



**Welcoming Remarks by  
Ambassador Lamberto Zannier, OSCE Secretary General**

*INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR*

*Towards “Helsinki +40”*

*The OSCE, the Global Mediterranean and the Future of Cooperative Security*

*Rome, 18 September 2014*

*Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

*Piazzale della Farnesina, 1*

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to this seminar on cooperative security and the Mediterranean. Let me start by thanking the *Institute of International Affairs* and the Italian Foreign Ministry for hosting this event, which has been organized under the auspices of the Swiss OSCE Chairmanship and the Italian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. I would also like to thank the *Compagnia di San Paolo* Foundation for their support for the broader “OSCE-Mediterranean track II initiative”.

Dear Colleagues,



At a time when the OSCE has been primarily focused on the situation in Ukraine – a crisis threatening European security as a whole, and presenting significant challenges to us as an organization – we have nonetheless continued to follow developments in the Mediterranean with great attention, not least because the challenges in this region are extremely serious too. This seminar is a testament to our dedication to peace and security dialogue in the Mediterranean region.

This commitment dates all the way back to the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, our founding document, which includes a chapter on Mediterranean security. Agreed upon during a time of East-West Cold War tensions, the Helsinki Final Act advanced the notion that the security of Europe is inextricably linked to security in the Mediterranean. Since then, this link has only become more apparent. From the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis to the threat of transnational terrorism and foreign fighters, from uncontrolled migration flows to the environment, Euro-Mediterranean interdependence is a reality that we see in action every day. Even as the Mediterranean has gone through cycles of change, our goal has remained the same: to foster stability and reduce the risks of conflict while maximizing the many opportunities that interdependence creates for co-operation and co-development across the Euro-Mediterranean space.

Over the decades, the OSCE-Mediterranean partnership has expanded in scope and content, most recently in response to the so-called Arab Spring. Co-operation now ranges from elections to capacity building, from women's empowerment to the fight against terrorism. Just yesterday, together with UNODC, the OSCE held a Mediterranean region expert workshop in Malta on counter-terrorism and hostage-taking and there is now a plan to create an OSCE Center of Excellence in Malta, focusing on rule of law, justice and the fight against terrorism.



As we move forward in intensifying our partnership, we expect that OSCE-Mediterranean dialogue will be even more strongly geared towards achieving concrete outcomes and results. Our Mediterranean Partners are now clearly more forthcoming in communicating their expectations. We are pleased and encouraged by this growing engagement. Efforts should now be put towards making full use of existing mechanisms for co-operation and ensuring better follow-up to recommendations made in our regular dialogue and at the annual OSCE Mediterranean Conference. The Mediterranean Contact Group, a forum celebrating its twentieth anniversary this year, will continue to be the main regular forum for close interaction between the OSCE participating States and our Mediterranean partners.

Dear Colleagues,

The OSCE recognizes that the Mediterranean is undergoing tremendous political, economic and societal challenges. That is why we have developed relationships not only with individual countries but also with a growing network of regional and multilateral organizations. As needs multiply in the region, seeking synergies and working out a suitable division of labor become ever more important goals. We are determined to strengthen ties and improve coordination with other multilateral organizations interested in Mediterranean issues such as the League of Arab States and the Union for the Mediterranean. As the largest regional organization under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, the OSCE stands ready to act as a bridge between organizations with common concerns about regional security and peace.

In sharing our considerable experience as a regional security organization, we remain convinced that a comprehensive definition of security needs to stretch



well beyond the military domain to include the political, economic and environmental, and human dimensions of security. In this context, the OSCE reiterates its support for the ongoing reform processes in Mediterranean Partner countries since 2011, and reconfirms its readiness to share the OSCE experience in assisting during difficult processes of transition. In this regard, I wish to pay special tribute to the contribution of the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) to the successful institutional transition in Tunisia, which was the first Mediterranean Partner to approach the OSCE with a request for information on OSCE's experience in assisting democratic transition.

Indeed, the range of activities we are conducting with our Mediterranean Partners shows our determination to further operationalize our security dialogue. More than 20 projects are ongoing with our Mediterranean Partners, whose topics reflect the increasingly complex array of threats and risks faced by the Mediterranean countries from both outside and inside their borders. I have already mentioned the Conference on kidnapping for ransom which took place yesterday; the issue of illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons (SALW) will be the main topic of the 2014 Mediterranean Conference to be held in Neum, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in October.

Beside sharing of expertise and best practices, we are also implementing very concrete requests for assistance received from some of our Mediterranean Partners. Some of our key documents, such as the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, have been translated into Arabic to spread the knowledge and raise awareness among the local security sectors about these important instruments for confidence building and conflict prevention.



We intend to continue down this path, sharing our decades-long experience wherever this is considered useful. We are confident that sharing best practices will continue to provide a good basis for our engagement, as part of a Mediterranean dialogue driven by local demands and priorities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the OSCE looks toward the fortieth anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act next year, enhancing the relationship with the OSCE's Partners for Co-operation will be a prominent item on its agenda. We look forward to strong engagement and concrete input from our Mediterranean Partners. Let me take this opportunity to thank the Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the OSCE, Ambassador Batjargal, for the role he is playing in carrying forward this specific cluster of the "Helsinki +40 Process" (Cluster VIII: "Increase Interaction with the Partners for Co-Operation and with International and Regional Organizations Working in Similar Fields").

In order to gather new ideas about the way forward, we have also decided to systematically involve think tanks and academic institutions in our discussions. I am happy to announce the launch of a new OSCE-linked network dedicated to Mediterranean issues. Named "New-Med", the new network will launch a broad discussion on the future of Mediterranean security and channel fresh, original perspectives into the ongoing diplomatic dialogue. New-Med will maintain a level of informality that is not possible in institutional contexts and will seek ties with other networks. It will act as an open forum for dialogue on the Mediterranean – also referred to as the "global Mediterranean" in title of this seminar – that should involve and benefit other organizations and actors sharing the same concerns for security and peace. Our Mediterranean Focal Point, Mr. Emiliano Alessandri, will further explain this initiative in due course.



Today's seminar should be seen as an important step in a longer-term process. The goal is not only to re-affirm the importance of Euro-Mediterranean ties, but to understand what Euro-Mediterranean interdependence concretely means in the specific security context in which we are currently operating. The added value that the OSCE can bring to the table should be a key item of discussion.

In this regard, I would like to draw your attention to the many interesting proposals which are contained in the papers that have been prepared for this conference, and I hope that many other useful recommendations will be made today by our distinguished panelists and guests. We will make sure that the outcome of this seminar will be fed into the Helsinki +40 Process, supporting our efforts to further deepen our ties with the Mediterranean Partners. I very much look forward to today's discussion.

Thank you.