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**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR TACAN İLDEM  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY  
ON BEHALF OF THE DELEGATIONS OF NORWAY, SWITZERLAND AND TURKEY  
Under the agenda item “Any other business”, concerning the OSCE High-Level Conference  
on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination held in Tirana on 21-22 May 2013**

**(954<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Permanent Council, 30 May 2013)**

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

I would like to make this statement on behalf of the delegations of Norway, Switzerland and Turkey.

As a result of the tireless efforts of the Ukrainian Chairmanship, the excellent organization by the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, and the gracious hospitality of Albania, the High-Level Conference on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination held in Tirana on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of May can be considered a success. As Norway, Switzerland and Turkey, we take every opportunity to underscore the importance of TND-related activities, stressing that all the various areas within the human dimension are equally important and deserve equal attention. The High-Level Conference thus allowed us to focus on pressing issues which should not be neglected.

We find it regrettable that the delay experienced in finalizing the decision related to the Conference made it difficult for most delegations to ensure high-level participation from their capitals in a timely manner. Nevertheless, also due to the many inputs from civil society, we believe the Conference provided us with a valuable opportunity to exchange views and best practices and to engage in lively, constructive debate, all of which will hopefully contribute to the strengthening of our relevant commitments and their full implementation. The Conference, like other human dimension events, once again has shown us the importance of the participation of civil society in the discussions.

Although all the topics which were discussed during the two days of the Conference had aspects requiring the attention and involvement of all the institutions of the OSCE, no institutions apart from ODIHR were represented at the Conference. We believe the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media and the Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities should also be represented at such events and note with regret that the late adoption of a Permanent Council decision made it impossible for them to attend. We further believe that all three Personal

Representatives of the Chairperson-in-Office on combating intolerance and discrimination should have been represented at the Conference.

We would like to add that the presence of ODIHR's Director, Ambassador Lenarcic, would have further bolstered the credentials of the event. His personal insight would certainly have been an additional asset.

It is our hope and expectation that the results of the High-Level Conference will prepare the ground for deliverables, including a decision, at the upcoming Kyiv Ministerial Council in the area of tolerance and non-discrimination.

We request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you.