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As prepared

**Address by Mr Pablo Zaldivar, special envoy of H.E. M.A. Moratinos, minister of foreign affairs of Spain
at the Summit of the Black Sea Forum for Dialogue and Partnership
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On behalf of the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, I should like to thank the Romanian authorities for inviting us to participate in this Summit of the Black Sea Forum for Dialogue and Partnership, and for the hospitality we have been offered.

The International Community is very much aware of Romania's valuable contribution to shaping an international policy for the Black Sea, and we are grateful for it. In this context, the initiative of calling the present Summit is a precious opportunity to reflect together upon the circumstances and issues facing this region. The presence of representatives of civil society is also an element of particular interest, enabling us to hear at first hand about people's interests and concerns.

The various initiatives and plans for regional cooperation that have been launched in recent years – among which special mention must be made of the Organization for Economic Cooperation in the Black Sea – together with the active presence of European and Euro-Atlantic institutions, underline the growing strategic importance of a region in which peaceful coexistence and stability are essential elements for consolidating the architecture of European security.

With the end of the Cold War, the Black Sea area regained the sense of identity which, in spite of diversity, due to the individual, still presents historical and cultural affinities that mark it out. Indeed, its situation at the easternmost extremity of Europe led the *Pontus Euxinos* of ancient times to become, long before the formation of Europe as we know it, a crossroads enabling cultures to communicate and trade to take place. Today, thanks to the profound political transformation that has taken place in Europe since the end of the 20th century, the Black Sea has ceased to be what one historian called "a region frozen in time for most of the 20th century". European and Euro-Atlantic institutions are present around its shores and a broad consensus is coming about that the Black Sea is a necessary element in the shaping of the geopolitical map of Europe. Thus we see an emerging regional awareness that is prompting the search for a common outlook, within a shared understanding of the values of freedom, political pluralism and the market economy.

At the same time, the Black Sea area must respond to challenges on an international scale, as is characteristic of our time, and chief among which are the problems of terrorism, illicit trafficking, the

difficulties in consolidating the transformation towards a democratic society, neighbourhood conflicts and the economic instability that leads to social conflict. Moreover, the horizon is darkened by new dangers arising from uncertainties about energy supplies. These security threats can only be met with the cooperation of all the international actors, directly involved in strengthening and consolidating stability and development in this part of Europe.

Spain shares these concerns and interests, and is aware that European security must be constructed on the basis of coexistence within a spirit of solidarity between the Euro-Atlantic community and its neighbours, with whom we live in geographic areas that are facing the same risks. I need not remind you that Spain, well aware of the need to reinforce a solid and dynamic relationship with its neighbours on the shores of the Mediterranean, has promoted and plays an active role in the Barcelona Process and the Mediterranean Dialogue within NATO.

In addition to the above, the stability and security of the Black Sea region are of particular interest for Spain. Scheduled to exercise the Presidency of the OSCE in 2007, my country is acutely aware of the importance for regional stability of resolving the "frozen conflicts" in the area. The OSCE must be a forum so that, via dialogue and the promotion of confidence-building measures, a definitive channel may be achieved to overcome these disputes that have such a negative effect on the overall stability of the region.

Spain pays close attention to political events in the region and, as a current member of the OSCE Troika, will take an active part to ensure that, during its Presidency, decisive political advances are made towards a solution, in the medium term, of the above-mentioned conflicts.

I should like to conclude by expressing my wish that this Summit may constitute a new and important step forward in the efforts being made to construct a space of solidarity, security, freedom and development in this region, on the basis of cooperation and dialogue.