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Delegation of Italy

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR STEFANO BALDI,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ITALY TO THE OSCE, AT THE
1299th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

21 January 2021

**In response to the inaugural address by the OSCE Secretary General,
Helga Maria Schmid**

Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and wishes to add some remarks in its national capacity.

We are particularly glad, Madam Secretary General, to welcome you today to the Permanent Council for the first time. Your presence reassures us as to the future of our Organization, because we know for certain that your experience, your management skills and your political sensitivity will all redound to the OSCE's benefit.

The qualities which we recognize in you are eminently suitable to executing the complex mandate of the Secretary General as specified in the terms of reference, with regard to both the administrative and the political aspects.

Allow me to add that we are convinced that the structure steered by you, that is, the Secretariat, carries out tasks that are essential to the Organization and to the objectives that we here all share. This has been demonstrated by its excellent management during the pandemic, which has enabled us to find a way around huge obstacles and to continue our work, responding earlier and better than other organizations.

What we envisage is a Secretariat becoming ever more efficient and accountable towards the participating States, but not, as a consequence of that, increasingly weaker.

We appreciate the attention that you have given to the issue of communication and to the need to improve awareness of the OSCE among a wider audience. We are prepared to play our part.

We fully concur with your intention to deepen relationships with the partner countries and to develop the potential of the Partnerships, which constitute an increasingly relevant mechanism for addressing comprehensive security in our area.

Lastly, we support the project for reforming the budget adoption process on the basis of all that was promoted in that regard by the Italian Chairmanship in 2018. We believe it is necessary to focus our attention on reforming the Scales of Contributions, which has by now become a matter of urgency.

Madam Secretary General, you can always count without fail on Italy and on our sincere and staunch support for the OSCE.