

also informed the Co-Chair countries that their presidents are ready to meet again jointly in the near future to continue their direct dialogue on how to bring peace, stability and prosperity to their peoples.

Many deplorable incidents occurred along the Line of Contact in 2011. These incidents resulted in the loss of life and contributed to increased tension in the region. The Chairmanship, alongside the Minsk Group Co-Chairs, called on the parties to take additional, immediate actions to reinforce the cease-fire agreement by agreeing on a mechanism, which was proposed in 2011, to conduct investigations of incidents along the Line of Contact, and by removing snipers and

establishing direct telecommunications between the field commanders.

The Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group are Ambassador Robert Bradtke of the United States, Ambassador Igor Popov of the Russian Federation, and Ambassador Jacques Faure of France, who succeeded Ambassador Bernard Fassier in December.

### **Responding to unforeseen events**

**BELARUS.** Following the non-extension of the mandate of the OSCE Office in Minsk in December 2010, the Chairmanship initiated several rounds of consultations throughout the year with the Belarusian authorities on

### **Dayton Article IV Agreement**

In his report to the Permanent Council on 8 September, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Brigadier General Costanzo Periotto emphasized that the Parties to Article IV, Annex 1B of the Dayton Peace Accords “continue to execute all the activities in an atmosphere of trust, friendship, transparency and co-operation.”

The four Parties to the accord – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia – have worked together with the support of the international community since 1996 to re-establish peace and stability in South-Eastern Europe. The implementation and verification of the agreed arms control measures is a crucial part of this work. Eighteen inspection missions were carried out in 2011. In all, 660 inspection missions have been conducted since the signing of the Agreement in 1996, involving 1,208 international assistants and resulting in the impressive reduction of 9,525 heavy weapons.



*One of 61 T-55 tanks that were destroyed in Montenegro. (Montenegrin Verification Centre)*

This year, the number of international assistants that regularly attend field inspections was reduced by half because the experts at the Verification Centres of the Parties no longer require technical support from the international community. In addition, the inspection training course was completely re-organized, resulting in a saving of resources, an increase in quality of the lectures and, in line with the ownership process, greater involvement of the Verification Centres of the Parties. Both measures are positive steps forward in the ongoing ownership process.

The implementation of a comprehensive two-phase Action Plan for the transfer of responsibilities, which was elaborated in 2010, continued to move forward. The first phase, involving the gradual transfer of functions from the Office of the Personal Representative to the Parties, was concluded as planned by year's end. A final version of a detailed road map and time table for the execution of the second phase of the project will likely be adopted by the Parties, with implementation slated for the course of 2012. The second phase, comprising preparation of all necessary measures – legal, political, technical and organizational – for the transfer of full autonomy to the Parties, is planned to conclude by the end of 2014.

With the assumption of full ownership by the Parties, the role of the OSCE will shift from assistance to support. Consequently, the Office of the Personal Representative may be closed.

The ownership process, with the support of the OSCE community, the European Union, the Contact Group countries (Germany, France, Italy, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States) and the Parties themselves, continues to be implemented in full respect of agreed measures. This evolution in the direction of full autonomy should not be interpreted as the international community withdrawing its support. On the contrary, the international community will continue to remain engaged as the countries of the region progressively assume full responsibility of this process.