**Europe: Confronting an Uncertain Future**

**To: The Participating Delegations**

**Fr: OSCE**

**Dt: January 14, 2016**

**Re: Delegation Briefing Papers**

**Dear Participants,**

We applaud your willingness to come together to discuss issues critical to the future of Europe. As we prepare to convene in April, Europe faces a new threshold that challenges the overall stability and security it experienced throughout the latter half of the twentieth century and the advent of the twenty-first. It is contending with internal divisions and fragmentation and external hostilities and encroachment, as well as a lack of trust.

The threats range from Russian aggression on its eastern border to its citizens fighting abroad in Iraq and Syria and returning home radicalized – highlighted by the recent Paris tragedy – to its vulnerability to the growing threat of cyber attacks and hybrid warfare, to the refugee crisis on its southern shores.

Russia’s moves in Ukraine have altered presumptions about European security, the future of NATO, and Europe’s energy security. The end of the Cold War, an alleged peace dividend, and a Russia in disarray with the collapse of the Soviet Union left the continent unprepared for a newly aggressive Putin regime.

Europe’s stated commitment to human rights and its espousal of humanitarian policies are being tested with the wave of migrants escaping conflict and poverty in the Middle East and Africa. The deaths of hundreds has forced Europe to act, securitizing a humanitarian emergency as it targets traffickers and encourages the North African rim countries to enact tougher policies.

The flow of people, coupled with recent terrorist attacks, is making countries reconsider aspects of the Schengen Agreement, a cornerstone of the European experiment. The migration crisis, by land and sea, is further exacerbating ethnic and religious tensions, xenophobia, Euroskepticism, and the continent’s north-south divide.

Have these issues, in addition to recent economic crises, concerns about a democratic deficit, and rapid expansion within the European Union, pushed Europe to the brink?

When we convene in April, we will be considering a broad range of issues within the following committee: Governance, Cross-Border Issues, Eurozone, Security, Migration, Foreign Policy, and Identity & Integration.

Below are briefing papers we are asking delegations to prepare in advance of the meetings. They are due on **March 14**. They will be posted on the conference site on March 21. Please email the briefing papers to heather.barry@tufts.edu

**Briefing Paper Components:**

**A. Introduction** (this should be one to three paragraphs addressing how you want to present your delegation to the other participating delegations)

**B. Key Points** (what do you see as the most important issues that your delegation would like addressed at the conference (no more than ten))

**C. Background of your country** (how have key institutions and populations evolved -- three pages)

**D. Issues** (two to three pages for each committee)

**Committee on Governance**

What type of government does your country currently have? How has it changed, or not, since the end of World War II? What are the major political parties in your country and what are their views on the key issues being discussed at this conference? How would you describe the political and social rights citizens have in your country? How would you describe the political and social rights non-citizens have in your country? What are the major political points of contention in your country? What is your role in Europe/in the European Union? Has that changed since you joined? How would you define a democratic deficit? Do you think there is a democratic deficit within the EU’s structure? What political party will you be representing at the conference?

**Committee on Cross-Border Issues**

Briefly describe the most important cross-border issues your country or organization is concerned with. What is your country or organization’s stance on the Schengen zone? Do you agree or disagree that there needs to be a securitization of borders? Why? Is corruption a prevalent issue in your country? What policies are currently in place to tackle those issues and what areas can be improved upon? Is your country or organization in a vulnerable geographic or strategic position in regard to cross-border issues such as migration, climate change or energy? What is your vision of Europe and its boundaries? Is your country an EU candidate or member state?

**Committee on Economics**

What is the current state of your economy? Were you affected by the Greek economic crisis? If so, how? If not, why not? What do you think caused the economic crisis? Is the EU based on monetary policy, political policy or both? Explain. Do you perceive the European debt crisis as a challenge to the future of the euro, or even further, to European unity? Is the eurocrisis only a byproduct of Europe’s much larger cohesion issues, what some call a “half-built house”? What do you think the future of the euro should be? Should countries be allowed or encouraged to exit the euro? What policies would be best for your country? What do you think about austerity measures?

**Committee on Security**

What are the major security concerns facing your country and Europe? How have recent events - e.g. Russian intervention in Ukraine, terrorist attacks on Paris - affected your perception of security priorities? What military or security alliances and organizations are you a part of if any, and what is your role within these? In particular, how do you feel about the efforts of NATO, and of the OSCE, and of the role played by the USA in European security? Who are you dependent upon for either acquiring your energy or buying your energy? Has energy been a source of cooperation or coercion for your country?

**Committee on Migration**

Please outline your concerns with regard to the current migration crisis in Europe and your country’s priorities. What is your country’s historical view of migration and its impact? What are the obstacles to and implications of integrating immigrants into European societies? Do EU policies regarding asylum seekers need to be reformed to ensure that member states are sharing the burden of integrating migrants? What are the current migration flows within your country? How has your country’s native population traditionally interacted with immigrant populations? Describe your expectations and commitment to policies regarding refugees and migration control.

**Committee on Foreign Policy**

Does your country conduct foreign policy within the framework of the EU, independently, or a combination of both? What are some examples of this? What is the stance of your country on the development of a joint-EU foreign policy? Does your country have a voice in current EU foreign policy decisions? Do you agree with current EU policies regarding Ukraine and Russia? Why or why not? Did you agree with the EU decision to intervene in Libya? Why or why not? Do you think the EU should work closely with the US on foreign policy issue or be more independent? Why or why not? What is your relationship with the US?

**Committee on Identity & Integration**

How was your country influenced by the Second World War and its aftermath? How has historical memory influenced your country’s political discourse? Have certain events prompted a revision of your country’s core values and/or ideological pillars? What minority populations live in your country? How has that changed since World War II? What rights do minority populations living within your borders have? What rights do non-citizens living within your borders have? Is the goal of your policies to integrate new populations into your country, eg assimilation or multiculturalism? Have your policies been effective? Why or why not? Are there ethnic divisions in your country and are these contentious? Does your country emphasize political/individual or social/cultural rights? Is your country facing any secessionist movements? Have your policies changed with the current migrant crisis?