace and Security should be one of our strategic goals, as well as gender mainstreaming within our comprehensive concept of security.

To secure this integral part of our unique security concept, we need to work diligently on all levels, beginning with our own societies because none of us can say that we have a perfect record. But we also need to maintain the concept of peer review that is so characteristic and important for our Organization. We need to follow what our Heads of States stated clearly in the Astana Commemorative Declaration, that the commitments undertaken in the human dimension are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned. We note with concern negative developments in a number of participating States, where violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms are persisting and even growing. All of us must also assure that our commitments are observed and implemented also in the new realms, like cyber space. Let me also emphasize that OSCE field presences are our great asset, as it was the case in Croatia, in assisting countries to implement their commitments.

Being a security organization, OSCE needs to strengthen its work on surpassing the impasse that we are facing in the area of conventional arms control and confidence building measures. We also need to be active in further development of our capacities in dealing with conflict cycle, but at the same time we must work effortlessly on the resolution of protracted conflicts in our region, through existing formats and with full adherence to the principles and norms of international law and international relations. We also have to apply vigilance in addressing new transnational threats to our security, building on our decisions already taken in this area.

Mr. Chairperson,

We also have to be aware that the OSCE has its neighborhood, and our security is also dependent on developments in our surrounding. Therefore we have to continue to pay close attention to developments in Partner Countries of our Organization, especially Mediterranean Partners, and together with them work on the ways in which we might be able to assist in meeting their needs in all three OSCE dimensions. Croatia stands ready to provide its substantive and targeted contribution in that regard. That is particularly important regarding Afghanistan, with fast approach of 2014 and final departure of ISAF. To ensure durability of achieved security and stability, it remains crucial that the positive developments in strengthening democratic processes and standards, in particular the protection of the rights of women and girls, remain preserved and that they do not become a hostage of changed circumstances of international engagement in the country.

Mr. Chairperson,

As a country of South-East Europe, Croatia is genuinely interested in stability and prosperity of that part of OSCE space. As an imminent new Member State of the European Union, we shall continue with our policy to build good and strong neighbourly relations with all countries of the region, and provide our concrete and targeted assistance in realization of their EU and Euro-Atlantic aspirations. I would particularly like to emphasize that political leaders in our region also have special responsibility to work for a better future of our countries and their citizens.

Let me conclude by wishing the incoming Ukrainian Chairmanship all the success in their important task of leading our Organization in 2013, and assure them of Croatia's full cooperation and committed approach in advancing the OSCE agenda.

Thank you.