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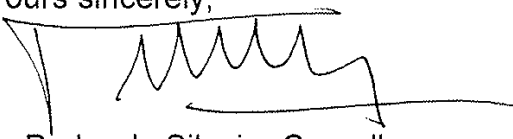
Copenhagen. 15th March 2011

Dear President,

I have the honour to forward to Your Excellency, a letter addressed to you by H. E. Mr. Jaime Gama, President of the Assembly of the Republic of Portugal.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,



João Pedro da Silveira Carvalho
Ambassador

His Excellency
Mr. Thor Pedersen
President of the Parliament of Denmark
Copenhagen

Assembleia da República

(courtesy translation)

His/Her Excellency
Speaker of the Parliament

I was delighted to hear that MP João Soares was available to stand for the post of Secretary-General of the OSCE. For this purpose, the Portuguese Government has recently formalised his candidature.

I was Chairman-in-Office in 2002 – at the time I was Minister for Foreign Affairs – and I know the Organisation, its history, mission, fields of action, its successes and the challenges it faces. I recognise the crucial importance of the proper performance of the duties of Secretary-General, for the good functioning of the Organisation as a whole and for the success of its mission.

I know MP João Soares well. I know his institutional career, which includes unusually diverse experiences, of great demand and responsibility and which complement one another. I see in him a high professional and human profile and qualities that distinguish him, within the framework of the exercise of executive, legislative, management and administrative competences, at both national and international levels.

The institutional career of MP João Soares reveals that he is not only firm in his principles, but has also a conciliatory spirit, a capacity for dialogue and negotiation skills, which enable agreements and consensus, leadership qualities, as well as a natural integration capacity in hierarchical structures, respecting the degree of his competences, and the discipline in the management of resources. João Soares is a good speaker and communicator, in various languages, which makes it easier for him to publicise in a proper and balanced way the information he aims to transmit.

I should also like to emphasise João Soares' deep knowledge of international issues and of the OSCE. Apart from the management positions to which he has been elected and re-elected, always unanimously – namely as President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE, visiting in this quality almost all field missions of the OSCE – he was appointed by several Presidencies to serve as Special Co-ordinator and to lead election observation missions of the OSCE in several countries. João Soares has been an active member of the National Defence Committee and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Assembly of the Republic; he was a Member of the European Parliament and Mayor of Lisbon.

Assembleia da República

Having in mind the profile for the functions of Secretary-General of the OSCE, I ascribe all indispensable qualities for an excellent performance to MP João Soares. I believe that João Soares is a good candidate and, with determination and conviction, I should like to ask you and the Parliamentary Delegation of your country, to support the candidature of MP João Soares. Attached to this letter you will find his CV.

I believe that the selection process of the Secretary-General – who acts under the aegis of the Chairman-in-Office and as his representative – would justify an active involvement of the political decision-makers, of executive level, with the benefit of conferring it the legitimacy that is compatible with the demand and the degree of responsibility of the functions of Secretary-General. Within this context, I should like to submit to your consideration the measures you may deem suitable, near the competent Minister of the Government of your country.

In fact, the Secretary-General is appointed by ministerial decision, adopted by consensus. The selection process of the candidates for the post is currently under way, given that the current Secretary-General terminates his mandate next 30 June.

Please accept, Mr/Ms President, the assurances of my highest consideration and esteem.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC

JAIME GAMA

JOÃO SOARES

João Soares' experience in diplomacy, politics and management makes him uniquely qualified to serve as the next Secretary General of the OSCE. With a range of responsibilities in executive functions, the legislative branch, and in the private sector, including as Mayor of Lisbon and President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, he served with distinction at municipal, national and international levels.

He has served as a Member of the Portuguese Parliament from 1987 to 1990 and again since 2002, elected by the Constituencies of Lisbon and of Faro. He is a Member of the Parliamentary Committee on National Defence and Head of the Portuguese Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly since 2005.

A member of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly since 2002, in 2006 Mr. Soares was elected Vice-President of the Assembly. Two years later he was unanimously elected President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and re-elected, again unanimously and with the support of all political groups in 2009. As President of the OSCE PA, he dedicated much of his time to raising the level of political dialogue on OSCE issues. He has visited almost all OSCE field missions, addressed two OSCE Ministerial Council meetings as well as the Permanent Council in Vienna, and has participated in several other Ministerial meetings and the most recent OSCE Summit in Astana.

He has also been appointed by several OSCE Chairmanships to serve as Special Co-ordinator and to lead OSCE election observation missions, including to Georgia, Montenegro, Ukraine, the UK and the USA.

João Soares served as Deputy Mayor (1990-1995) and then Mayor of Lisbon from 1995 to 2002. During his time as Deputy Mayor, when he was in charge of Cultural Affairs, Lisbon was the European Capital of Culture (1994). As Mayor of Lisbon he managed a staff of more than 11.000 persons and a total budget of around 500 million Euro. In 1998 he led the successful diplomatic effort of the Portuguese capital to host the Expo98, a World Exhibition that was visited by more than 10 million people.

From 1998 to 2002 he served as a Member of the State Council (an advisory body to the Portuguese President). He was also Chairman of the Union of Capital Cities of Portuguese Language, which has among its members cities from Europe, South America, Africa and Asia. Mr. Soares was also a Member of the European Parliament in 1994 and 1995. In 1994 he was elected as Quaestor and member of the Bureau of the EP.

João Soares was born on 29 August 1949 in Lisbon, Portugal. He has a Degree in Law from the Classical University of Lisbon. He has practiced as a lawyer and managed a publishing house, and has himself written several books including one about the OSCE in 2006. He speaks Portuguese, English, French, Spanish and German (modest).

João Soares is married with Annick Burhenne, a Belgian citizen, and has five children.