

Check against delivery!

Statement

By

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Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to start by addressing words of gratitude to H.E. Dr Frank-Walter Steinmeier and to the whole German team for their leadership and dedication.

One year after the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act our organization has perhaps never been more challenged with a serious step-back from the OSCE commitments, growing threats to the enjoyment of fundamental freedoms and human rights, lowest level of trust and confidence, structural crisis of cooperative security, shortage of military transparency, unprecedented migration and refugee flows.

Now the OSCE is more important than ever and has shown it can rise to the challenges. That's why we could try to make a step forward on the track of dialogue and new culture of engagement. We should send a message that the OSCE is the right format for discussions how to address the current multiple challenges and threats to our common security.

The crisis in and around Ukraine is an acute challenge to European security among many others and clear illustration of lack of confidence.

The Minsk Agreements should be fully implemented and we support the international efforts in this regard. Sustainable political solution to the crisis should be based on the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

Ensuring effective, safe and unrestricted access for the SMM staff throughout Ukraine and re-establishment of full Ukrainian control over its state border with Russia remains of paramount importance.

The resolution of the protracted conflicts in Georgia, in the Republic of Moldova and in Nagorno-Karabakh remains also a core task of the OSCE, based on the existing mediation formats.

Bulgaria supports Georgia`s sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. The peaceful resolution of the conflict in Georgia should be based on the full implementation of the EU mediated Ceasefire Agreement from 12 August 2008.

The vast OSCE expertise across the full conflict cycle should be retained and developed and its operational capacities further strengthened.

European and Euro-Atlantic security architecture and the existing legally binding regime with its basic principles – reciprocity, transparency and host-nation consent have a key importance for the security and stability of Europe. Bulgaria remains firmly committed to these principles.

Conventional Arms Control and CSBMs are also vital pillars of our security community. Full implementation, updating and modernization of the existing OSCE commitments in the politico-military area, based on founding OSCE principles and agreed norms, is a task to be pursued in a priority manner. We see the Berlin Declaration of 14 OSCE participating States and the US initiative for engaging in a structured dialogue on security challenges at the OSCE as mutually complementary efforts to re-establish security, stability, transparency and predictability on our continent.

Security in Europe cannot be successfully addressed without genuine consideration for the rule of law and the protection and promotion of human rights in the OSCE area. These principles remain the firm foundation for cooperation among the participating States and therefore must be kept and reinforced.

The transnational and global phenomenon of migration requires a collective response in a spirit of solidarity. Solidarity with the countries of origin, the refugees and the migrants but also with the countries directly exposed to significant migratory pressure. The OSCE has significant expertise in migration-related issues and remains an important platform for dialogue and partnership. No region or route should be excluded or underestimated and therefore geographically balanced approach is needed.

We appreciate the work of the German Chairmanship in the field of good governance and connectivity, which is highly relevant for the OSCE.

In conclusion, I would like to express once again our appreciation for the valuable work of the German Chairmanship throughout the year and to wish every success to Austria as the next Chair of the Organisation.

Thank you for your attention.