STATEMENT BY MS. TALYA LADOR-FRESHER

THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ISRAEL

**AT THE TWENTY-FOURTH MEETING OF THE OSCE
MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Vienna, 8 December 2017

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

I wish to thank the Government of the Republic of Austria for its successful chairmanship of the OSCE.

I also wish to extend our deepest appreciation to the Secretary General, the OSCE Secretariat, and the Italian Chair of the Mediterranean Contact Group on this year's robust agenda which expanded the scope of cooperation and the wonderful spirit in which it was done.

I assure you, Mr. Chair, that Israel's commitment to the principles of the OSCE, as reflected in the Helsinki Final Act, and the goal of a comprehensive security policy, remains steadfast and unwavering, as well as our commitment to the Contact Group. We were pleased that Israeli experts contributed on the topics of Cybersecurity, Counter-Terrorism and Start-up economy to fruitful exchanges with the other Partners of Co-Operation and participating States.

Furthermore in the past year, we participated very actively in many OSCE activities ranging from Counter-Terrorism to Human Trafficking, Border Control, Freedom of Media, Youth, Gender Equality, Mediation, Police Matters and economic activities.

Mr. Chairman,

European and Middle Eastern security are very much intertwined, and there are many issues that can result in mutual benefit or detriment. We applaud Italy for bringing the issue of Migration Governance up to discussion for the Mediterranean Conference in Palermo earlier this year, where Tzachi Hanegbi, Israel's Minister for Regional Co-Operation, and Arnon Mantver from the Centre for International Migration and Integration participated. The large movement of migrants and refugees in Europe and the Mediterranean region is a challenge. To cope with this, new strategies and policies must

be developed to better manage this phenomenon. Israel has a great deal of experience dealing with issues of integration and the fight against terrorism, and as a partner nation we stand ready to contribute to those challenges facing us across all three dimensions of the OSCE.

Mr. Chairman,

Israel commends the work of ODIHR and applauds its tireless efforts in combating Anti-Semitism and in teaching the lessons of the Holocaust across the OSCE region. We compliment ODIHR on its Guidebook for "Understanding Anti-Semitic Hate Crimes and Addressing the Security Needs of the Jewish Community" published earlier this year. The book addresses the surge in Anti-Semitic hate crimes and also presents responses for governments on how to effectively address this threat.

We applaud the upcoming Italian Chairmanship on its initiative to host on 29 January in Rome a special conference on the Responsibility of States, Institutions and Individuals in the Fight against Anti-Semitism.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to bring to your attention that IHRA, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, adopted in May 2016 an important working definition of Anti-Semitism. Since then, Israel and several OSCE countries adopted it. In order to address the problem of Anti-Semitism, there must be clarity about its meaning. We believe it is crucial that a prominent organization like the OSCE will also adopt the IHRA working definition on Anti-Semitism.

Mr. Chairman,

It is our sincere hope, that creating a conductive environment for enhanced economic activity with and within the Palestinian Authority, will encourage the resumption of direct negotiations, leading to a Two States for Two Peoples solution, living side by side, in security and in peace. Israel remains committed to the status quo in Jerusalem and will continue to guarantee the freedom of worship for Jews, Christians and Muslims alike.

Mr. Chairman,

We wish to thank the Austrian Chairmanship and send our best wishes to the Government of Italy, as it assumes chairmanship of the OSCE. We also send our best wishes to the Slovakian delegation, as they take over the Chairmanship of the Mediterranean Contact Group.

Thank you very much.