



OSCE Chairperson-in-Office/ Serbia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivica Dacic attended the OSCE Troika meeting in Magdeburg today, together with Swiss Foreign Minister Didier Burkhalter and German Foreign Minister Frank Walter Steinmeier.

"May I thank my counterparts, Ministers Steinmeier and Burkhalter, for a further, very constructive exchange. This is the fourth time since the beginning of the year that we meet in the OSCE Troika format and I am glad that through joint efforts we succeeded in promoting operation of the Troika mechanism. The situation in and around Ukraine was the main topic that we discussed today. Implementation of the Minsk agreements remains our priority and we agreed that the ceasefire that has been holding successfully for weeks already should be used as an encouragement for giving a momentum to the political process within the Trilateral Contact Group. It is an imperative that dialogue must not come to a halt and that only steady progress in the convergence of positions can lead us to the goal of a mutually acceptable solution to disputable issues. The key prerequisite for such progress, i.e. the implementation of the Minsk package of measures is the political will of all sides. It is our task within the Ministerial Troika and in coordination with the Normandy Format and within the Trilateral Contact Group to find a way to help the parties in conflict not to give up on dialogue. I wish to reiterate that Serbia as the chairing country and myself being its representative, as well as our Ministerial Troika constantly underline the importance of the political will of the stakeholders in negotiations for the dialogue progress and, therefore, we welcome the progress that has undoubtedly been achieved in Ukraine and that is the observance of the ceasefire in which the OSCE presence played an important role. I wish to add that we have expressed once again our full support for the work of the Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine and pointed out its enhancement as being the current priority, both operationally and through strengthening the technical capacities. Good quality coordination between the Special Monitoring Mission and my Special Representative Martin Sajdik is very important. The OSCE Troika expresses its full support to the Normandy Format activities. Continued cooperation between the Normandy Format and key political agreements and the implementation of the same is of huge significance in that regard, which is the task of the OSCE. In that context, I believe that we could be satisfied with the OSCE approach so far.

We also discussed today the current migration issue. Although this theme is not afflicting our Organization as a whole, there are many of our member and partner countries, particularly the Mediterranean ones that have been affected by the crisis. We have agreed to jointly work on

finding a solution and helping everyone, particularly the countries that suffer the major consequences, the transit countries.

In conclusion, I wish to recall the forthcoming OSCE Ministerial Council meeting, to be held in Belgrade on 3 and 4 December. We are preparing political decisions in all three dimensions. As you know, the Organization operates by consensus and that is why my predecessor, my Swiss counterpart, wished me luck in the negotiations on the Political Declaration. The same awaits Germany next year, in a situation of serious problems to tackle divisions and divergence of opinions inside our Organization. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to come to an appropriate political text by the participating States that would be acceptable for all, but we will do our utmost, in the year when we are marking the 40th anniversary of the OSCE establishment, to discuss not only current political themes but strategic issues as well, such as the experience on the existence and activities of our Organization. This is being done through the Panel of Eminent Persons and the Helsinki +40. We are also discussing the evaluation and overviewing the concept of OSCE peace operations in order to draw some important lessons for the future. Belgrade will host this huge event after which Germany will take over the Chairmanship on 1 January 2016. I wish to thank my German counterpart for his nice words concerning our past work and I am sure that the German Chairmanship and his personal one will make an important contribution to the reputation and authority of the OSCE", Minister Dacic said.