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**STATEMENT BY
MS. MARINA SERENI, DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND
INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION OF ITALY, AT THE TWENTY-SEVENTH
MEETING OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Tirana, 3 and 4 December 2020 (via video teleconference)

Mr. Chairperson-in-Office,
Dear colleagues,

I congratulate the Chairperson-in-Office, Prime Minister Edi Rama, on the exceptional work he has carried out in a complicated year and I wish every success to the incoming Swedish Chairmanship.

Thirty years ago, the Charter of Paris anticipated the start of an era of peace and security for Europe. Today more than ever, in the context of a pandemic and worrying security scenarios, we have to ask ourselves how to revitalize the “spirit of Helsinki”. The deterioration of the conditions for dialogue on the Organization’s major issues requires above all an effort to rebuild trust.

For six years now, the OSCE has been promoting the objective of a stable and lasting solution to the Ukrainian crisis through the Special Monitoring Mission and the Trilateral Contact Group. Over the past year we have seen positive signs for a political way out of the crisis.

We hope that through political dialogue in the Trilateral Contact Group we can construct a path for negotiation towards a solution that sees all parties fully implementing the Minsk agreements with respect for Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The OSCE also remains a key player in promoting political solutions to so-called “protracted conflicts”.

We have witnessed the tragedy of the war in Nagorno-Karabakh with sorrow and welcomed the ceasefire with relief. It is now time for all of us to contribute to tackling the humanitarian emergency. Italy is already doing its part.

We hope that the agreements reached will pave the way for stabilization and pacification of the area, a process in which the role of the OSCE will be decisive.

Italy also confirms its commitment to a negotiated settlement of the crises in Georgia and Transdnistria.

In this evolving framework, faced with the challenges to multilateralism, we are concerned about the progressive erosion of the European security architecture. The general system of conventional arms control in Europe, inherited from the end of the Cold War, has been greatly weakened.

We must ensure full implementation of the relevant agreements, including the Treaty on Open Skies.

There is also an urgent need to update conventional arms control instruments as well as confidence-building and transparency measures by embarking on constructive negotiation to modernize the Vienna Document.

Dear colleagues,

Unilateral or national solutions in complicated situations have proved ineffective. The COVID-19 pandemic has fostered a new awareness of the need for a multilateral and co-operative approach to countering common security challenges.

This also applies to the economic and environmental dimension. We cannot ignore the increasingly close link between security and climate, which has an impact on stability in the Mediterranean as well, as can also be seen in the sixth edition of the Mediterranean Dialogues taking place at the moment, which Italy organized this year in virtual mode.

Climate, migration and sustainable development must also become priorities in co-operation with our partners on the southern shore of the Mediterranean. These are strands of collaboration on which we are ready to continue to work.

The OSCE is also a successful model for co-operative responses to transnational threats such as terrorism and violent extremism, cyberattacks, corruption, organized crime, trafficking in human beings and illicit trafficking, including trafficking in cultural goods.

In particular, we have greatly appreciated the attention paid by the Albanian Chairmanship to the fight against corruption and organized crime, in the year of the 20th anniversary of the Palermo Convention.

These phenomena have a dramatic impact in particular on the most vulnerable social groups.

In that context, we are convinced that the inclusion of women helps to improve the effectiveness of security policies. For that reason, Italy considers it essential to promote gender perspectives in all three OSCE dimensions.

Of these, the third dimension – the human dimension – continues to represent a pillar of the European security architecture and a founding principle of the Organization. The OSCE's experience in election monitoring, which has also benefited from the Italian contribution, remains a valuable tool to be protected.

I should also like to recall in this context the Italian support for the OSCE's offer to facilitate dialogue between the Government and opposition in Belarus and to reiterate our concern about the ongoing repression in the country and the risks of regional destabilization.

The relaunch of the co-operative security instruments in the region as we have described it up to now certainly requires adequate resources. I therefore advocate the timely adoption of the Organization's budget and a constructive discussion on a more equitable reform of the scales of contributions.

Finally, I should like to congratulate the Albanian Chairmanship on the excellent work in achieving consensus on the filling of the Organization's top positions again.

In this way, we will revive together the "wind of Helsinki".

Thank you for your attention.