**Intervento del Sottosegretario On. Picchi**

**Alla Conferenza Mediterranea OSCE 2018**

Malaga, 26 ottobre 2018

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Dear Excellencies, distinguished guests, dear colleagues,

I am honoured to address the 2018 Mediterranean Conference, representing my country, Italy, as the OSCE Chairmanship. This meeting has a special meaning for us, as **the “Mediterranean dimension” is central to our Chairmanship** in the belief that Euro-Mediterranean security is indivisible from, and complementary to, Euro-atlantic and Eurasian security. This is the vision that inspired the founders of our Organisation, the signatories of the Helsinki Final Act.

Current developments around the world throw this complementarity into even starker relief. The complex crises unfolding in the Mediterranean are presenting threats and challenges that then spill over into the OSCE area across all three dimensions of security.

For this reason, when we took on the responsibility of chairing the largest regional security organisation in the world, we did so with **the ambition of placing the Mediterranean dimension very high on its agenda** – with security in the Med being central to its overall development.

This leads us to today’s topic: energy is a fundamental ingredient for economic development but it also entails certain special considerations.

**Firstly**, unlike some other growth factors, **the approach to energy must operate over the medium to long term**. Take the Mediterranean Sea for instance: it takes years, sometimes decades, from the discovery of energy reserves to the moment where these can be deployed in energy production and consumption. That is why we must have a long-term vision when developing energy policy: to respond effectively to rising energy consumption, we must keep a sharp focus on the role of the green economy and of renewable resources.

**Secondly**, **energy management has repercussions on international relations**. All around the world – and the Mediterranean is no exception – energy has historically been a key geo-political factor. This peculiarity of energy policy has shifted the way many countries approach it. Notably, the goal of energy independence is no longer a realistic or sustainable ambition; most States seek and rely on energy interdependence, with the assumption that we are safer in a system of codependence, cooperation and collaboration. Well, this is nothing new for us. This is where the OSCE fits best.

As the sole regional security organisation to unite major energy producing-countries, consumers as well as transporters, **the OSCE has untapped potential to contribute on energy governance, in particular in the Mediterranean region**. I cannot think of many organisations which provide a forum for a dialogue on security that bring together OSCE Participating States, our Asian partners and, here, around the table, our Mediterranean partners for co-operation. Building on our Organisation’s long standing expertise in confidence-building measures, we could easily plan similar initiatives between OSCE participating States and Med partners. Furthermore, we could enhance our co-operation with other international organisations– one example being the Union for the Mediterranean, along the lines of what our respective Parliamentary Assemblies are already doing.

Looking ahead, a long term and collaborative approach to energy governance in the Mediterranean can also help us to **address other common challenges in the region**, with a principal challenge being **migration**. By improving economic growth and creating new jobs in Mediterranean countries, we will mitigate pull factors, ultimately **closing the profound income gap between the southern and northern shores**. And by tackling environmental risks, we can **address push factors**, for example through mitigating the impact of drought or natural catastrophes.

Now, what are we proposing to do within the OSCE about all of this? The next major milestone for the Organisation is the annual Ministerial Council which this year will take place in Milan on 6 – 7 December. In Milan, we plan to translate our Chairmanship’s engagement on the Mediterranean into concrete commitment, firstly by proposing a **Declaration on the “Mediterranean Dimension of Security in the OSCE Area”**. The text will encourage a stronger cooperation with our Med Partners. We will also identify the most pressing challenges that call for enhanced cooperation. As the last OSCE text on the Mediterranean was adopted in Basel back in 2014, Italy strongly advocates recommitting now at the highest level to the Mediterranean Partnership.

Secondly, moving to the challenge of migration, Italy continues to advocate that **governance of migration flows should be built upon the principles of shared responsibility and true partnership among countries of origin, transit and destination**. Accordingly, we are proposing a Ministerial **Declaration on the “OSCE’s role towards a better governance of migration flows”.**

Thirdly, looking at the security situation in the Mediterranean through the prism of the three complementary and interlinked dimensions of security, we can clearly see several other issues threatening security in the OSCE. That is why we will aim to **streamline the Mediterranean aspects** across most of the texts proposed for adoption in Milan.

Fourthly, the link between security in the Mediterranean and the OSCE became most evident when returning **Foreign Terrorist Fighters** strike against civilians in several participating States. The Rome Anti-Terrorism Conference in May highlighted the need to address the threat stemming from the potential exploitation of migration routes by Foreign Terrorist Fighters. Acknowledging this, and in order to ensure the full implementation of global commitments outlined in UN Security Council Resolution 2396, we are also working on a **Ministerial Council Decision on the Return of Foreign Terrorist Fighters**.

Finally, as very concrete deliverables, Italy is ready to finance, through an Extra-Budgetary project, the secondment of a “**Migration coordinator**” within the OSCE Secretariat. Italy will co-organise with the Secretariat a **three-year project** to train **officials from the Mediterranean Partners** to strengthen capabilities on detecting victims of trafficking along migration routes. And together with ODIHR, we will organise a week’s training course for **30 young professionals from the six OSCE Med partner countries** designed to develop and implement policies in an objective way that respects both gender-balance and democratic values.

Dear Excellencies,

**the Mediterranean dimension of security presents both challenges and opportunities**, most of which require renewed partnership and a long-term vision to be tackled effectively. Energy, as we have seen, is one such example. It is up to us, the participating States of the OSCE, the community of countries which first acknowledged and enjoyed the benefits of dialogue and cooperation, to take the necessary measures to do so. The next step will be in Milan: I hope that there we will be ready to confirm our renewed commitment to the Mediterranean dimension of the OSCE, also **enhancing the outcome of our common work here in Malaga**.