



United States Mission to the OSCE

On Cooperation with the Mediterranean Partners

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires, a.i., James E. Donegan
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
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It is fitting the discussion with our *Mediterranean Partners* follows Foreign Minister and incoming Chair-in-Office Rau's briefing for the Permanent Council on Poland's 2022 priorities. As Chair of the *Mediterranean Partners*, Poland tackled substantive challenges, including post-pandemic recovery, transnational organized crime, and this past Monday (July 12), the potential of youth participation to amplify our efforts in these areas. Along with the focus of today's dialogue on sustainable development in a time of changing climate, these areas hold untapped potential for further cooperation through practical, constructive, and tangible actions.

Climate change is not something that can or should be addressed through only one channel or a single multilateral forum. Limiting global temperature increase must be a joint effort across the board, for the simple reason that the climate crisis is not an issue that can be separated from other challenges—social challenges, economic challenges, health challenges, and certainly security challenges.

In the OSCE's Second Dimension, there are concrete economic and environmental actions participating States and our Mediterranean partners can take to support peace, prosperity, and stability. Developing and sharing climate-friendly and innovative technologies and best practices could help integrate less carbon-intensive solutions, spur sustainable and equitable economic growth, and create jobs and investment. Cooperation between the OSCE and its *Mediterranean Partners* can forge new collaborative approaches—or expand or deepen existing approaches—to mitigate the worst security threats posed by climate change while building trust and confidence and reducing tensions. In particular, we should collectively focus on specific ways to respond to these security threats, and protect critical infrastructure such as power grids, promote food protection and climate-smart agriculture, and manage essential transboundary resources like forests and water more efficiently, and so on. We welcome responses from participating States and the *Mediterranean Partners* on how we can best work together to address these issues.

The strength of the dialogue between the *Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation* and the OSCE is made evident by many examples of cooperation, such as training for border and customs officials at the OSCE Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe and the *Perspectives 20–30* initiative for young leaders. We encourage the OSCE and the *Mediterranean Partners* to explore additional avenues for cooperation through the OSCE Academy in Bishkek and other OSCE institutions and field missions.

We are also pleased the Permanent Council adopted on July 8 timely decisions for the annual *Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation Conference* to take place in Vienna on October 12 and

13. This year's conference will focus on post-pandemic recovery and security. It builds on last year's work on security through sustainable development. As we recover and rebuild in the wake of the pandemic, we must consider ways in which both women and men can contribute to rebuilding and sustainable recovery efforts. I would like to pose a question on this theme for general consideration: how can we best assess the pandemic's impact on the access to education for women and girls, and how should we address that impact? We believe this question, and gender equality more broadly, is one key to our ability to sustain an inclusive and equitable economic recovery in the years to come. We encourage participating States and our *Mediterranean Partners* to integrate gender-sensitive approaches in our collective work and empower women as agents of change.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

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