



**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR TACAN İLDEM,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY**

**REGARDING THE THIRD MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
OF THE ISTANBUL PROCESS**

950TH PERMANENT COUNCIL

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Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

At the outset, I would like to express our gratitude to our distinguished Afghan colleague Ambassador Erfani for presenting us with an informative briefing on the Third Ministerial Conference of the İstanbul Process.

The Conference, which was held on 26 April in Almaty that Minister Davutoğlu participated in has taken the ongoing endeavors one step further. This has been achieved through on the one hand the reconfirmation of the participants' willingness to resolutely expand and deepen confidence, regional ownership and cooperation and on the other hand, putting into effect the implementation plans on six confidence measures packages that were identified last year.

It is with satisfaction that we recognize the considerable level of collective effort devoted to the preparation of the implementation plans which already yield positive results. Having said this, Ministers acknowledged the challenges and the work ahead, and agreed that the next stage should be one where concrete results through implementation of CBM's need to be registered.

For its part, Turkey will lead together with the United Arab Emirates the Counter-terrorism CBM (CT-CBM) group. In this regard, "the crucial importance of countering the financing of terrorism, dismantling of terrorist sanctuaries and safe havens, the illicit cross-border movement of explosive and lethal substances, as well as the strengthening of existing counter-terrorism initiatives and institutions in accordance with CT-CBM implementation plan" was underlined in the Almaty declaration. In addition, "the timely implementation of other activities envisaged in the plan, including the sharing of information and expertise among relevant agencies from participating states, and the organization of technical workshops and expert meetings with a focus on developing and further strengthening counter-terrorism cooperation among countries of the region" was also mentioned in the declaration. In this context, Turkey expressed its readiness to host some of the identified activities.

Let me also emphasize that Ministers acknowledged once more the fact that "the support of non-regional countries and international and regional organisations involved is essential to the success of this shared effort". As affirmed in the final declaration, the İstanbul Process "seeks to add value by cooperating with all existing regional efforts, by complementing and bringing coherence to their work when necessary".



As we advocate each time that occasion arises, I will not fail to take this opportunity to repeat our view that since many of the States that take part in the Heart of Asia initiative are participating States of the OSCE and Afghanistan is a Partner for Cooperation, we can make efforts in ensuring OSCE's value-added while addressing the priorities of the countries involved and in support of the regional ownership.

Finally, I would like once again to reiterate the view of my Minister as stated at the Conference in Almaty that "Afghanistan is at a critical stage in its recent history. Indeed, the next two years can be regarded as the formative years which will be decisive in how the next decade will unfold. Over the course of this period, it is important to increase achievements on the ground and to ensure that these gains are maintained. Many challenges exist, but the international community should focus on the positive scenario for the future of the country. Turkey will continue to be in solidarity with Afghanistan and will continue to support Afghanistan in its efforts to establish security and stability".

In conclusion, we would like to express our appreciation to Kazakhstan for hosting this successful Conference and our hope that the next Conference of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs to be held in China in 2014 will ensure the successful continuation of the Istanbul Process towards results that we all expect to see.