

## Statement

By H.E. Mr. Daniel Mitov,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria  
at the 21<sup>st</sup> OSCE Ministerial Council  
4 –5 December 2014, Basel

Mr. Chairperson,  
Distinguished Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to start by addressing words of gratitude to our host H.E. Mr. Didier Burkhalter, Minister of Foreign Affairs and President of the Swiss Confederation, as well as to his team for their hard work and constructive leadership of the OSCE.

Aligning fully with the statement made on behalf of the European Union earlier today, I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

**The comparative advantage of the OSCE** is to be a broad platform for reconciliation, bridging differences and building security through shared goals and commitments. More than ever we need now this Organisation living up to its role.

As we approach **the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act**, the escalation of crisis in Ukraine has shown an unprecedented violation of its basic principles, as well as of the other founding documents and OSCE commitments.

Confronted to the crisis in and around Ukraine and the continued conflicts in the immediate neighbourhood of Europe, we are witnessing a reality, marked by a growing degree of mistrust and divisions that we used to consider belonging to the irreversible past and shaken to its foundations by the rapidly evolving security environment and the emerging threats to peace and security in the OSCE area, including terrorism, cyber threats, illegal traffic of arms, drugs and human beings.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In line with the OSCE's principles and commitments, **Bulgaria supports the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders**. We condemn the illegal annexation of Crimea and do not recognize the results of the illegitimate elections held in the territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine, which are inconsistent with the international law and the Minsk agreement.

We highly value **the OSCE role in addressing the crisis in Ukraine** in an effective and timely manner, making full use of the existing OSCE instruments in order to stabilize the situation on the ground and prevent it from evolving into a full-fledged military conflict. We commend the expertise and the professionalism of the OSCE Secretariat and the OSCE autonomous institutions in this process.

We reiterate our full support for **the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM)** in Ukraine. Its rapid deployment and full operationalization within few days was a good test for the efficiency

and the rapid reaction capabilities of the Organisation. We fully support the extension of the SMM mandate at the background of its new tasks and responsibilities, set up in line with the Minsk agreements.

We strongly believe that lasting and reliable solution of the crisis in Ukraine can be only ensured through strong political will to fully **implement all the relevant multilateral commitments and obligations**.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

While **keeping the balance across the OSCE three dimensions of security** (*politico-military, economic and environmental and human*) is of key importance, we believe that here in Basel we would be able to adopt not so many but substantial decisions that would make possible the advancement of the Organisation under the incoming Chairmanship, thus ensuring the necessary continuity and effectiveness.

We are strongly committed to the adoption of a **Political declaration on Ukraine** here in Basel as it would signal to our citizens that a first step is made down the road from a vision to action and would prove our relevance and adequate approach in addressing the major security concerns in the OSCE area.

The adoption of a **Declaration on the Helsinki+40 Process** would be another key deliverable of our meeting and a major political message to the public, thus providing guidelines for the way ahead, ensuring the consolidation of the OSCE acquis and setting the frame for improving the efficiency of the Organisation to address the challenges of the evolving security environment.

**Preserving the autonomy of the OSCE institutions and giving more prominent role to civil society and academia** in the OSCE activities should be part of this process.

With regard to **protracted conflicts**, we consider that they remain among the major threats to security and stability in the OSCE area. We hope that the Helsinki+40 Process would result in strengthening the capacity of the OSCE to provide adequate response on the whole spectrum of conflict-related situations, thus ensuring tangible results in their settlement.

The closer and intensified cooperation with our **Mediterranean and Asian Partnerships** in the field of security will certainly have an increasing importance for both sides, thus being the best recognition for our shared values and principles and for their relevance for building peace and stability.

In terms of conclusion, I would like to thank once again the Swiss Chairmanship for its warm hospitality and dedicated work throughout the year, and to wish success to **Serbia** as the next Chair of our Organisation.

Thank you for your attention.