

## SECOND DAY OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH MEETING OF THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

### THIRD PLENARY SESSION (CLOSED)

1. Date: Friday, 8 December 2017  
  
Opened: 10.10 a.m.  
Suspended: 11 a.m.
  
2. Chairperson: Ambassador Alessandro Azzoni, Permanent Representative of Italy to the OSCE
  
3. Subjects discussed – Statements – Decisions/documents adopted:  
  
Agenda item 6: STATEMENTS BY HEADS OF DELEGATIONS (continued)  
  
Afghanistan (Partner for Co-operation) (MC.DEL/67/17), Japan (Partner for Co-operation) (MC.DEL/28/17 OSCE+), Republic of Korea (Partner for Co-operation), Morocco (Partner for Co-operation), Australia (Partner for Co-operation) (MC.DEL/26/17), Jordan (Partner for Co-operation) (MC.DEL/42/17 OSCE+), Tunisia (Partner for Co-operation), Israel (Partner for Co-operation) (MC.DEL/41/17), Algeria (Partner for Co-operation), Egypt (Partner for Co-operation) (MC.DEL/63/17 OSCE+), Thailand (Partner for Co-operation) (MC.DEL/64/17 OSCE+)

### **THIRD PLENARY SESSION (CONTINUED) (CLOSED)**

1. Date: Friday, 8 December 2017  
  
Resumed: 12.50 p.m.  
Closed: 1.30 p.m.
  
2. Chairperson: H.E. Sebastian Kurz, Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria, Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE
  
3. Subjects discussed – Statements – Decisions/documents adopted:

Agenda item 7: ADOPTION OF MINISTERIAL COUNCIL DOCUMENTS AND DECISIONS

Chairperson (Austria)

The Chairperson (Austria) announced that Decision No. 1/17 (MC.DEC/1/17) on the appointment of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, the text of which is appended to this journal, had been adopted by the Ministerial Council on 18 July 2017 through a silence procedure.

The Chairperson (Austria) announced that Decision No. 2/17 (MC.DEC/2/17) on the appointment of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, the text of which is appended to this journal, had been adopted by the Ministerial Council on 18 July 2017 through a silence procedure.

The Chairperson (Austria) announced that Decision No. 3/17 (MC.DEC/3/17) on the appointment of the Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the text of which is appended to this journal, had been adopted by the Ministerial Council on 18 July 2017 through a silence procedure.

The Chairperson (Austria) announced that Decision No. 4/17 (MC.DEC/4/17) on the appointment of the OSCE Secretary General, the text of which is appended to this journal, had been adopted by the Ministerial Council on 18 July 2017 through a silence procedure.

**Document adopted:** The Ministerial Council adopted the Ministerial Statement on the Negotiations on the Transdniestrian Settlement Process in the “5+2” Format (MC.DOC/1/17), the text of which is appended to this journal.

**Decision:** The Ministerial Council adopted Decision No. 5/17 (MC.DEC/5/17) on enhancing OSCE efforts to reduce the risks of conflict stemming from the use of information and communication technologies, the text of which is appended to this journal.

**Decision:** The Ministerial Council adopted Decision No. 6/17 (MC.DEC/6/17) on strengthening efforts to prevent trafficking in human beings, the text of which is appended to this journal.

Canada (also on behalf of the United States of America) (interpretative statement, see attachment to the decision)

**Decision:** The Ministerial Council adopted Decision No. 7/17 (MC.DEC/7/17) on strengthening efforts to combat all forms of child trafficking, including for sexual exploitation, as well as other forms of sexual exploitation of children, the text of which is appended to this journal.

Russian Federation (interpretative statement, see attachment to the decision)

**Decision:** The Ministerial Council adopted Decision No. 8/17 (MC.DEC/8/17) on promoting economic participation in the OSCE area, the text of which is appended to this journal.

**Decision:** The Ministerial Council adopted Decision No. 9/17 (MC.DEC/9/17) on the time and place of the next meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council, the text of which is appended to this journal.

**Decision:** The Ministerial Council adopted Decision No. 10/17 (MC.DEC/10/17) on small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition, the text of which is appended to this journal.

Agenda item 8: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Closing statement by the incoming Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2018, Italy:* Italy (MC.DEL/57/17 OSCE+)
- (b) *Conventional arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation in the OSCE area:* United Kingdom (also on behalf of Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey and the United States of America) (Annex 1)
- (c) *Security sector governance and reform:* Slovakia (also on behalf of Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Finland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Mongolia, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) (MC.DEL/54/17 OSCE+)
- (d) *Human rights and fundamental freedoms in the OSCE area:* Denmark (also on behalf of Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece,

Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) (Annex 2)

- (e) *Proposed amendment to the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE (MC.DOC/1/06):* Spain (also on behalf of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Malta, Monaco, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland) (Annex 3)

4. Next meeting:

Friday, 8 December 2017, at 1.30 p.m., in the plenary hall

## CLOSING SESSION (OPEN)

1. Date: Friday, 8 December 2017  
  
Opened: 1.35 p.m.  
Closed: 2.35 p.m.
  
2. Chairperson: H.E. Sebastian Kurz, Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria, Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE

3. Subjects discussed – Statements – Decisions/documents adopted:

Agenda item 9: FORMAL CLOSURE (STATEMENTS BY THE CURRENT AND INCOMING CHAIRPERSONS-IN-OFFICE)

Chairperson (Austria) (MC.DEL/45/17), Chairperson (Austria) (also on behalf of Germany, Italy and Slovakia) (Annex 4), Chairperson (Austria) (also on behalf of Germany and Italy) (Annex 5), Chairperson (Austria) (Annex 6), Chairperson (Austria) (also on behalf of Kazakhstan) (Annex 7), Estonia-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro; the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Moldova, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (Annex 8), Switzerland (MC.DEL/36/17 OSCE+), Ukraine (Annex 9), Canada (Annex 10), Sweden (also on behalf of Canada, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) (Annex 11), United States of America (Annex 12), Russian Federation (Annex 13)

The letter from the Chairperson of the Forum for Security Co-operation to the Chairperson-in-Office is annexed hereto (Annex 14).

The Chairperson formally declared the Twenty-Fourth Meeting of the Ministerial Council closed.

4. Next meeting:  
  
6 and 7 December 2018, to be held in Milan, Italy



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
Ministerial Council  
Vienna 2017**

MC(24).JOUR/2  
8 December 2017  
Annex 1

Original: ENGLISH

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**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 8(b)

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM  
(ALSO ON BEHALF OF ALBANIA, BELGIUM, BULGARIA,  
CANADA, CROATIA, THE CZECH REPUBLIC, DENMARK,  
ESTONIA, FRANCE, GERMANY, GREECE, HUNGARY, ICELAND,  
ITALY, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, LUXEMBOURG, MONTENEGRO,  
THE NETHERLANDS, NORWAY, POLAND, PORTUGAL,  
ROMANIA, SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA, SPAIN, TURKEY AND  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

This statement is delivered on behalf of the following participating States: Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, and the United States of America, as well as my own country, the United Kingdom.

Mr. Chairperson,

Arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation continue to play an important role in the achievement of our security objectives. Both the success and failure of these efforts can have a direct impact on our security environment. We welcome the decision on small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition.

Enhancing military transparency and confidence in Europe is a top priority. We remain committed to conventional arms control as a key element of Euro-Atlantic security. Full implementation and compliance with these commitments is essential to rebuild trust and confidence in the Euro-Atlantic region. Russia's unilateral military activity in and around Ukraine continues to undermine peace, security, and stability across the region, and its selective implementation of the Vienna Document and the Open Skies Treaty and long-standing non-implementation of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty have eroded the positive contributions of these arms control instruments. We call on Russia to fully adhere to its commitments and treaty obligations. Reciprocal military transparency and risk reduction have the potential to improve stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area, helping to avoid miscalculation and misunderstanding. We are determined to preserve,

strengthen, and modernize conventional arms control in Europe, based on key principles and commitments, including respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, reciprocity, transparency, and host nation consent.

We remain, *inter alia*, committed to improving implementation of and achieving concrete progress in 2018 on modernizing the Vienna Document to adapt it to the evolving security environment, including through its substantive update. We welcome the wealth of concrete proposals aimed, *inter alia*, at strengthening risk reduction mechanisms, enhancing military transparency, preventing military incidents and rendering verification more effective. We call on Russia, which has a very substantial conventional military force, to constructively engage by joining other participating States in the ongoing discussions in the OSCE to modernize the Vienna Document, so that we can reach agreement on meaningful updates. Full implementation and modernization of the Vienna Document will help to avoid miscalculation and misunderstanding. We also underline that the OSCE remains a relevant and inclusive forum to rebuild trust and confidence through multilateral military dialogue.

We welcome the Structured Dialogue as an opportunity to renew a meaningful exchange of ideas among all of the stakeholders of European security in the OSCE area to rebuild trust. The process will take more time but we value the significant, initial work done in the Structured Dialogue at the OSCE during 2017, including discussions of threat perceptions, challenges to the rules-based order, military-to-military contact, and analysis of trends in military force postures and exercises. We look forward to the continuation of the Structured Dialogue in 2018.

Mr. Chairperson,

The participating States subscribing to this statement request its inclusion in the journal of this ministerial meeting.

Thank you.



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**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 8(d)

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF DENMARK  
(ALSO ON BEHALF OF ALBANIA, ANDORRA, AUSTRIA,  
BELGIUM, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, BULGARIA, CANADA,  
CROATIA, CYPRUS, THE CZECH REPUBLIC, ESTONIA, FINLAND,  
THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA, FRANCE,  
GEORGIA, GERMANY, GREECE, ICELAND, IRELAND, ITALY,  
LATVIA, LIECHTENSTEIN, LITHUANIA, LUXEMBOURG, MALTA,  
MOLDOVA, MONACO, MONTENEGRO, THE NETHERLANDS,  
NORWAY, POLAND, PORTUGAL, ROMANIA, SAN MARINO,  
SERBIA, SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA, SPAIN, SWEDEN, SWITZERLAND,  
UKRAINE, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)**

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the following 44 participating States: Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America and my own country, Denmark.

We make this statement in the same week where we celebrate the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; a collective commitment to recognize and protect the equal dignity, freedom and rights of every human being.

Nearly seven decades later, we deeply regret that we are witnessing a continuing deterioration in some participating States in the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, all of which are essential to the realization of comprehensive security. At the same time, we regret that the participating States were unable to reach consensus on draft decisions addressing these challenges.

As highlighted in the Vienna Declaration adopted by the OSCE Parallel Civil Society Conference, the fight against terrorism and violent extremism must go hand in hand with the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.



However, in certain parts of the OSCE region, the space for civil society is rapidly shrinking, both online and offline, and attacks on human rights defenders continue to increase. There are attempts to silence civil society, human rights defenders and free and pluralistic media through restrictive legislation, intimidations, or even violent acts and murder for which those responsible go unpunished. Women and girls continue to face discrimination and violence, and LGBTI persons experience hate crimes and violent ill treatment.

These policies and practices not only violate or abuse human rights and fundamental freedoms, they are also often counter-productive, as they increase mutual suspicion in society, undermine trust in the rule of law and marginalize vulnerable communities.

For these reasons, we speak out when human rights and fundamental freedoms are violated or abused. Whether it is human rights defenders facing reprisals for their actions, or persons being harassed, bullied or attacked because of who they are, whom they love or what they believe or say. We will challenge harmful stereotypes, combat myths with facts, and speak out against discrimination on all grounds. We recall our commitments and hold ourselves and each other to account. There may be times where we cannot prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest.

We commend all individuals and organizations who work tirelessly to safeguard our commitments on human rights and hold governments accountable for their actions. They deserve our recognition and deepest respect.

Our defence of and support for human rights defenders and civil society are not simply a matter of principle. When people can freely exercise their human rights, fundamental freedoms and civil society thrives, and minorities are not marginalized, societies are more resilient and peaceful. When women and girls can pursue unlimited opportunities, a country realizes its full potential. When free and pluralistic media can inform the public, abuses of power, corruption and disinformation are uncovered.

We commend the work of the OSCE autonomous institutions, the ODIHR, the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Representative on Freedom of the Media, for their efforts to stand up for human rights, thereby contributing to our common security. Their work, mandates and institutional independence are essential to the promotion and protection of fundamental freedoms and human rights.

We will continue to take forward the principles that underpin the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the international covenants and the Helsinki Final Act and stand up for human rights, across the OSCE region, and worldwide.

Finally, we also would like to express our sincere appreciation and thanks to the Austrian Chairmanship for its tireless efforts to strengthen the human dimension.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
Ministerial Council  
Vienna 2017**

MC(24).JOUR/2  
8 December 2017  
Annex 3

Original: ENGLISH

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**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 8(e)

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF SPAIN  
(ALSO ON BEHALF OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, IRELAND,  
ITALY, KAZAKHSTAN, MALTA, MONACO, PORTUGAL, ROMANIA,  
SAN MARINO, SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA AND SWITZERLAND)**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

This statement is delivered on behalf of the following participating States: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Malta, Principality of Monaco, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland, as well as by my own country, Spain.

Mr. Chairperson,

At the 2013 Ministerial Council in Kyiv we all recognized the evolving nature of transnational threats in the OSCE region and beyond, as well as the need to provide collective responses, including by strengthening the co-operation with our OSCE Mediterranean and Asian Partners. Since then, further transnational challenges have emerged, underscoring once again the interdependence between the security of the OSCE area and that of our Partners for Co-operation.

We believe that, in order to frame a common response to such challenges, we need to deepen the political dialogue between OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation in all possible venues, starting from the Ministerial Council, in line with the spirit of the Ministerial Declaration on the OSCE Partners for Co-operation adopted in Madrid in 2007 (MC.DOC/1/07) and the Basel Ministerial Council Declarations on Co-operation with the Asian and Mediterranean Partners (MC.DOC/9/14 and MC.DOC/10/14).

We therefore see merit in amending the OSCE Rules of Procedure in a way that will allow heads of delegations from Partners for Co-operation to address the Ministerial Council following the heads of delegation of equal rank from participating States, as it follows:

- Ministers or heads of delegations of equal rank from the participating States;
- Ministers or heads of delegations of equal rank from the Partners for Co-operation;

- Deputy ministers or representatives of equal rank from the participating States;
- Deputy ministers or representatives of equal rank from the Partners for Co-operation;
- All other heads of delegations from the participating States;
- All other heads of delegations from the Partners for Co-operation.

We see this as a concrete signal of the political will to further engage with the partners within the framework of the OSCE and enhance our political dialogue.

Such an amendment will also codify the current practice, introduced under the Swiss Chairmanship, of inviting participating States to address the Ministerial Council according to the rank of their head of delegation, with ministers or heads of delegations of equal rank taking precedence over other representatives.

We encourage other participating States to further consider such a proposal, with a view to reaching the necessary consensus for its adoption in the future.

Mr. Chairperson,

We remain committed to further strengthening our relationship with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation to increase our ability to frame a collective response to the challenges of our time.

Mr. Chairperson,

The participating States subscribing to this statement request that it be attached to the journal of this ministerial meeting.

Thank you.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
Ministerial Council  
Vienna 2017**

MC(24).JOUR/2  
8 December 2017  
Annex 4

Original: ENGLISH

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**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 9

**STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON  
(ALSO ON BEHALF OF GERMANY, ITALY AND SLOVAKIA)**

We, the Foreign Ministers of Germany, Austria, Italy and Slovakia, representing the previous, current and incoming Chairmanships of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) are concerned by developments within the OSCE area that have deepened mistrust, increased tensions, caused conflict and instability within and between States.

Serious challenges in the OSCE area include fundamental breaches of the OSCE's principles and commitments, armed conflicts, in particular the crisis in and around Ukraine, protracted conflicts, terrorism, violent extremism, transnational threats, violations of human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, cyber threats, challenges arising from large movements of refugees and migrants, deteriorating economic and social integration. Responses require effective multilateral co-operation. Therefore, we need to rebuild trust and improve good neighbourly relations.

We reiterate our commitment to the concept of comprehensive, co-operative, equal and indivisible security, guided by the principles of equal partnership, solidarity and transparency. We remain inspired by the vision of a free, democratic, common and indivisible Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community as outlined in the Astana Commemorative Declaration.

OSCE principles and commitments, in particular those enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act, form the basis of our common security. We deplore grave breaches of the Helsinki principles. We reaffirm our commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the OSCE area. The role of civil society is essential in this regard.

We are most concerned about the crisis in and around Ukraine and its wider impact on security and co-operation in Europe. We emphasize the importance of the full and swift implementation of the Minsk agreements. We commend the diplomatic efforts of the Normandy format; we recognize the vital role of the Trilateral Contact Group; and we express our strong support for the Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) to Ukraine. We reaffirm that the SMM is mandated to have safe and secure access throughout Ukraine.

We stress the role of the OSCE as a vital instrument for preventing and resolving armed conflicts. In particular, the OSCE continues to address the conflict in Georgia and contributes to facilitating negotiations and reducing tensions concerning the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We commend the recent progress on the Transdniestrian settlement process, and we welcome today's OSCE Ministerial Statement.

We reaffirm the need for a strong commitment by OSCE participating States to the full implementation and further development of arms control agreements and confidence- and security-building measures to enhance military and political stability within the OSCE area.

We believe dialogue to be essential to enhancing security and co-operation. In this light, we support the ongoing Structured Dialogue and are committed, building on the work done, to continuing this process.

We are resolved to strengthen our efforts to counter terrorism, violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism, while consistently upholding human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We will continue to enhance sustainable growth within the OSCE area by promoting the objective of economic connectivity and encouraging environmental co-operation.

We stress the value of effective co-operation with our Asian and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.

We welcome the new leadership team of the OSCE executive structures and support efforts to strengthen the effectiveness of the Organization. We believe that a stronger sense of ownership and shared responsibility will enhance the spirit of co-operation, promoting better relations among OSCE States and ensuring conditions in which people can live in peace.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
Ministerial Council  
Vienna 2017**

MC(24).JOUR/2  
8 December 2017  
Annex 5

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**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 9

**STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON  
(ALSO ON BEHALF OF GERMANY AND ITALY)**

We, the Foreign Ministers of Germany, Austria and Italy, the Troika of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), are deeply concerned about the crisis in and around Ukraine, particularly by the continued fighting and the use of heavy weapons which have severe negative consequences for the security of the local population in eastern Ukraine. We are also concerned about the wider impact of the crisis on stability and co-operation in Europe and our commonly agreed principles and commitments. We call for implementation of a durable and verifiable ceasefire and a new impetus to intensify efforts to resolve the conflict.

We would have preferred to reach consensus on a joint declaration on the OSCE's response to the crisis in and around Ukraine. Due to disagreement, in particular, over a reference to the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine and the status of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, this was not possible again this year. Nevertheless, we, together with nearly all participating States reaffirm our full respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and call on the sides to accelerate the disengagement process, demining and withdrawal of heavy weapons, and to agree on new disengagement areas. We also stress the importance of the full, swift and comprehensive implementation of the Minsk agreements in their entirety.

Like all participating States we continue to have the gravest concerns about the situation on the ground. We deplore the suffering of civilians – particularly children and the elderly – and the grave humanitarian, economic and environmental impact of the crisis. We underline the urgent need to address pressing humanitarian issues, including by enabling access by international humanitarian organizations to the entire territory of Ukraine.

We call for the immediate release and exchange of all hostages and unlawfully detained persons, based on the principle of “all for all”, in accordance with the Minsk agreements. We condemn the indiscriminate use of mines and their devastating impact on civilians and the environment, as well as the threat they pose to SMM patrols. We, like most participating States, urge the sides to enhance their efforts to clear mines, explosive devices and unexploded ordnance, and to refrain from laying additional mines and increase mine awareness. We are concerned by ceasefire violations in the vicinity of critical infrastructure. We call on the sides to continue to assist the SMM to enable local ceasefires, particularly for

the repair of critical infrastructure, and to establish safety zones around such installations. We need greater efforts to reduce the risk of ecological and humanitarian disasters in the region. We urge the sides to enhance connectivity, and to repeal unilateral steps that run counter to the spirit of the Minsk Agreements.

The OSCE will continue to work towards a peaceful solution of the crisis, fully committed to upholding the United Nations Charter, the Helsinki Final Act, and all other OSCE principles and commitments to which we have all agreed. We support the diplomatic efforts in the Normandy format, and welcome close cooperation between the Chairmanship, Trilateral Contact Group (TCG), Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM), and the members of the Normandy Group.

Like all participating States, we recognize the central role of the TCG and its working groups in facilitating the practical implementation of the Minsk agreements and we reiterate our full support for the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Ambassador Martin Sajdik, and the co-ordinators of the four working groups. We appreciate the good offices provided by Belarus in hosting the meetings.

Despite political differences, there is overwhelming support for the work of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM), and appreciation to its monitors who are operating in a challenging environment under the able, almost four-year-long leadership of Ambassador Ertugrul Apakan.

As demonstrated in the declaration of support for the SMM adopted by the Permanent Council on 27 April 2017, all participating States lament the death of paramedic Mr. Joseph Stone and the injuries suffered by two other monitors while on patrol with the SMM on 23 April 2017. We welcome the findings of the investigations into this tragic incident and the resulting enhanced efforts to improve the security of the monitors.

All participating States have agreed that the SMM is mandated to have safe and secure access throughout Ukraine and have called for this to be fully respected. We condemn any threats against SMM monitors and damage of OSCE assets.

Following the visits by the CiO to the region and the talks with the local population most affected, the need for more and enhanced monitoring by the SMM became apparent. We welcome the decision by all participating States to adopt the budget of the SMM and applaud the work that the SMM has done this year to expand its footprint, increase the number of monitors, and enhance the use of technology. We call on the SMM to continue to enhance efforts in monitoring and supporting the implementation of all OSCE principles and commitments. In this regard, we also welcome the relevant activities of the OSCE executive structures, including the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media.

We acknowledge the role played by the OSCE Observer Mission to two Russian checkpoints of Gukovo and Donetsk, and call for further dialogue on how to enhance monitoring at the Ukrainian/Russian State border.

We support establishing closer co-operation between the OSCE and the United Nations with the aim to contribute to fostering the peaceful resolution of the crisis in and around Ukraine.





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**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 9

**STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON**

The Austrian Chairmanship of the OSCE condemns terrorism in the strongest possible terms, in all its forms and manifestations, and all terrorist attacks, in particular those perpetrated in 2017. We offer heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims and to the people and governments that have been targeted. Terrorism constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security.

The increasing number of terrorist attacks and alarming number of victims in the OSCE area, including attacks by terrorists acting alone or in small cells, continue to raise serious concerns, as does the proliferation of the terrorist and violent extremist ideology and narratives that motivate all these acts. Any act of terrorism is criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of its motivation; we condemn, in the strongest terms, the incitement of terrorist acts and repudiate attempts at the justification or glorification (or apologie) of terrorist acts that may incite further terrorist acts. We respect the right to freedom of expression reflected in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Furthermore, terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality or civilization.

We strongly reaffirm our determination and commitment to remaining united in preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT). We stress that terrorism can only be defeated through increased international solidarity and co-operation and by a sustained and comprehensive approach involving the active participation and co-operation of all participating States and relevant international and regional organizations, as well as, where appropriate, civil society, and directed at impeding, impairing, isolating and incapacitating the terrorist threat. We condemn unequivocally and express outrage at the indiscriminate killing and deliberate targeting of civilians, at numerous atrocities, at persecutions of individuals and communities, *inter alia* on the basis of their religion or belief, by terrorist groups, such as the so-called Islamic State, also known as ISIL/DAESH, Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities. We note with appreciation the international counter-terrorism efforts being made and emphasize in this context that security in the OSCE area is intricately linked to security in adjacent areas.

We underscore the central role of the United Nations in preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism, and strongly reaffirm our commitment to taking the measures needed to protect all people within our jurisdictions

against terrorist acts and the need for all actions to be conducted in accordance with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, and all other applicable obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law, as well as relevant UN Security Council resolutions. We recall and reaffirm all relevant OSCE commitments adopted in the field of preventing and countering terrorism and VERLT, in particular the 2015 Ministerial Declaration on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism. Accordingly, we underscore the importance of our commitments under the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the need to continue to implement all its aspects in an integrated manner, in close co-operation with the newly created UN Office of Counter-Terrorism. We take note of the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism presented by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. We also take note of the relevant Good Practices documents adopted by the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF). We encourage the OSCE participating States to consider, as appropriate, becoming Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism and to its Additional Protocol.

We welcome the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 2354 (2017) and of the Comprehensive International Framework to Counter Terrorist Narratives (S/2017/375), with its recommended guidelines and good practices for effectively countering the ways that terrorist groups and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities use their narratives to encourage, motivate and recruit others to commit terrorist acts. We invite participating States and OSCE Partners for Co-operation to actively engage in and reinforce their work to address these challenges, in particular the spread of terrorist narratives, and to this aim undertake appropriate national and international measures, in accordance with their obligations under international law, in line with the relevant UNSC resolutions, in particular UNSC resolution 2354, and consistent with relevant OSCE commitments. We invite OSCE executive structures, within their mandates and available resources and complementing ongoing UN efforts, to facilitate thematic discussions focused on implementing UNSC resolution 2354 on a regional level and on exchanging lessons learned and good practices for promoting a comprehensive response to the spread of terrorist and violent extremist ideologies and narratives.

We acknowledge that the OSCE, as the largest, most inclusive and comprehensive regional security organization, has unique organizational strengths that make it suited to providing a platform for the exchange of good practices and lessons learned on preventing and countering terrorism and VERLT, and emphasize that the profile of the OSCE in this field could be strengthened further, in accordance with and building upon the existing mandates. In addition, voluntary reporting by OSCE participating States in the Security Committee of the OSCE Permanent Council is an opportunity to share valuable lessons that could be built upon.

We stress that OSCE participating States have the primary role in preventing and countering terrorism and VERLT, while respecting their obligations under international law, in particular human rights and fundamental freedoms. We reiterate that all participating States should refrain from providing any form of support, active or passive, to entities or persons involved in terrorist acts. We reaffirm that those who participate in the financing, planning, facilitating, preparing or perpetrating terrorist acts must be held accountable and brought to justice, on the basis of the principle “extradite or prosecute” in compliance with relevant obligations under international law, as well as applicable domestic legislation. We

strongly reaffirm our determination and commitment to pursue a sustained and comprehensive approach and to strengthen co-operation at all relevant levels on preventing and countering terrorism and VERLT. In this context, we emphasize the importance of strengthening inter-agency co-operation and co-ordination.

We commend the OSCE's work in this field, which complements efforts being made by the United Nations, as well as other international organizations. We welcome the OSCE United in Countering Violent Extremism (#United CVE) campaign and the OSCE's efforts to support and build the capacity of civil society actors in preventing VERLT, with emphases on women, youth, and religious and community leaders, as appropriate. We also welcome the OSCE's work on scenario-based discussions, including table-top exercises aimed at building public-private partnerships, societal resilience, as well as its work on the protection of critical infrastructure from terrorist attacks. We further acknowledge the role effective community policing can play in identifying individuals at risk of radicalization that leads to terrorism.

We reaffirm our intention to take resolute action, in full implementation of UNSC resolution 2178 and other relevant UNSC resolutions, and consistent with OSCE commitments, in particular the 2014 Declaration on the OSCE Role in Countering the Phenomenon of Foreign Terrorist Fighters in the Context of the Implementation of UN Security Council resolutions 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014) (MC.DOC/5/14), to counter the threat posed by FTFs to countries of origin, transit and destination, including those returning to their countries of origin or relocating from or to conflict zones. We encourage commitment to co-operating and consistently providing mutual support in preventing and countering terrorism, including by eliminating the supply of weapons to terrorists and preventing the recruitment and mobilization of individuals as terrorists, in compliance with obligations under international law, and consistent with OSCE commitments.

We underline our resolve to prevent and suppress terrorist financing and we commit ourselves to deepening international and regional co-operation within the UN, the OSCE, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and FATF-style regional bodies. We encourage a strengthening of the measures against the financing of international terrorist groups, in accordance with the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. We also encourage swift, effective and comprehensive implementation of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) standards, in the OSCE area and worldwide. We welcome the strengthening of the co-operation between the OSCE and the UNODC in offering capacity-building on countering terrorist financing in the OSCE area and for the OSCE Partners for Co-operation.

We note with increasing concern the multifaceted nexus between international terrorism and transnational organized crime, as described in relevant UNSC resolutions. In this context, we invite participating States to make full use of available multilateral and bilateral mechanisms and data-sharing systems and to contribute to existing databases and update them systematically, while fully respecting their obligations under international law, including the right to be free from arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy.

We remain committed to ensuring that national criminal justice systems are based on respect for human rights and the rule of law, due process and fair trial guarantees and are effectively complemented by appropriate preventive measures. We stress the importance of the development and maintenance of effective, fair, humane, transparent and accountable

criminal justice systems, as well as of ensuring effective prison management consistent with applicable international law and national legislation, as a fundamental basis of any strategy to prevent and counter terrorism and VERLT.

We emphasize the importance of a sustained, multidimensional, and comprehensive approach to preventing and countering terrorism and VERLT, aimed at effectively addressing all internal and external conditions conducive to their spread, in accordance with applicable international law and consistent with OSCE commitments, and while recognizing that none of these conditions can excuse or justify terrorism or VERLT. We also emphasize the importance of developing tailored and human rights-compliant strategies, policies and programmes, including a gender perspective, in line with applicable international law and domestic legislation, designed to reduce the appeal of terrorism and VERLT.

We emphasize the importance of building whole of society resilience to terrorism and VERLT, as well as of fostering the role of civil society in supporting a global campaign against terrorism, and the need to further promote public-private partnerships. We underscore the importance of involving civil society, in particular families, youth, women, victims of terrorism, and religious, cultural and educational leaders, as well as the media and the private sector, in preventing terrorism and VERLT, as applicable.

We recognize the need to foster an environment that is not conducive to terrorism and, in this context, stress the importance of counter-narratives which should aim not only to rebut terrorist messages but also to amplify positive narratives, in order to provide alternatives and address issues of concern to audiences who are targeted by terrorist narratives. We encourage participating States to adopt measures to counter terrorist narratives complying with their obligations under international law, including international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law and consistent with OSCE commitments. We emphasize the value of public-private partnerships in countering terrorist narratives, and the need to involve a wide range of actors, including families, youth, women and religious, cultural and educational leaders. Where appropriate, participating States could engage and co-operate with religious authorities and community leaders possessing relevant expertise in crafting and delivering effective counter-narratives.

We stress the importance of the role played by the media, civil society, religious groups, the private sector and educational institutions in efforts to enhance dialogues and broaden understanding, and in promoting tolerance and peaceful coexistence. Fully respecting the right to freedom of opinion and expression, we stress the necessity to act co-operatively, including with ICT and social media companies, in accordance with international law, to continue to develop and implement practical measures to counter the exploitation of the Internet and other information and communication technologies for terrorist purposes, including to commit, incite, recruit, fund or plan terrorist acts.

We recognize that efforts to prevent terrorism and VERLT can benefit from increasing youth participation and promoting their sense of belonging to societies, including by the creation of an enabling environment and opportunities for youth to participate and engage voluntarily and freely in public life and in the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms, democratic principles and the rule of law, tolerance and non-discrimination, and dialogue and mutual respect; such efforts can also benefit from the facilitation of youth access to social services and employment and from support being given

to youth-led and youth-focused awareness-raising initiatives, including through the Internet and social media. We also underscore the important role of education in building relevant skills, such as critical thinking, media literacy, and the sense of responsibility, in order to enable youth to reject terrorist narratives and challenge them more effectively. In this context, we underscore the need to enhance the exchange of information, lessons learned and good practices on how to effectively engage with youth in preventing terrorism and VERLT.

We condemn all the acts, methods and practices of terrorist groups, including indiscriminate or targeted killings, torture, kidnapping and hostage-taking, abductions, and acts of violence which cause destruction and displace people. We express deep concern that acts of sexual and gender-based violence are known to be part of the ideology of certain terrorist groups, and are used as an instrument to increase their power in supporting the financing of terrorism, recruitment and the destruction of communities. We recognize the differential impact terrorism and VERLT have on women and children, with particular respect to such matters as violations and abuses of human rights, and acknowledge that women and children are often directly targeted by terrorist groups. We highlight the need to consider evidence-based policies in mechanisms and strategies for preventing terrorism and VERLT, as appropriate, in dealing with female, juvenile recruits and returnees. Children formerly associated with terrorist groups, or who have been forced to travel to conflict zones affected by terrorist attacks, should be treated in a manner consistent with their rights, dignity and needs.

We encourage States to co-operate in efforts to address the threat posed by terrorists, including relocating and returning FTFs, by, *inter alia*, developing and implementing, after prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration strategies, policies and programmes before, during and after imprisonment and as part of non-custodial measures of justice. Such programmes should be compliant with international law, in particular international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law. They should also ensure national ownership and address specific concerns, vulnerabilities and needs of men, women and children, including accompanying family members of FTFs, as well those of incarcerated offenders, as appropriate. A comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach may benefit from the concerted efforts of those best placed to bring about successful outcomes, such as counter-terrorism practitioners from law enforcement bodies and criminal justice systems, social workers and civil society, including families, teachers, local communities, women, non-governmental organizations and religious, cultural and educational leaders, within their competencies. In this regard, we also emphasize the importance of further research, thematic discussions and sharing of good practices and international guidelines, as well as of tailored technical assistance offered by relevant international organizations, including the OSCE. To this end, we invite the OSCE executive structures to work with and assist the OSCE participating States on these matters, upon request, within existing mandates and available resources.

We welcome the activities pursued by OSCE executive structures, including OSCE institutions, within existing mandates and available resources, in support of the implementation of OSCE commitments in the field of preventing and countering terrorism and VERLT, in line with the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security.

We recognize the importance of subregional efforts to counter the transnational threat of terrorism. We therefore encourage and empower OSCE executive structures, within their

mandates and available resources, to facilitate subregional co-operation to prevent and counter terrorism and VERLT, including with the Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation, as relevant.

We welcome the efforts of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in the field of preventing and countering terrorism and VERLT. Furthermore, we encourage parliamentarians from the OSCE participating States to continue to engage in dialogue with a view to strengthening international and domestic legislation, in order to prevent and counter terrorism and VERLT, to build resilience within our societies, to promote solidarity with victims of terrorism, and to speak out strongly and promptly against intolerance, discrimination, terrorism and VERLT.

We invite the OSCE Partners for Co-operation to join us in affirming this declaration.



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**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 9

**STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON  
(ALSO ON BEHALF OF KAZAKHSTAN)**

The Chairmanship-in-Office and the Chairmanship of the Economic and Environmental Committee,

After a yearlong of constructive consultations and engaging negotiations, the Chairmanship-in-Office and the Chairmanship of the Economic and Environmental Committee are appreciating the active participation and broad support of all participating States in almost achieving a consensus,

Reaffirming and recalling the commitments and principles related to environmental co-operation contained in the OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension adopted in Maastricht in 2003, the Ministerial Council Declaration on Environment and Security adopted in Madrid in 2007, the Ministerial Council Decision on Strengthening Dialogue and Co-operation on Energy Security adopted in Athens in 2009, the Ministerial Council Decisions on Improving the Environmental Footprint of Energy-Related Activities and on Protection of Energy Networks from Natural and Man-Made Disasters adopted in Kyiv in 2013, the Ministerial Council Decision on Enhancing Disaster Risk Reduction adopted in Basel in 2014, and the Ministerial Council Decision on Strengthening Good Governance and Promoting Connectivity adopted in Hamburg in 2016,

Recognizing that greening our economies and fostering our environmental co-operation can increase economic prosperity while reducing environmental risks, thereby contributing to stability, security and enhanced co-operation in the OSCE area,

Recalling the often cross-boundary nature of environmental challenges, including disasters, climate change, unsustainable use of natural resources, hazardous waste and pollution, that calls for co-operation,

Recognizing the role of OSCE executive structures, including field operations, within the scope of their mandates, in addressing environmental challenges,

Acknowledging that women are often disproportionately affected by disasters, climate change and environmental degradation, and that women should play an active role in designing and developing strategic responses to environmental threats,

Recognizing that energy efficiency and renewable energy can contribute to sustainable economic growth, a diversified energy mix, resource efficiency and energy access, and improve energy security,

Acknowledging that the responsible and sustainable management of natural resources, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, energy efficiency and the increasing use of renewable energy contribute to conserving nature, addressing climate change and greening our economies,

Recognizing that the implementation of green innovations, the use of green and low-carbon technologies and sound waste management measures offer economic opportunities and contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and environmental pollution,

Highlighting that good environmental governance, including transparency, corruption prevention, public participation and equal opportunities for women and men in environmental decision-making, supported by raising awareness and enhancing education on environment and sustainable development, contributes to addressing environmental challenges more effectively,

Acknowledging the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a comprehensive framework contributing to peace, security and co-operation,

Acknowledging the Paris Agreement as a global instrument for enhancing collective action against climate change and for contributing to stability and sustainable development,

Supporting the efforts towards reducing environmental risks, greening our economies and promoting sustainable development through relevant regional and international organizations and multilateral agreements, *inter alia*, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Paris Agreement,

Acknowledging the outcomes of the Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference in Batumi and the Eighth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development in the margins of the International Specialized Exhibition EXPO 2017 in Astana,

Welcoming the substantial discussions held in the framework of the 25th Economic and Environmental Forum on “Greening the economy and building partnerships for security in the OSCE region”, in particular those of the Preparatory Meeting held in Astana in June 2017 and of the Concluding Meeting in Prague in September 2017, of the Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting and of the thematic Economic and Environmental Committee meetings held in 2017,



Calls upon participating States to:

Strengthen our environmental co-operation in support of disaster risk reduction, climate action, sustainable use of natural resources, sound hazardous waste management and pollution prevention and control, thereby also contributing to security and confidence-building;

Promote the sustainable use and management of ecosystems for the prevention of environmental disasters;

Promote energy efficiency and renewable energy for economic growth and sustainable development;

Strengthen good environmental governance, *inter alia*, by preventing corruption, by promoting transparency, by raising awareness and enhancing education on environment and sustainable development, by promoting engagement of all relevant stakeholders, including the public and private sector, civil society, media and academia, and by ensuring equal opportunities for women and men in environmental decision-making processes;

Further strengthen measures that contribute to greening our economies, *inter alia*, by increasing resource efficiency and circular economy, and exchanging best practices and knowledge in environmentally sound technologies;

Foster our environmental co-operation to strengthen security, as applicable, through the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement;

Strengthen the role of women in greening our economies and fostering our environmental co-operation.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
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**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 9

**STATEMENT BY  
THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

The delegation of Estonia, in its capacity as EU Presidency, passed the floor to the representative of the European Union, who delivered the following statement:

We express our deep gratitude to Minister Kurz and to the Austrian Chairmanship for the generous hospitality we have enjoyed not just during the Ministerial Council, but throughout the year. Minister Kurz, you should rightly be very proud of your excellent team for the tremendous work put into preparing and hosting this Ministerial Council, and for the Chairmanship's tireless efforts in taking us through difficult discussions, this week and during the whole of 2017.

In light of ongoing challenges the EU would have liked to join a strong message in a ministerial political declaration. We regret that this was not possible.

For a fourth year, the Ministerial Council has taken place against the bleak backdrop of the crisis in and around Ukraine. We had hoped and worked for agreement on a ministerial declaration on OSCE action addressing the crisis in and around Ukraine and we regret the renewed failure to get consensus language on the most serious security challenge Europe is facing. Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and destabilization of eastern Ukraine continues to violate the principles and commitments, as enshrined notably in the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter, which constitute the basis of the European security order. We reiterate our strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, which we will not recognize. We reaffirm our unwavering support for Ukrainian sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. The European Union will support the continued international diplomatic efforts within the Normandy format and the Trilateral Contact Group. Respect for our fundamental principles and commitments must be restored.

We reaffirm our strong support for the OSCE's role in the crisis in and around Ukraine, and to its essential and multifaceted contribution to facilitating the full implementation of the Minsk agreements. We also reiterate our unequivocal support for the essential role of the SMM in advancing the full implementation of Minsk agreements and call for full, safe and unhindered access of the monitors throughout Ukraine. We call on all sides to work effectively to fully implement the Minsk agreements and to re-establish full Ukrainian control of its internationally recognized borders, so as to ensure a sustainable

political solution in line with OSCE principles and commitments. We underline Russia's responsibility in this regard.

The resolution of the protracted conflicts in the Republic of Moldova, in Georgia and of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict remains a top priority for the European Union. We call again on all parties to show the political will necessary to make progress in resolving them in 2018. We reiterate our strong support for the Geneva International Discussions, the Transdniestrian Settlement process and the mediation of the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group. In this context we welcome today's ministerial declaration confirming the progress achieved towards reaching a settlement of the Transnistrian conflict. We welcome the joint statement by the Heads of Delegation of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries. We regret that it was not possible to adopt a statement on the conflict in Georgia.

Instruments of military transparency reduce risks, increase predictability, and thus play an important role in fostering confidence and stability. We welcome that we could reach agreement on the Ministerial Council decision on SALW and SCA, which remains an important contribution of the Organization to the stability and security in the OSCE region. This decision provides fresh impetus on our work in an area in which the EU and its Member States invest heavily. We also emphasize the need to work towards an environment conducive to reinvigorating conventional arms control and CSBMs, together with our commitment to full implementation of the existing commitments in the politico-military area. We remain strong supporters of the Vienna Document modernization and the continued operation of the Open Skies Treaty. We regret that we could not reach consensus on declarations on promoting military stability and security and the 25th anniversary of the FSC. We welcome the successful launch of the Structured Dialogue, value the work done in 2017 and, building on this work, we will continue to actively engage in this process.

In light of terrorist attacks and ongoing terrorist threat in the OSCE area and worldwide, we were ready to speak out again strongly against the continued threat posed by terrorism. Negotiations on the text were fruitful and reflected a good balance – hence we welcome the Chairmanship's statement. Building on previous commitments, we tried to reflect the increasing concern to all of us, on how to address the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters, as well as on how to counter terrorist narratives, particularly taking into account the youth perspective, while respecting freedom of opinion and expression. We had wanted to highlight again the important contribution of civil society – and the importance to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms to effectively prevent VERLT. It is regrettable that the text could not be adopted.

Our comprehensive security cannot exclude or marginalize half of our populations. Gender equality should be a core value for every participating State, and we deeply regret that we could not adopt a decision on strengthening the participation of women in the security sector, as this is an important issue to address to increase the operational effectiveness of the security sector. We saw this initiative as central to the work of our Organization and look forward to continuing efforts in this area with the Chairmanship. We are also particularly disappointed that we could not adopt a decision on preventing and combating violence against women, which remains one of the most pervasive and persistent human rights violations across the OSCE area. We reiterate that the engagement of men is essential for its elimination.

The cross-dimensional Ministerial Council decision on strengthening efforts to prevent trafficking in human beings represents an important deliverable of this year's Ministerial Council. We welcome that it calls for the adoption of a victim-centred and gender-sensitive approach, which fully respects human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as for the promotion of dialogue and co-operation among all relevant stakeholders. We also welcome the agreement, building on previous commitments, to strengthen efforts to combat all forms of child trafficking and sexual exploitation of children.

We welcome the adoption of the Ministerial Council decision on enhancing OSCE efforts to reduce the risk of conflict stemming from the use of information and communication technologies. The OSCE has played a pioneering role in adopting and implementing confidence-building measures to address cybersecurity. Progress was made this year on the implementation front and this decision provides again a welcome push to continue to address the cyber challenges we all face in a cross-dimensional manner, while preserving the mandate of the Informal Working Group established pursuant to Permanent Council Decision No. 1039.

We reaffirm the importance we attach to our co-operation on economic and environmental issues as an important element of the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security. We welcome that we could adopt the decision on the promotion of economic participation in the OSCE area. We consider good governance, social inclusion, the fight against corruption and tackling unemployment, youth unemployment in particular, as essential to ensure prosperous, stable and secure societies. Furthermore, greening our economies and fostering our environmental co-operation are of fundamental importance. In the context of global efforts to combat climate change, in particular after the adoption of the Paris Agreement, we deeply regret that we were not able to find consensus on a text dealing with this critical and urgent issue.

The signals sent from the parallel civil society conference, this year again, reminded us about the urgent need to address the ongoing increasing restrictions on civil society and the crackdown in human rights and fundamental freedoms in many parts of the OSCE region. We appreciate the contribution of civil society in the implementation of our OSCE commitments, and we support their broad participation in OSCE events. Our commitments are more relevant than ever and we call on all participating States to live up to them and reverse existing violations. Despite considerable engagement from many delegations, which led to notable substantive progress, we deeply regret that for the third year in a row we were not able to adopt any texts in the third dimension, even though they enjoyed the support of the vast majority of participating States. Freedom of the media and freedom of assembly are at the core of the comprehensive concept of security, and we regret that the positions of a few participating States prevented us from adopting texts on these key policy topics. We hope and expect that efforts in these priority areas will continue in the coming years. In the same vein, we will remain committed to combating all forms of intolerance and discrimination in a holistic manner. We must continue to work on strengthening respect for fundamental freedoms, raise human rights violations, advance the implementation of our commitments and support OSCE activities in this regard.

The European Union stresses its strong support for the OSCE autonomous institutions, the OSCE field missions and the Secretariat. We reiterate our deep appreciation for the work of the ODIHR, the Representative on Freedom of the Media and the High

Commissioner on National Minorities and our unwavering support for their strong and flexible mandates. Their ability to carry out these mandates must be preserved.

The Austrian Chairmanship had rightly emphasized the importance of incorporating the youth perspective in our work and promoting further participation of young people. We look forward to further discussions on this issue.

We also look forward to our continued fruitful co-operation with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

The OSCE's southern region – the Mediterranean – remains a priority in 2018. We appreciate the Italian Chair's efforts throughout the year on common interests and risks that impact security in the Mediterranean region and the OSCE area as a whole. The OSCE Mediterranean Conference in Palermo this year confirmed the relevance of migration in the security context – not just as a challenge, but also as an opportunity.

We greatly appreciate Italy's readiness to assume the Chairmanship of the OSCE at this critical point in time. Minister Alfano, we look forward to working with you and your able team during your Chairmanship and we wish you every success. You can count on our full support. In this vein, we would like to see timely adoption of the budget for 2018 and the adoption of a decision on scales of contributions.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of today's meeting.

The candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia<sup>1</sup>, Montenegro<sup>1</sup> and Albania<sup>1</sup>, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

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1 The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.



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**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 9

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE**

Mr. Chairperson-in-Office,  
Excellencies,

The delegation of Ukraine is grateful to the Austrian hosts for the warm hospitality in Austria's and the OSCE capital. We highly appreciate the work of all members of the Austrian Chairmanship team and their dedication during the year.

The conflict in and around Ukraine, caused by Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine, illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol, military intervention in Donbas stayed at the top of the OSCE agenda throughout the year and in the centre of the discussions at this Ministerial Council meeting. This aggression and related flagrant breach of Helsinki Final Act principles and Paris Charter norms remain the biggest threat to Ukraine's and European security and to the rules-based order. This year once again, we have not been able to agree on a document that would chart the way to the resolution of the conflict with full respect for OSCE norms and principles. The reason is that Russia would not recommit itself to such basic rules as respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, inviolability of frontiers of participating States, and non-use or threat of use of force. The Russian Federation is not willing to implement in full its Minsk commitments, instead perpetrating further hostilities, violence and destruction. This Russian position provides clarity on the origin of the security threats to Ukraine and other European nations.

It is in this disturbing context that we underline the importance of exploring ways to increase the OSCE's effectiveness in dealing with cases of clear, gross and continuing violations of OSCE principles and commitments, as was agreed at the OSCE Istanbul Summit. We request the incoming Italian Chairmanship to launch respective consultations.

Addressing the serious violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the illegally occupied Crimean peninsula, including by seeking unimpeded access there of the OSCE and other international organizations, must remain in the focus of our efforts.

Ukraine supported the Chairmanship's efforts on the draft decisions of the Ministerial Council and promoted a number of specific aspects with a direct link to security. We reiterate the importance of incremental progress and added value in the adoption of OSCE documents. We welcome the consensus reached in a number of areas.

We deeply regret that in the human dimension, which constitutes one of the main pillars of our common security, decisions were again not adopted, in particular those on free and pluralistic media, on freedom of assembly and on combating intolerance based on religious grounds. This situation is not acceptable in the environment of significant challenges to human rights and fundamental freedoms and particularly grave human rights violations in the situations of occupation.

We should continue to focus our efforts and strong attention on seeking compliance with the relevant OSCE commitments.

We wish our Italian friends every success in steering the OSCE work next year. Please be assured of Ukraine's readiness to closely co-operate with the incoming Chairmanship across the OSCE mandate.

The delegation of Ukraine kindly requests that this statement be attached to the journal of this Council meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



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**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
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## **STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF CANADA**

Mr. Chairperson,

I will begin by reiterating Minister Freeland's statement yesterday that we oppose recent attempts to redefine European borders by force, as one of the fundamental principles of the OSCE is respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity. We regret that, once again, due to the failure of Russia to uphold this principle, consensus was blocked on a ministerial communique, as well as on declarations on the crisis in and around Ukraine and on Georgia. Both issues must remain at the very top of our Organization's agenda.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Ministerial Council just adopted seven substantive decisions and statements. Canada is disappointed that consensus was not reached on important cross-cutting and human dimension topics, notably on freedom of assembly, on freedom of the media and expression, and on the protection of religious freedom.

We are particularly disappointed by the failure to achieve consensus on the two draft decisions on combating violence against women and on the role of women in the security sector, which focus on gender equality issues. Canada will continue to press for meaningful and concrete progress within the OSCE on these critical issues.

For us, the protection of human rights and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusion are and must remain at the core of the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security. As Minister Freeland said yesterday, the attempts by some OSCE participating States to roll back provisions of democracy and the rule of law, often under the guise of a response to the threat of terrorism, undermine democracy and adversely affect everyone, and in particular vulnerable groups, be they migrants, women and girls, LGBTI persons or persons of various faiths and beliefs and, of course, the human rights defenders who nobly attempt to assist such groups.

While we welcome the decision adopted on small arms and light weapons, we also regret that we could not achieve consensus on other politico-military issues. It is important to continue working to improve transparency, risk reduction and modernization, and full implementation of existing conventional arms control agreements. We look forward to



continuing the Structured Dialogue in 2018 and to addressing all aspects of our shared comprehensive security in that context.

Mr. Chairperson,

Despite these disappointing outcomes, we are convinced that the well-established OSCE commitments and principles we have all agreed upon must continue to guide our collective action, and we salute the contribution made by our OSCE autonomous institutions, the Secretariat and field missions. Their work is essential and deserves both our accolades and our unstinting support.

We also take this opportunity to once again express our strong support for the OSCE's essential contribution to ensuring a sustainable political solution to the conflict being fought in eastern Ukraine, in line with OSCE principles and commitments and including facilitation of the full implementation of the Minsk agreements. We salute the contribution to peace and security of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, and reiterate our full support in ensuring that it is able to safely and securely implement its mandate on the full territory of Ukraine. We reaffirm our unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its recognized borders, as well as the fact that Canada does not and will not recognize the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol, which remain integral parts of Ukraine.

Mr. Chairperson,

In closing, my delegation thanks you and the entire Austrian team of the 2017 OSCE Chairmanship for the efforts you have made to guide the OSCE throughout the year and for your ongoing hospitality here in Vienna. Canada very much looks forward to working closely with Italy as it takes over the OSCE Chairmanship and to meeting in Milan next year.

I would ask that this statement be reflected in the journal of this Ministerial Council meeting.

Thank you.



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**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF SWEDEN  
(ALSO ON BEHALF OF CANADA, THE CZECH REPUBLIC,  
ESTONIA, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, POLAND, ROMANIA, THE UNITED  
KINGDOM AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)**

This statement is delivered on behalf of Canada, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

We reaffirm our full support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

We express our full support to the strong determination of Georgia, in its aspirations of European and Euro-Atlantic integration and commend the commitment shown by the Georgian authorities in this regard.

We welcome the progress made by Georgia in further consolidating its democracy, improving transparency of its institutions, upholding human rights and fostering economic development, thereby setting a very positive example.

We congratulate the government and people of Georgia on well-administered local elections of 2017 conducted in respect with fundamental freedoms and international commitments. We note the preliminary findings and conclusions of the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission and expect the government to implement its recommendations to further improve the election environment in the country.

We remain concerned over the continued occupation of the territories of Georgia and underline the need for the peaceful resolution of the conflict, based on full respect of the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act, and the fundamental norms and principles of international law.

We call upon the Russian Federation to fully implement the EU-mediated 12 August 2008 Ceasefire Agreement, *inter alia* to withdraw its military forces from the occupied territories of Georgia.

We urge the Russian Federation to reverse its recognition of Georgia's regions as independent States.

We support the Geneva International Discussions as an important format to address the consequences of the August 2008 war, and underline the need for progress on the core issues of the discussions, including the non-use of force, establishing international security arrangements in the Georgian regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia aimed at providing security and stability on the ground, and ensuring the safe and dignified return of IDPs and refugees.

We welcome the efficient work and contributions of the EU Monitoring Mission in preventing the escalation of tensions on the ground and call upon the Russian Federation to grant the EUMM an access to the Georgian regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia. We support the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms (IPRMs) in Gali and Ergneti and encourage the participants to find proper solutions for the safety and humanitarian needs of the conflict-affected population.

We express our deep concern over the increase of Russian military exercises and further build-up to the Georgian regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia by the Russian Federation. We condemn the gross violations of rights related to freedom of movement, residence, property, as well as right to education in one's native language and underline that the so-called borderization through placement of artificial obstacles and fortifying the occupation line with barbed and razor wire fences further aggravates the humanitarian situation on the ground.

Of particular concern is the intensified ethnic discrimination in the Georgian regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia. We express our concern for recent mass demolition of houses of Georgian IDPs in Eredvi village, South Ossetia, Georgia, under the Russian investment programme that is an illustration of purposeful policy to completely erase the traces of ethnic Georgian population from the occupied territories.

We support the fundamental right of IDPs and refugees to return to the places of their origin in safety and dignity.

We call upon the Russian Federation to enable access by international human rights monitoring mechanisms to the occupied territories of Georgia.

We welcome Georgia's constructive policy aimed at de-escalation of tensions with Russia including unilateral steps such as the pledge of non-use of force in restoring its territorial integrity, its constructive participation in the Geneva International Discussions, as well as its efforts to engage with the population residing in the occupied regions and support concrete projects in healthcare, education and environmental fields that are being implemented to this end.

We encourage the OSCE's engagement in the process of finding a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Georgia and support the implementation of confidence-building measures with an aim to rebuilding trust and improving the living conditions of the conflict-affected communities.

We also encourage OSCE participating States to agree on reopening an OSCE cross-dimensional mission in Georgia, in particular for the benefit of the civilian population,

including a monitoring capacity able to operate unhindered across the occupation line. The mission will considerably strengthen the OSCE's engagement in the Geneva International Discussions and Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms, as well as in implementation of CBMs.

The Friends look forward to working with the OSCE and Georgian authorities to develop supportive humanitarian, educational, medical, environmental and other outreach opportunities to increase contacts. The Friends will continue to raise awareness of the conflict in Georgia and need for its peaceful resolution.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
Ministerial Council  
Vienna 2017**

MC(24).JOUR/2  
8 December 2017  
Annex 12

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**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 9

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Mr. Chairperson,

In his opening statement yesterday, Secretary Tillerson called the OSCE an indispensable pillar of our common European security architecture – an architecture that bolsters peace and stability throughout the region. As this Twenty-Fourth OSCE Ministerial Council comes to a close, let us reflect for a moment on the vision rooted in the Helsinki Final Act and on what that should mean for all of us here today.

The signatories of the Helsinki Final Act believed that a rules-based international order could help us meet common challenges. The OSCE was born with the hope that through commitments to basic principles of international behaviour – including respect for the territorial integrity of States, the inviolability of frontiers, and respect for the sovereignty of other States and the human rights of our people – we could avoid the kinds of conflicts that rocked the European continent throughout the twentieth century and, collectively, build a Europe whole, free, and at peace.

Events of the last decade have tarnished this optimism. Most recently, in 2014, Russia-led forces violated Ukraine's borders. The United States is committed to Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity within its internationally-recognized borders. We call for the full implementation of the Minsk agreements, and will never accept Russia's occupation and attempted annexation of Crimea. And Crimea-related sanctions will remain in place until Russia returns full control of the peninsula to Ukraine. We join several other participating States today in voicing our regret regarding the failure to produce a declaration on this number one threat to the security of Europe, and we welcome Italy's commitment to prioritizing this issue during its upcoming Chairmanship.

The United States remains committed to the SMM (the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine) as a vital component for achieving peace in Ukraine. As participating States, we share ensuring that each and every monitor, regardless of their nationality, enjoys the full support of all of us. On behalf of the United States of America, I would like to thank my colleagues and those ministers who were kind enough to mention the horrific loss of Mr. Joseph Stone in their opening statements. As I've said before, it's our collective responsibility to make sure that there is no more loss of monitors. It should never happen again. And particularly those participating States that have the direct ability to influence that,

I call upon them to take extra precautions to ensure that we never lose another monitor. In this light, let me be even more clear. We call on Russia and its proxies to end their harassment and intimidation and attacks on the Mission, and to permit the Mission to access all of Ukraine, including the internationally-recognized border with Russia.

Secretary Tillerson noted yesterday that the United States welcomes the frank exchanges that have already occurred in the Structured Dialogue on the challenges that nations view as primary threats to peace and safety. At a time when existing arms control agreements are being violated, we cannot seriously discuss new arrangements. The United States does stand ready to participate actively in intensified discussions next year under the Italian Chairmanship on the full range of threat perceptions that have been raised. As Secretary Tillerson noted yesterday, we need to take action to rebuild military transparency by updating and modernizing the Vienna Document, even as we press for full implementation of existing agreements.

On Moldova, the United States welcomes the statement agreed at this Ministerial Council highlighting the important accomplishments of the recent “5+2” meeting in Vienna, including the reopening of a key bridge to facilitate the free movement of goods and people, as well as several other important steps that will improve the lives of people on the ground. However, that text does not address all the issues relevant to the OSCE’s work to promote a political settlement of the conflict in Moldova. We need to continue to focus on achieving implementation of Summit commitments relating to Russian military withdrawal from Moldova and on Moldova’s call to transform the current peacekeeping force into a genuinely multinational presence.

We were pleased to join the Friends of Georgia in issuing a statement at this Ministerial that makes clear our support for Georgia’s territorial integrity within its internationally-recognized borders, and we welcome the frank discussion on a Georgia regional statement, though disagreements on core principles made agreement on a text impossible.

We support the efforts of the Minsk Group to find a lasting and peaceful solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We welcome the 6 December meeting of the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan and the issuing of a statement yesterday by the Heads of Delegation of the Minsk Group Co-Chair countries. We were pleased by commitments made by the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan at their October summit to intensify negotiations and to reduce tensions along the line of contact.

We welcome the cyber decision, which sets the informal working group on cyber up for continued success. However, we regret that consensus on an important new counterterrorism declaration – which would have established a new policy framework for the OSCE’s work in rehabilitation and reintegration of foreign terrorist fighters and their accompanying family members – was not achieved.

Mr. Chairperson,

We are living in a time when civil society and independent media are under considerable pressure in a number of participating States. As you noted in your statement, intolerance in many forms is on the rise in our region. It is in this context that it is regrettable

that agreement was not reached on texts in the areas of media freedom, discrimination on religious grounds, and freedom of peaceful assembly. I wish to express our profound appreciation to the Chairmanship for its efforts to help advance our work and to train the spotlight on these important issues. The United States joins the overwhelming number of participating States in categorically opposing the eleventh hour attempt by one participating State to insert language aimed at compromising the mandate and independence of the Representative on Freedom of the Media. As Secretary Tillerson said yesterday, the United States “will reject efforts to weaken any of (the OSCE’s) institutions.”

Looking forward, we should now turn our attention to focusing on collective efforts on implementing our international obligations and OSCE commitments on human rights and fundamental freedoms, looking to leverage the expertise of the Representative on Freedom of the Media, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the Chairmanship’s Representatives, and our field missions.

Mr. Chairperson,

I wish to commend the civil society representatives who gathered in Vienna for the parallel conference on the eve of the Ministerial. I thank them for their participation and their insightful report and thoughtful recommendations across all three dimensions of our work. I had the privilege of meeting with a number of them yesterday, and I came away from that meeting as convinced as ever that civil society’s contribution of ideas and insights is crucial to the integrity and advancement of the Helsinki process and to the achievement of comprehensive security. The United States will oppose any attempts to reduce or unduly restrict civil society’s access to and participation in OSCE proceedings, and will continue to champion the courageous efforts of civil society activists across the region.

We welcome the adoption today of two strong texts on combating trafficking in persons: one on prevention of human trafficking and one on combating all forms of child trafficking as well as other sexual exploitation of children. The latter decision addresses imminent threats to children from traffickers on the Internet, encourages participating States to prosecute traffickers who misuse the Internet to facilitate access to children for exploitation, strengthens our commitments to international law enforcement co-operation for the prevention of child sex tourism, and calls on participating States to take new, strategic, and specific actions to protect children from accessing pornography on the Internet.

Mr. Chairperson,

Regrettably the failures of some participating States to implement their OSCE commitments should not render those commitments any less valid nor the fundamental truth underlying our Organization’s concept of comprehensive security any less true. In our view the OSCE is, and will continue to be, a major contributor to regional security and stability, as necessary and relevant today as it was in 1975. Our collective commitments to the Organization are just as real. Despite individual budget constraints and other challenges, the 57 participating States must continue to provide the OSCE with the resources it needs to carry out its mandate, especially in the independent institutions and field missions. All – let me be clear – all participating States must assist the Italian Chairmanship and agree to both a 2018 Unified Budget and a continued mechanism for assessing participating States’ Scales of Contributions before the end of the year.

Mr. Chairperson,

Before concluding, allow me to thank – on behalf of Secretary Tillerson and his entire delegation – you and your team. Thank you for your hospitality, patience, and hard work. I wish to commend Italy for taking on the Chairmanship next year, during a particularly challenging time. Italy can count on full US support and co-operation next year.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.





**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
Ministerial Council  
Vienna 2017**

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Annex 13

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**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 9

**STATEMENT BY  
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Mr. Chairperson,  
Esteemed colleagues,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, I should like to express our gratitude to the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship, to Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz personally and his entire team, as well as to the Vienna city authorities for their hospitality and the excellent organization of this Ministerial Council meeting.

The main achievement of this Ministerial Council is the quality discussions held on a wide range of pan-European issues. It is this ability rather than the number of decisions adopted that we see as the OSCE's key role as the leading forum for political dialogue.

We regret that the politicized position of some countries has once again prevented the adoption of a number of important Ministerial Council decisions, including a common political declaration and a statement on the OSCE's efforts to facilitate a settlement of the internal Ukrainian crisis. Moreover, two countries have even blocked the attempt by the Austrian Chairmanship to adopt a non-confrontational document in support of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine.

At the same time, discussions on other conflicts in the OSCE's area of responsibility were more productive. We welcome the statement on Transdniestria, which reflects the progress made towards a settlement and the resolve to settle the remaining issues. We reaffirm our initiative regarding the need for an agreement to be concluded between the Governments of Moldova and Transdniestria on guarantees for the implementation of the agreements reached.

We welcome the joint statement by the heads of delegation of the OSCE Minsk Group three Co-Chair countries on a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Although no document has been adopted on the Geneva Discussions on security in the Trans-Caucasus, we believe that the talks at the Ministerial Council have confirmed the need

for this important format of direct dialogue between Georgia, South Ossetia and Abkhazia, with a focus on reaching an agreement between them on the non-use of force.

Unfortunately, the politico-military dimension has fallen victim to confrontational policies. Only one document has been adopted on small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition. Nevertheless, we regard the discussions on ways of revitalizing an equal and mutually respectful pan-European dialogue on de-escalation of tension as a major outcome of the Ministerial Council meeting. For our part, we should like to point out the illogical and counter-productive nature of any attempt to push through decisions on the “modernization” of the OSCE’s existing politico-military tools. There can be no talk of this until NATO changes its policy of “containment” towards Russia. At the same time, we stand ready to participate in the Structured Dialogue and hope that it will be as depoliticized as possible.

It is important that a serious discussion on jointly countering transnational threats has taken place at the Ministerial Council meeting. Stepping up counter-terrorism co-operation is especially relevant in the light of an unprecedented wave of terrorist acts in Europe. We regret that no Ministerial Council documents have been agreed upon on countering terrorist ideology and propaganda, or on extremism and radicalization. We believe that the Ministerial Council decision in support of the OSCE’s systemic work in the field of information and communication technologies will help to form a responsible attitude among the participating States towards co-operation and renunciation of unsubstantiated accusations of involvement in cyberattacks.

Our work on the economic aspects of the OSCE’s activities has enabled us to agree on a decision on the broader participation of women and young people in economic affairs and on encouraging private enterprise. In that connection, it is regrettable that some countries are unwilling to reflect the issue of the alignment of integration processes in Ministerial Council decisions. We expect this issue to remain on the OSCE’s agenda. We should like to draw attention to the joint statement adopted by the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) countries on connectivity and alignment of integration processes, which was circulated in the OSCE. We regret that a decision on reducing the environmental risks of economic activity has not been adopted.

Although no decisions on the “integration of integrations” have been adopted, we note the development of dialogue between organizations and associations on the OSCE platform involving the heads and representatives of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, NATO, the EAEU and the European Union, including on the sidelines of this Ministerial Council meeting.

Discussions at the meeting have shown that the human dimension is still being seriously affected by substantial distortions and politicization. Russia proposed that the Ministerial Council consider a draft decision on optimizing the OSCE human dimension events. We regret that this proposal did not achieve consensus. Still, we hope that discussion on this issue will continue.

We are pleased that decisions were adopted on combating trafficking in human beings and protecting children from trafficking and sexual exploitation. At the same time, serious problems such as attacks on freedom of the media in some OSCE States and attempts to

rewrite history have not been reflected in the Ministerial Council documents. We draw attention to the statement by the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States on preventing and precluding the destruction and desecration of monuments and other items commemorating the courage and heroism of those who fell fighting Nazism and fascism during the Second World War. We expect the OSCE to address this issue.

The unconstructive position taken by some States has again prevented us from carrying out the instructions of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Basel in 2014 regarding the adoption of declarations to protect Christians and Muslims. We call on the future Italian Chairmanship to work towards settling this issue next year. An event on the safety of Christians, which Russia and Hungary organized on the margins of this meeting, demonstrated the importance of this issue and focused on the numerous threats facing Christian communities in the Middle East and Europe.

In conclusion, I should like to thank our Austrian colleagues for their sincere efforts to formulate a balanced OSCE agenda for 2017, which takes into account the interests of all participating States, and also for their most constructive approach towards reaching consensus on Ministerial Council decisions.

We trust that Italy will be able to take up this baton in a fitting manner next year and wish it every success in its future endeavours.

Thank you for your attention. I request that this statement be appended to the journal of the day.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
Ministerial Council  
Vienna 2017**

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8 December 2017  
Annex 14

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**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 9

**LETTER FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE  
FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION TO THE  
FEDERAL MINISTER FOR EUROPE, INTEGRATION AND FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS OF AUSTRIA, CHAIRPERSON OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH  
MEETING OF THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

As the Chairperson of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), it is a pleasure for me to inform you about the activities of the Forum in 2017.

In preparing this letter, I have consulted with the previous 2017 FSC Chairmanships of Romania and the Russian Federation. During 2017, the Chairmanships worked in close co-operation with each other to ensure continuity and efficiency in the implementation of the Forum's annual work programme.

Even though the situation in and around Ukraine remained the dominant topic of the discussions in the FSC, several initiatives put forward by participating States led to the adoption of six decisions, which were designed to support the implementation of existing commitments.

Also, the participating States decided to approve the use of the OSCE Communications Network to address security of and in the use of information and communication technologies in line with Permanent Council Decisions No. 1039, No. 1106 and No. 1202, upon the identification of contact centres/points for cyber/ICT security-related communications within capitals and provided that relevant operational requirements are elaborated and unhindered provision of services to the OSCE participating States in the politico-military dimension is ensured.

The strategic discussions during the Security Dialogues emphasized the FSC's importance as a platform for addressing and discussing security issues of common interest. Specifically, an active dialogue took place on matters related to topical European security issues, including, *inter alia*, confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs), the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition, UN Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1325 (2000) and subregional military and defence co-operation. All three FSC 2017 Chairmanships actively stimulated discussions by organizing a total of nineteen Security Dialogues.

By continuing promoting regional stability and comprehensive and co-operative security Romania and Serbia dedicated Security Dialogues to the subregional issues in South East Europe and the Black Sea; politico-military activities undertaken by OSCE missions; SALW projects in the Republic of Moldova and implementation of the Agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control Article IV, Annex 1-B, Dayton Peace Accords. Furthermore, under the Chairmanship of the Russian Federation, a number of Security Dialogues were held with the participation of Collective Security Treaty Organization, Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Wassenaar Arrangement emphasizing the importance of the OSCE's comprehensive and co-operative concept of security.

Under the Chairmanship of Romania, the 27th Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting took place in Vienna, between 28 February and 1 March 2017 during which the participating States discussed the present and future implementation of agreed confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs).

Under the Chairmanship of the Russian Federation, the sixth Annual Discussion on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security was held on 14 June 2017, in Vienna. Furthermore, under the respective Chairmanships of Romania and Serbia the role of the military chaplains in the armed forces and the freedom of belief (in peacetime or at war), as well as were the role of parliaments in the democratic control of armed forces was discussed. In May 2017, a seminar on the Code of Conduct for participating States of South East Europe and other interested participating States and Partners for Co-operation was held in Budva, Montenegro. Additionally, for the first time a Conference on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security was held in October 2017 in Washington D.C., United States of America. This event provided a unique opportunity to discuss the provisions of the Code of Conduct in the North American context and to facilitate better implementation, to promote awareness and to support outreach of the Code of Conduct. With the Code of Conduct providing the key normative framework for security sector governance, the FSC Support Section has also supported the OSCE towards developing a coherent and co-ordinated approach to security sector governance and reform (SSG/R) and in bringing the concept of SSG/R closer to its participating States.

With the participation of International Atomic Energy Agency, EU, non-proliferation issues were promoted at the Security Dialogues organized by Romania and the Russian Federation with the emphasis on implementation of UNSCR 1540 (2004), in particular, to identify new and emerging risks and threats to international WMD proliferation regime and through national export control experiences and best practices of the OSCE participating States. The 1540 Committee and its Group of Experts recognized the efforts already made by the OSCE participating States to promote the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), as well as the role of the OSCE Secretariat in promoting the appointment of 1540 national Points of Contact and encouraging the development of a network among them.

By supporting gender equality and integrating gender perspectives in politico-military dimension, Romania and Serbia organized two Security Dialogues seeking the role of military in implementing the UNSCR 1325 and enhancing women's role in both conflict-related and peacetime operations. The OSCE and UNODA initiative was launched during the Romanian Chairmanship on "Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education Partnership" enhancing knowledge and training of women in the field of arms control,

disarmament and non-proliferation. For this purpose a Scholarship for Peace and Security was developed by support of a number of participating States.

The issue of confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) was accorded particular importance during the tenure of the three FSC Chairmanships, which was highlighted through a number of activities in 2017. Romania held a special meeting on Vienna Document 2011 raising topical issues on arms control, modernization of the Vienna Document and its need for update.

In 2017 a significant work was accomplished in the area of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA). A meeting on deactivation of SALW was held on 30 March 2017. As a result a process of developing minimal standards for deactivation of SALW was taken forward and enhanced. Furthermore, by contributing to transparency, predictability and stability in the OSCE area, an online reporting tool was introduced under the Chairmanship of the Russian Federation allowing participating States to simultaneously submit national SALW reports to both the OSCE and the UN. This contributes to lessen the reporting burden on participating States and to encourage a co-ordinated approach to reporting. On the basis of the OSCE Document on SALW, Serbia organized a special meeting to review the implementation of OSCE assistance projects in the field of SALW and stockpiles of conventional ammunition on 3 and 4 October 2017. As the result of the meeting the various aspects of project management issues were discussed as well as shortcomings and room for improvements were identified.

The FSC contributed within its mandate to the Annual Security Review Conference, held from 27 to 29 June 2017 through sessions, focusing on politico-military elements, including conventional arms control and confidence- and security-building measures. During the Conference, discussions were held with focus on elements related to the wide range of politico-military security in the OSCE. Moreover, a special session was devoted to the Structured Dialogue, a process that addresses challenges and risks in the wider politico-military sphere and explores possibilities of reversing the negative trends in the European security architecture.

The Romanian FSC Chairmanship issued a perception paper (FSC.DEL/124/17) containing Chair's conclusions and recommendations after the thematic debates that were held in accordance with their programme of work. In their view, the perception paper would add an extra layer of memory about progress the FSC succeeded to achieve in addressing topics of broad interest and would assist future Chairs in defining the starting line of their related endeavours.

All three FSC Chairmanships in 2017 continued to work jointly with the Permanent Council (PC) on issues of relevance of both bodies as part of the OSCE's concept of comprehensive and indivisible security. To this end, with the participation of high officials from the NATO, EU, US four joint FSC-PC meetings have been held by November 2017 on military aspects of cybersecurity, on support to the national authorities in migration crisis by the security forces, and on developments with regard to the Structured Dialogue, in order to address cross-dimensional issues relevant to the work of both the FSC and the PC.

Finally, media coverage indicated a significant level of public interest in the FSC's work, judging from the OSCE webpage views, engagement on Twitter, Facebook podcast interviews, comments and shares.



**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 7

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE  
NEGOTIATIONS ON THE TRANSDNIESTRIAN SETTLEMENT  
PROCESS IN THE “5+2” FORMAT**

1. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the participating States of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe:
2. Recall the past Ministerial Statements on the work of the Permanent Conference on Political Issues in the Framework of the Negotiation Process for the Transdniestrian Settlement in the “5+2” format;
3. Reiterate their strong resolve to attain a comprehensive, peaceful and sustainable settlement of the Transdniestrian conflict based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognized borders with a special status for Transdniestria that fully guarantees the human, political, economic and social rights of its population;
4. Recall the output-oriented approach reaffirmed by the Hamburg Ministerial Statement of 9 December 2016 and in this context commend the sides for reaching agreements on five of the priority issues: on apostilization of educational documents issued in Transdniestria, interaction in the field of telecommunications, functioning of the Latin Script Schools, use of farmlands in Dubasari region, as well as the opening of the bridge across the Dniester/Nistru River between villages Gura Bicului and Bychok; thus achieving substantial progress in the negotiation process;
5. Welcome the commitment and timelines stipulated by the sides in the Protocol of the “5+2” round of talks held in Vienna on 27 and 28 November 2017 to draw on the positive achievements of 2017 in order to resolve other priority issues in the coming year, in particular the remaining provisions from the Berlin Protocol;
6. Call upon the sides to continue to work at all levels to achieve tangible progress on all three baskets of the agreed agenda for the negotiation process: socio-economic issues, general legal and humanitarian issues and human rights, and a comprehensive settlement, including institutional, political and security issues;
7. Underline the importance of the Permanent Conference on Political Issues in the Framework of the Negotiation Process for the Transdniestrian Settlement in the “5+2” format as the only mechanism to achieve a comprehensive and sustainable resolution of the conflict



in accordance with the internationally agreed parameters as referred to in paragraph 3, and the important role the OSCE plays in supporting this process;

8. Call upon the sides to continue to engage, under the Italian OSCE Chairmanship, in the negotiation process within the existing negotiating formats and in accordance with the internationally agreed parameters as referred to in paragraph 3;

9. Applaud the political will of the sides to continue to resolve long-standing issues, as well as the unified and active approach by the mediators and observers in the Permanent Conference on Political Issues in the Framework of the Negotiation Process for the Transdniestrian Settlement in the “5+2” format in the course of their activities in 2017;

10. Encourage the mediators and observers of the OSCE, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, the European Union and the United States of America to continue to co-ordinate their efforts and to make full use of their collective potential to promote progress in achieving a comprehensive resolution of the Transdniestrian conflict.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
Ministerial Council**

MC.DEC/1/17  
18 July 2017

Original: ENGLISH

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**DECISION No. 1/17  
APPOINTMENT OF THE OSCE HIGH COMMISSIONER ON  
NATIONAL MINORITIES**

The Ministerial Council,

Recalling the decision of the CSCE Helsinki Summit 1992 to establish a High Commissioner on National Minorities,

Reaffirming the necessity that the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities carries out his functions in full compliance with the OSCE principles, commitments and decisions as well as with the mandate of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities,

Considering that the term of office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Ms. Astrid Thors, came to an end on 19 August 2016,

Taking into consideration the recommendation of the Permanent Council,

Decides to appoint Mr. Lamberto Zannier as OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities for a period of three years with effect from 19 July 2017.

MC.DEC/1/17  
18 July 2017  
Attachment 1

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of Kazakhstan:

“Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

The delegation of Kazakhstan would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure in connection with the adoption of Ministerial Council decisions on the appointments of a new OSCE Secretary General and new heads of institutions.

We welcome the fact that eventually we reached consensus on this matter and appreciate all efforts of the Austrian Chairmanship regarding these appointments. Although, the decisions were not adopted in due time.

Let me warmly welcome Mr. Thomas Greminger (Switzerland) as OSCE Secretary General; Ms. Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir (Iceland) as Director of OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights; Mr. Lamberto Zannier (Italy) as OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities; and Mr. Harlem Désir (France) as OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media to the Permanent Council meeting and congratulate them on respective appointments. I would like to wish all the success to all of you in your new capacities.

At the same time, we regretfully note the absence of fair geographical balance among leading representatives of the OSCE, not only among newly appointed heads of institutions, but also historically among previous incumbents since the very establishment of the OSCE. We hope that this practice will be halted in the future.

For this, we encourage to use a GRIP approach, where G stands for Gender Balance, R stands for Regional Balance, I stands for Interfaith Balance and P stands for Professional Balance.

From the procedural prospective, we note the “broad interpretation” of existing established practice of candidates’ nomination, although we understand that the Chairmanship has done that for the sake of consensus.

We call on all participating States to ensure further institutionalization of our Organization through the adoption of the OSCE Charter which will contain, *inter alia*, a clear

set of rules and procedures related to the processes of nomination, selection and appointment to the OSCE leading posts. We are confident that it will help us to avoid the burdens of last selection process in the year 2016–2017.

Mr. Chairperson, I request that this interpretative statement be attached to all four decisions and included in the journal of the day.”

MC.DEC/1/17  
18 July 2017  
Attachment 2

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of the Russian Federation (also on behalf of Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan):

“Our countries joined the consensus on the decisions by the OSCE Ministers for Foreign Affairs on the appointment of the new OSCE Secretary General, the new Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the new High Commissioner on National Minorities and the new Representative on Freedom of the Media, the silence procedure for which expired on 18 July. Thus, from 19 July, Mr. Thomas Greminger assumed responsibilities as the new Secretary General, Ms. Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir as the new Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Mr. Lamberto Zannier as the new High Commissioner on National Minorities and Mr. Harlem Désir as the new Representative on Freedom of the Media. We congratulate them on their lofty appointments. We wish them every success in their responsible positions.

At the same time, we should like to point out the unacceptability of the situation in which throughout all the years of the OSCE’s existence there has never been a single representative of our countries in the leadership of its executive structures. Steps need to be taken to rectify such a bias, which contravenes the fundamental principles of the OSCE’s work and its procedural norms establishing the equality of all participating States and their equal opportunity to be involved in the leadership of the Secretariat, its departments and the institutions of the Organization.

We trust that in future appointments to leading positions in the OSCE executive structures our concerns will be fully taken into account.

We hope that the aforementioned executive structures will work effectively in strict accordance with their mandates and taking into account the opinions of all participating States and also on the basis of a constructive approach on the part of the newly appointed heads.

I request that this statement be appended to all the decisions adopted, and included in the journal of the day.”

MC.DEC/1/17  
18 July 2017  
Attachment 3

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of the United States of America:

“Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

In connection with the adoption of the decision for the appointment of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), the United States would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure.

The United States welcomes the appointment of Ambassador Lamberto Zannier. We fully respect the autonomy and support the work of the HCNM.

Unfortunately, in recent years, there has been pressure from some participating States to weaken the OSCE’s autonomous institutions and cut resources for them. Nothing in this decision should be interpreted to diminish the autonomy of or restrict the work of the High Commissioner on National Minorities in the exercise of his or her mandate.

Finally, the United States underscores that it is the OSCE participating States which have adopted our principles, commitments and decisions and it is first and foremost the responsibility of participating States to implement them.

I request that this interpretative statement be attached to the decision and that it be included in the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.”

MC.DEC/1/17  
18 July 2017  
Attachment 4

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of Azerbaijan:

“While joining the consensus on the Ministerial Council decision on the appointment of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, the delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan would like to make an interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE.

The delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan continues to be of the strong view that the OSCE executive structures and field missions are the common assets of all 57 OSCE participating States, providing that they act in full compliance with the OSCE principles, commitments and decisions as well as with their respective mandates and by no means harm the legitimate interests of participating States. Principles of accountability, transparency and efficiency, as well as scrupulous implementation of their respective mandates by heads of the institutions and field missions are the prerequisites for extending collective support of participating States to activities of OSCE institutions and field missions.

Furthermore, selection of the candidates for leadership positions within the Organization revealed once again already intolerable geographic imbalance in OSCE recruitment process. It underscored the urgent need to improve fair geographic representation within the Organization’s executive structures from unrepresented participating States.

The decision in no way sets a precedent and we strongly encourage the current Austrian and incoming Italian OSCE Chairmanships to submit promptly a proposal on establishing a mechanism that would ensure stronger application in practice of the principle of fair geographic distribution of posts in OSCE. This will help ensuring a sense of ownership of the Organization and rebuilding trust and confidence in the OSCE. Such a mechanism will assist participating States in proper planning and nominating candidates for vacancies, including for the next selection process of heads of OSCE executive structures.

The delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan requests that this statement be attached to the adopted decision and be included in the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.”



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
Ministerial Council**

MC.DEC/2/17  
18 July 2017

Original: ENGLISH

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**DECISION No. 2/17  
APPOINTMENT OF THE OSCE REPRESENTATIVE ON  
FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA**

The Ministerial Council,

Recalling Permanent Council Decision No. 193 of 5 November 1997 on establishing an OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media,

Reaffirming the necessity that the Representative on Freedom of the Media carries out his functions in full compliance with the OSCE principles, commitments and decisions as well as with the mandate of the Representative on Freedom of the Media,

Considering that, according to Ministerial Council Decision No. 1/16, the term of office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media, Ms. Dunja Mijatović, expired on 10 March 2017,

Taking into account the recommendation of the Permanent Council,

Decides to appoint Mr. Harlem Désir as Representative on Freedom of the Media for a period of three years with effect from 19 July 2017.



MC.DEC/2/17  
18 July 2017  
Attachment 1

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of Kazakhstan:

“Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

The delegation of Kazakhstan would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure in connection with the adoption of Ministerial Council decisions on the appointments of a new OSCE Secretary General and new heads of institutions.

We welcome the fact that eventually we reached consensus on this matter and appreciate all efforts of the Austrian Chairmanship regarding these appointments. Although, the decisions were not adopted in due time.

Let me warmly welcome Mr. Thomas Greminger (Switzerland) as OSCE Secretary General; Ms. Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir (Iceland) as Director of OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights; Mr. Lamberto Zannier (Italy) as OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities; and Mr. Harlem Désir (France) as OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media to the Permanent Council meeting and congratulate them on respective appointments. I would like to wish all the success to all of you in your new capacities.

At the same time, we regretfully note the absence of fair geographical balance among leading representatives of the OSCE, not only among newly appointed heads of institutions, but also historically among previous incumbents since the very establishment of the OSCE. We hope that this practice will be halted in the future.

For this, we encourage to use a GRIP approach, where G stands for Gender Balance, R stands for Regional Balance, I stands for Interfaith Balance and P stands for Professional Balance.

From the procedural prospective, we note the “broad interpretation” of existing established practice of candidates’ nomination, although we understand that the Chairmanship has done that for the sake of consensus.

We call on all participating States to ensure further institutionalization of our Organization through the adoption of the OSCE Charter which will contain, *inter alia*, a clear

set of rules and procedures related to the processes of nomination, selection and appointment to the OSCE leading posts. We are confident that it will help us to avoid the burdens of last selection process in the year 2016–2017.

Mr. Chairperson, I request that this interpretative statement be attached to all four decisions and included in the journal of the day.”

MC.DEC/2/17  
18 July 2017  
Attachment 2

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of the Russian Federation (also on behalf of Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan):

“Our countries joined the consensus on the decisions by the OSCE Ministers for Foreign Affairs on the appointment of the new OSCE Secretary General, the new Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the new High Commissioner on National Minorities and the new Representative on Freedom of the Media, the silence procedure for which expired on 18 July. Thus, from 19 July, Mr. Thomas Greminger assumed responsibilities as the new Secretary General, Ms. Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir as the new Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Mr. Lamberto Zannier as the new High Commissioner on National Minorities and Mr. Harlem Désir as the new Representative on Freedom of the Media. We congratulate them on their lofty appointments. We wish them every success in their responsible positions.

At the same time, we should like to point out the unacceptability of the situation in which throughout all the years of the OSCE’s existence there has never been a single representative of our countries in the leadership of its executive structures. Steps need to be taken to rectify such a bias, which contravenes the fundamental principles of the OSCE’s work and its procedural norms establishing the equality of all participating States and their equal opportunity to be involved in the leadership of the Secretariat, its departments and the institutions of the Organization.

We trust that in future appointments to leading positions in the OSCE executive structures our concerns will be fully taken into account.

We hope that the aforementioned executive structures will work effectively in strict accordance with their mandates and taking into account the opinions of all participating States and also on the basis of a constructive approach on the part of the newly appointed heads.

I request that this statement be appended to all the decisions adopted, and included in the journal of the day.”

MC.DEC/2/17  
18 July 2017  
Attachment 3

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of Azerbaijan:

“While joining the consensus on the Ministerial Council decision on the appointment of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, the delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan would like to make an interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE.

The delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan continues to be of the strong view that the OSCE executive structures and field missions are the common assets of all 57 OSCE participating States, providing that they act in full compliance with the OSCE principles, commitments and decisions as well as with their respective mandates and by no means harm the legitimate interests of participating States. Principles of accountability, transparency and efficiency, as well as scrupulous implementation of their respective mandates by heads of the institutions and field missions are the prerequisites for extending collective support of participating States to activities of OSCE institutions and field missions.

Furthermore, selection of the candidates for leadership positions within the Organization revealed once again already intolerable geographic imbalance in OSCE recruitment process. It underscored the urgent need to improve fair geographic representation within the Organization’s executive structures from unrepresented participating States.

The decision in no way sets a precedent and we strongly encourage the current Austrian and incoming Italian OSCE Chairmanships to submit promptly a proposal on establishing a mechanism that would ensure stronger application in practice of the principle of fair geographic distribution of posts in OSCE. This will help ensuring a sense of ownership of the Organization and rebuilding trust and confidence in the OSCE. Such a mechanism will assist participating States in proper planning and nominating candidates for vacancies, including for the next selection process of heads of OSCE executive structures.

The delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan requests that this statement be attached to the adopted decision and be included in the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.”

MC.DEC/2/17  
18 July 2017  
Attachment 4

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of the United States of America:

“Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

In connection with the adoption of the decision for the appointment of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFOM), the United States would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure.

The United States welcomes the appointment of Harlem Désir. We fully respect the autonomy and support the work of the RFOM.

Unfortunately, in recent years, there has been pressure from some participating States to weaken the OSCE’s autonomous institutions and cut resources for them. Nothing in this decision should be interpreted to diminish the autonomy of or restrict the work of the Representative on Freedom of the Media in the exercise of his or her mandate.

Finally, the United States underscores that it is the OSCE participating States which have adopted our principles, commitments and decisions and it is first and foremost the responsibility of the participating States to implement them.

I request that this interpretative statement be attached to the decision and that it be included in the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.”



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
Ministerial Council**

MC.DEC/3/17  
18 July 2017

Original: ENGLISH

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**DECISION No. 3/17  
APPOINTMENT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE FOR  
DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

The Ministerial Council,

Recalling the decision of the Ministerial Council taken at its second meeting in Prague in 1992 concerning the development of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR),

Reaffirming the necessity that the Director of the ODIHR carries out her functions in full compliance with the OSCE principles, commitments and decisions as well as with the mandate of the ODIHR,

Considering that, according to Ministerial Council Decision No. 1/14, the term of office of the current Director of the ODIHR, Mr. Michael Georg Link, expired on 30 June 2017,

Taking into account the recommendation of the Permanent Council,

Decides to appoint Ms. Ingibjörg Solrun Gísladóttir as Director of the ODIHR for a period of three years with effect from 19 July 2017.

MC.DEC/3/17  
18 July 2017  
Attachment 1

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of Kazakhstan:

“Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

The delegation of Kazakhstan would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure in connection with the adoption of Ministerial Council decisions on the appointments of a new OSCE Secretary General and new heads of institutions.

We welcome the fact that eventually we reached consensus on this matter and appreciate all efforts of the Austrian Chairmanship regarding these appointments. Although, the decisions were not adopted in due time.

Let me warmly welcome Mr. Thomas Greminger (Switzerland) as OSCE Secretary General; Ms. Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir (Iceland) as Director of OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights; Mr. Lamberto Zannier (Italy) as OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities; and Mr. Harlem Désir (France) as OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media to the Permanent Council meeting and congratulate them on respective appointments. I would like to wish all the success to all of you in your new capacities.

At the same time, we regretfully note the absence of fair geographical balance among leading representatives of the OSCE, not only among newly appointed heads of institutions, but also historically among previous incumbents since the very establishment of the OSCE. We hope that this practice will be halted in the future.

For this, we encourage to use a GRIP approach, where G stands for Gender Balance, R stands for Regional Balance, I stands for Interfaith Balance and P stands for Professional Balance.

From the procedural prospective, we note the “broad interpretation” of existing established practice of candidates’ nomination, although we understand that the Chairmanship has done that for the sake of consensus.

We call on all participating States to ensure further institutionalization of our Organization through the adoption of the OSCE Charter which will contain, *inter alia*, a clear

set of rules and procedures related to the processes of nomination, selection and appointment to the OSCE leading posts. We are confident that it will help us to avoid the burdens of last selection process in the year 2016–2017.

Mr. Chairperson, I request that this interpretative statement be attached to all four decisions and included in the journal of the day.”



MC.DEC/3/17  
18 July 2017  
Attachment 2

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of the Russian Federation (also on behalf of Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan):

“Our countries joined the consensus on the decisions by the OSCE Ministers for Foreign Affairs on the appointment of the new OSCE Secretary General, the new Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the new High Commissioner on National Minorities and the new Representative on Freedom of the Media, the silence procedure for which expired on 18 July. Thus, from 19 July, Mr. Thomas Greminger assumed responsibilities as the new Secretary General, Ms. Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir as the new Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Mr. Lamberto Zannier as the new High Commissioner on National Minorities and Mr. Harlem Désir as the new Representative on Freedom of the Media. We congratulate them on their lofty appointments. We wish them every success in their responsible positions.

At the same time, we should like to point out the unacceptability of the situation in which throughout all the years of the OSCE’s existence there has never been a single representative of our countries in the leadership of its executive structures. Steps need to be taken to rectify such a bias, which contravenes the fundamental principles of the OSCE’s work and its procedural norms establishing the equality of all participating States and their equal opportunity to be involved in the leadership of the Secretariat, its departments and the institutions of the Organization.

We trust that in future appointments to leading positions in the OSCE executive structures our concerns will be fully taken into account.

We hope that the aforementioned executive structures will work effectively in strict accordance with their mandates and taking into account the opinions of all participating States and also on the basis of a constructive approach on the part of the newly appointed heads.

I request that this statement be appended to all the decisions adopted, and included in the journal of the day.”

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of Azerbaijan:

“While joining the consensus on the Ministerial Council decision on the appointment of the Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan would like to make an interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE.

The delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan continues to be of the strong view that the OSCE executive structures and field missions are the common assets of all 57 OSCE participating States, providing that they act in full compliance with the OSCE principles, commitments and decisions as well as with their respective mandates and by no means harm the legitimate interests of participating States. Principles of accountability, transparency and efficiency, as well as scrupulous implementation of their respective mandates by heads of the institutions and field missions are the prerequisites for extending collective support of participating States to activities of OSCE institutions and field missions.

Furthermore, selection of the candidates for leadership positions within the Organization revealed once again already intolerable geographic imbalance in OSCE recruitment process. It underscored the urgent need to improve fair geographic representation within the Organization’s executive structures from unrepresented participating States.

The decision in no way sets a precedent and we strongly encourage the current Austrian and incoming Italian OSCE Chairmanships to submit promptly a proposal on establishing a mechanism that would ensure stronger application in practice of the principle of fair geographic distribution of posts in OSCE. This will help ensuring a sense of ownership of the Organization and rebuilding trust and confidence in the OSCE. Such a mechanism will assist participating States in proper planning and nominating candidates for vacancies, including for the next selection process of heads of OSCE executive structures.

The delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan requests that this statement be attached to the adopted decision and be included in the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.”

MC.DEC/3/17  
18 July 2017  
Attachment 4

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of the United States of America:

“Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

In connection with the adoption of the decision for the appointment of the Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the United States would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure.

The United States welcomes the appointment of Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir. We fully respect the autonomy and support the work of ODIHR.

Unfortunately, in recent years, there has been pressure from some participating States to weaken the OSCE’s autonomous institutions and cut resources for them. Nothing in this decision should be interpreted to diminish the autonomy of or restrict the work of the Director of ODIHR in the exercise of his or her mandate.

Finally, the United States underscores that it is the OSCE participating States which have adopted our principles, commitments and decisions and it is first and foremost the responsibility of the participating States to implement them.

I request that this interpretative statement be attached to the decision and that it be included in the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.”

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of Austria:

“In line with paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure, we would like to make the following interpretative statement:

The appointments of the new heads of institutions and the new OSCE Secretary General are a crucial step towards ensuring the functionality and effectiveness of our Organization. They are a very important testimony to the interest of participating States in this Organization, its goals and values, and their ability to come to agreements on such important and political questions.

Therefore, we very much welcome the consensus reached on the appointments and we thank participating States for their support and spirit of compromise in this respect.

As expressed by the Chairperson-in-Office Minister Sebastian Kurz at the informal meeting of OSCE Foreign Ministers in Mauerbach, we will continue to pay great attention to issues such as competence, gender, and the need for all parts of our area, from Vancouver to Vladivostok, to be represented throughout our Organization.

The appointment of all four senior staff at the same time represents a unique situation and also an opportunity for a fresh start in the Organization in general and in the interaction between institutions and participating States in particular. In addition, it is an opportunity to further develop our culture of communication.

The Chairmanship acknowledges the need for the continuous improvement and further strengthening of the quality of dialogue between institutions and participating States. As a concrete measure, we will foster closer co-operation and regular contact with the newly appointed mandate holders. In this context, we deem the continuation of a process of reflection to be useful.

We would like to recall the priorities and principles of the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship, in particular rebuilding trust in our Organization and in our institutions. Based on these principles, we see the need to address any friction through dialogue. The Chairmanship is ready to facilitate this dialogue whenever necessary.

We call on the mandate holders to carry out their functions in full compliance with the OSCE principles, commitments and decisions as well as in line with their respective mandates.

This interpretative statement will be attached to the Ministerial Council decision on the appointment of the Director of the ODIHR.”



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
Ministerial Council**

MC.DEC/4/17  
18 July 2017

Original: ENGLISH

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**DECISION No. 4/17  
APPOINTMENT OF THE OSCE SECRETARY GENERAL**

The Ministerial Council,

Recalling the decision of the Third Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Stockholm in 1992 to establish the post of Secretary General, Ministerial Council Decision No. 15/04 of 7 December 2004 on the role of the OSCE Secretary General, Ministerial Council Decision No. 18/06 on further strengthening the effectiveness of OSCE executive structures and Ministerial Council Decision No. 3/08 of 22 October 2008 on the periods of service of the OSCE Secretary General,

Reaffirming the necessity that the OSCE Secretary General carries out his functions in full compliance with the OSCE principles, commitments and decisions as well as with the mandate of the OSCE Secretary General,

Taking into account the recommendation of the Permanent Council,

Decides:

To appoint Mr. Thomas Greminger as Secretary General of the OSCE for a period of three years with effect from 19 July 2017.

MC.DEC/4/17  
18 July 2017  
Attachment 1

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of Kazakhstan:

“Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

The delegation of Kazakhstan would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure in connection with the adoption of Ministerial Council decisions on the appointments of a new OSCE Secretary General and new heads of institutions.

We welcome the fact that eventually we reached consensus on this matter and appreciate all efforts of the Austrian Chairmanship regarding these appointments. Although, the decisions were not adopted in due time.

Let me warmly welcome Mr. Thomas Greminger (Switzerland) as OSCE Secretary General; Ms. Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir (Iceland) as Director of OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights; Mr. Lamberto Zannier (Italy) as OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities; and Mr. Harlem Désir (France) as OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media to the Permanent Council meeting and congratulate them on respective appointments. I would like to wish all the success to all of you in your new capacities.

At the same time, we regretfully note the absence of fair geographical balance among leading representatives of the OSCE, not only among newly appointed heads of institutions, but also historically among previous incumbents since the very establishment of the OSCE. We hope that this practice will be halted in the future.

For this, we encourage to use a GRIP approach, where G stands for Gender Balance, R stands for Regional Balance, I stands for Interfaith Balance and P stands for Professional Balance.

From the procedural prospective, we note the “broad interpretation” of existing established practice of candidates’ nomination, although we understand that the Chairmanship has done that for the sake of consensus.

We call on all participating States to ensure further institutionalization of our Organization through the adoption of the OSCE Charter which will contain, *inter alia*, a clear

set of rules and procedures related to the processes of nomination, selection and appointment to the OSCE leading posts. We are confident that it will help us to avoid the burdens of last selection process in the year 2016–2017.

Mr. Chairperson, I request that this interpretative statement be attached to all four decisions and included in the journal of the day.”



MC.DEC/4/17  
18 July 2017  
Attachment 2

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of the Russian Federation (also on behalf of Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan):

“Our countries joined the consensus on the decisions by the OSCE Ministers for Foreign Affairs on the appointment of the new OSCE Secretary General, the new Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the new High Commissioner on National Minorities and the new Representative on Freedom of the Media, the silence procedure for which expired on 18 July. Thus, from 19 July, Mr. Thomas Greminger assumed responsibilities as the new Secretary General, Ms. Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir as the new Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Mr. Lamberto Zannier as the new High Commissioner on National Minorities and Mr. Harlem Désir as the new Representative on Freedom of the Media. We congratulate them on their lofty appointments. We wish them every success in their responsible positions.

At the same time, we should like to point out the unacceptability of the situation in which throughout all the years of the OSCE’s existence there has never been a single representative of our countries in the leadership of its executive structures. Steps need to be taken to rectify such a bias, which contravenes the fundamental principles of the OSCE’s work and its procedural norms establishing the equality of all participating States and their equal opportunity to be involved in the leadership of the Secretariat, its departments and the institutions of the Organization.

We trust that in future appointments to leading positions in the OSCE executive structures our concerns will be fully taken into account.

We hope that the aforementioned executive structures will work effectively in strict accordance with their mandates and taking into account the opinions of all participating States and also on the basis of a constructive approach on the part of the newly appointed heads.

I request that this statement be appended to all the decisions adopted, and included in the journal of the day.”

MC.DEC/4/17  
18 July 2017  
Attachment 3

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of Azerbaijan:

“While joining the consensus on the Ministerial Council decision on the appointment of the OSCE Secretary General, the delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan would like to make an interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE.

The delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan continues to be of the strong view that the OSCE executive structures and field missions are the common assets of all 57 OSCE participating States, providing that they act in full compliance with the OSCE principles, commitments and decisions as well as with their respective mandates and by no means harm the legitimate interests of participating States. Principles of accountability, transparency and efficiency, as well as scrupulous implementation of their respective mandates by heads of the institutions and field missions are the prerequisites for extending collective support of participating States to activities of OSCE institutions and field missions.

Furthermore, selection of the candidates for leadership positions within the Organization revealed once again already intolerable geographic imbalance in OSCE recruitment process. It underscored the urgent need to improve fair geographic representation within the Organization’s executive structures from unrepresented participating States.

The decision in no way sets a precedent and we strongly encourage the current Austrian and incoming Italian OSCE Chairmanships to submit promptly a proposal on establishing a mechanism that would ensure stronger application in practice of the principle of fair geographic distribution of posts in OSCE. This will help ensuring a sense of ownership of the Organization and rebuilding trust and confidence in the OSCE. Such a mechanism will assist participating States in proper planning and nominating candidates for vacancies, including for the next selection process of heads of OSCE executive structures.

The delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan requests that this statement be attached to the adopted decision and be included in the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.”

MC.DEC/4/17  
18 July 2017  
Attachment 4

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of the United States of America:

“Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

In connection with the adoption of the decision for the appointment of the OSCE Secretary General, the United States would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure.

The United States welcomes the appointment of Ambassador Thomas Greminger. We support the work of the Secretary General and the OSCE Secretariat.

We recall that the Secretary General derives his/her authority from the collective decisions of the participating States and acts under the guidance of the Chairman-in-Office. He or she is the Chief Administrative Officer of the OSCE, and is tasked, among other things, to act as the representative of the Chairperson-in-Office and support him or her in all activities aimed at fulfilling the goals of the OSCE. Nothing in this decision should be interpreted to alter the mandate of the Secretary General or restrict the work of the Secretary General in the exercise of his or her mandate.

Finally, the United States underscores that it is the OSCE participating States which have adopted our principles, commitments and decisions and it is first and foremost the responsibility of the participating States to implement them.

I request that this interpretative statement be attached to the decision and that it be included in the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.”



**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 7

**DECISION No. 5/17**  
**ENHANCING OSCE EFFORTS TO REDUCE THE RISKS OF  
CONFLICT STEMMING FROM THE USE OF INFORMATION AND  
COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES**

The Ministerial Council of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe,

Noting the immense opportunities that information and communication technologies provide for social and economic development, and that they continue to grow in importance for the international community,

Recognizing that OSCE participating States benefit from an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful information and communication technologies environment,

Reaffirming that efforts by OSCE participating States to reduce the risks of conflict stemming from the use of information and communication technologies will be consistent with: international law, including, *inter alia*, the UN Charter and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the Helsinki Final Act; and their responsibilities to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Expressing concern about the increase in significant incidents involving the malicious use of information and communication technologies, and stressing that these negative trends hold security risks for all OSCE participating States and their citizens, as well as public and private sectors,

Reaffirming Ministerial Council Decision No. 5/16 as well as Permanent Council Decisions No. 1106 and No. 1202 on measures to reduce the risks of conflict stemming from the use of information and communication technologies, and acknowledging the need for intensifying efforts to implement them,

Recognizing the work of the cross-dimensional Informal Working Group established pursuant to Permanent Council Decision No. 1039 under the auspices of the Security Committee,

Recalling the importance of communication at all levels of authority to reduce the risk of conflict stemming from the use of information and communication technologies, noting steps taken and encouraging further progress to this end,

Reiterating in the context of security of and in the use of information and communication technologies the central role of the United Nations, and taking note of the continued relevance of the 2010, 2013 and 2015 reports of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security,

Welcoming the cross-dimensional work undertaken in 2017 by the OSCE Austrian Chairmanship, including the two high-level Chairmanship Conferences on “Cyber Security for Critical Infrastructure: Strengthening Confidence-Building in the OSCE” on 15 February 2017 as well as the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship Conference on Cyber Security on 3 November 2017,

Recognizing the need to further enhance OSCE efforts to continue building trust and to reduce the risks of conflict stemming from the use of information and communication technologies,

Decides to:

1. Continue to implement all decisions on confidence-building measures adopted by the OSCE to reduce the risks of conflict stemming from the use of information and communication technologies to contribute to an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful information and communication technologies environment in line with OSCE commitments;
2. Identify ways of strengthening and optimizing the work of the OSCE as a practical platform for reducing risks of conflict stemming from the use of information and communication technologies, and at the same time continuing the work of the cross-dimensional Informal Working Group established pursuant to Permanent Council Decision No. 1039;
3. Encourage executive OSCE structures, within their mandates and available resources, to assist participating States, upon their request, in the implementation of the OSCE confidence-building measures to reduce the risk of conflict stemming from the use of information and communication technologies, and to enhance pertinent national capabilities and processes;
4. Invite the OSCE Partners for Co-operation to enhance dialogue on efforts to reduce the risks of conflict stemming from the use of information and communication technologies.



**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 7

**DECISION No. 6/17  
STRENGTHENING EFFORTS TO PREVENT  
TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**

The Ministerial Council,

Reaffirming that trafficking in human beings is a grave and heinous crime that violates human dignity and that all aspects of combating human trafficking should be firmly based on the rule of law and respect for human rights,

Reaffirming our strongest condemnation of all forms of trafficking in human beings, including for the purpose of labour and sexual exploitation, child trafficking, forced criminality, as well as for the purpose of organ removal, and recognizing that the prevention of this crime is a priority,

Reaffirming also our commitment to addressing factors that make persons more vulnerable to trafficking and emphasizing the importance of a cross-dimensional and comprehensive approach to combating trafficking in human beings, which requires a focus on carrying out effective prevention measures,

Recalling the 2003 OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings and its Addenda, which stress the importance of comprehensive prevention measures, including measures to address demand, and reaffirming all OSCE commitments in the field of combating human trafficking,

Reiterating our support for the effective implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementing Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, as the international legal framework for combating trafficking in persons, and the importance of the implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons,

Recalling the relevance for the prevention of and fight against trafficking in human beings of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) if they are a party,

Noting that enhanced judicial and law enforcement co-operation and co-ordination among participating States and Partners for Co-operation, including effective border security

and management may contribute to preventing human trafficking, *inter alia*, by disrupting and dismantling related transnational criminal organizations and by prosecuting the perpetrators,

Stressing the importance of the implementation of international labour standards as applicable within efforts to prevent human trafficking and taking note of international labour instruments, such as the 2014 Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), the 2014 Forced Labour (Supplementary Measures) Recommendations (No. 203) and the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) and its Recommendation (No. 201) which also contain good practices on prevention of human trafficking for labour exploitation,

Commending participating States that require contractors supplying goods and services to the government to take effective and appropriate steps to address the risks of human trafficking in their supply chains, including steps that aim to prevent subcontractors and employees from participating in activities known to lead to human trafficking. Also commending those States that encourage the private sector to consider the risks of human trafficking in their own operations and in those of their subcontractors and suppliers, aiming to ensure that they address risks proactively,

Recognizing the contribution of civil society, including religious organizations, in preventing trafficking in human beings, and in assisting its victims,

Calls on participating States to:

1. Develop targeted prevention policies based on, as appropriate, enhanced research and systematically gathered reliable information, including with the support of national mechanisms, such as national rapporteurs where they exist, in order to maximize the effect and impact of anti-trafficking efforts at the national and international level;
2. Promote dialogue and co-operation among governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector, including businesses, and trade unions and employers organizations as social partners, with a view to enhance efforts to prevent human trafficking, *inter alia* through increasing awareness of each actor's role and through facilitating the exchange of information on human trafficking among countries of origin, transit and destination, including the Partners for Co-operation, and recognizing the importance of the voice of victims of human trafficking in elaborating effective anti-trafficking strategies;
3. Continue to use the OSCE as a platform for dialogue on judicial and law enforcement co-operation, border security and management as an important element to prevent trafficking in human beings;
4. Promote multi-agency, cross-sectorial and multinational capacity-building programmes that foster measures to prevent human trafficking in all of its forms, with a particular focus on factors that make people vulnerable to trafficking;
5. Take appropriate measures for effectively combating human trafficking, by developing harmonized procedures and training courses, *inter alia* on identification and protection of trafficking victims, including for relevant authorities, civil society organizations, health care and social workers as well as others that may have first contact with victims;

6. Strengthen education and awareness-raising efforts, including human rights education, and develop and implement empowerment programmes which take into account the particular needs of women, men, girls and boys, in order to enhance the capacity to recognize, prevent and fight human trafficking within communities;
7. Adopt a victim-centred, trauma-informed and, in that respect and in line with Ministerial Council Decision No. 14/06, gender-sensitive approach, that fully respects human rights and fundamental freedoms in all preventive and assistance efforts;
8. Recognize the important contribution that media can make to the prevention of human trafficking, *inter alia*, through the adoption of voluntary professional standards to responsibly and sensitively cover cases of human trafficking;
9. Identify, develop and share best practices, including as contained in the 2013 Addendum to the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings: One Decade Later, for successful national and global partnerships between the public and private sector in combating human trafficking, to promote respect for human rights and corporate social responsibility, including through public awareness-raising about the risk of human trafficking in production and sources of goods and provision of services;
10. Encourage the private sector to adopt policies and procedures to prevent all forms of human trafficking, to be actively involved in multi-stakeholder efforts, to develop awareness about the risks of human trafficking and to take into account best practices such as establishing independent monitoring, verification and certification mechanisms to document compliance with and implementation of codes of conduct or self-established ethical standards, including through providing incentives for businesses to act with due diligence and transparency to prevent the abuse and exploitation of workers throughout their supply chains and to enable a level playing field for responsible companies;
11. Promote policies, in complementarity with national legislation, that take into account whether businesses are taking appropriate and effective steps to address the risks of human trafficking, including with regards to their subcontractors and employees, when considering the awarding of government contracts for goods and services;
12. Take appropriate measures to identify and eradicate the abusive and fraudulent recruitment and employment practices which can lead to trafficking for labour exploitation, sexual exploitation, for forced criminality, or other forms of trafficking, including measures to promote clear criteria for the official registration of recruitment and placement agencies and through reinforcing the role of competent authorities, such as labour inspectors;
13. Promote measures to prevent and address the use of forced labour by diplomatic and other personnel of diplomatic missions and consular posts and international organizations, and promote a zero-tolerance policy for trafficking by such personnel, and take into account international best practices as compiled, for example, in the OSCE Handbook on how to prevent human trafficking for domestic servitude in diplomatic households and protect private domestic workers, and noting that many such measures are consistent with the Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic Relations and Consular Relations as well as headquarter agreements of international organizations and recognizing that the Vienna Conventions



include a duty to respect the laws and regulations of the receiving State, including those designed to prevent and address human trafficking;

14. Task the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and, as appropriate, other relevant executive structures in accordance with their mandates and in co-ordination with the OSCE Special Representative, to continue co-operation in the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons, and other regional and global platforms, *inter alia*, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons;

15. Encourage the relevant executive structures in accordance with their mandates and in co-ordination with the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, to continue undertaking research, in consultation with the participating States, to conduct capacity-building activities, to assist participating States, upon their request, in developing policies and guidelines to strengthen efforts to prevent human trafficking;

16. Task the Secretary General to review existing policies, audit and reporting procedures and recruitment safeguards, and to ensure that no activities of the OSCE executive structures, including the issuing of contracts for goods and services, contribute to any form of trafficking in human beings, in accordance with the 2013 Addendum to the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, and to report on this review and on the implementation of the OSCE Code of Conduct, Appendix 1 to Staff Regulations and Rules to the Permanent Council.

MC.DEC/6/17  
8 December 2017  
Attachment

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of Canada (also on behalf of the United States of America):

“Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

In connection with the adoption of the decision, Canada, also on behalf of the United States, would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure.

The United States and Canada strongly support this decision. Human trafficking is one of the most egregious crimes of our time, which robs human beings of their freedom and their dignity. We must all unite to end the scourge of human trafficking.

We believe it is a priority to ensure that the rights of victims are protected, that they are not re-traumatized or endangered, and that their privacy and dignity is respected.

In this decision, we recognize the important contribution that media can make in preventing human trafficking.

It is therefore in this particular context that we accepted the wording concerning media. We do not view “responsibly” used in this context as reflecting any intention of participating States to direct or dictate journalistic or editorial content, and our acceptance of the word “responsibly” in this context does not create a precedent for its use in another context, and certainly not in the overall context of the media.

We reiterate our unwavering support for freedom of expression and independence of the media.

I request that this interpretative statement be attached to the decision and to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.”

**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 7

**DECISION No. 7/17**  
**STRENGTHENING EFFORTS TO COMBAT ALL FORMS OF CHILD  
TRAFFICKING, INCLUDING FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, AS  
WELL AS OTHER FORMS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF  
CHILDREN**

The Ministerial Council,

Reaffirming the Copenhagen Document (1990), Sofia Ministerial Council Decision No. 13/04 on the special needs for child victims of trafficking for protection and assistance (2004), Brussels Ministerial Council Decision No. 15/06 on combating sexual exploitation of children (2006), Madrid Ministerial Council Decision No. 9/07 on combating sexual exploitation of children on the Internet (2007), and Kyiv Ministerial Council Decision No. 7/13 on combating trafficking in human beings (2013),

Reaffirming, if they are a party, the relevant provisions of pertinent international instruments, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, as well as the decisions and recommendations of pertinent international bodies,

Deeply alarmed by the persistence of all forms of child trafficking, both transnational and internal, including the trafficking of children for the purposes of sexual and labour exploitation, and reiterating the need to take more vigorous measures against it,

Reaffirming that the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration in decisions taken with regard to trafficked or sexually exploited children, and the importance of respecting the special needs of children for protection and assistance, and the opportunity for the child to be heard,

Distressed that sexual exploitation of children can result in serious, lifelong consequences for the physical and psychological development and well-being of a child and, in many instances, is a form of human trafficking,

Recognizing that all forms of child trafficking, including for sexual exploitation, as well as other forms of sexual exploitation of children violate human dignity and undermine the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Considering that all forms of child trafficking, including for sexual exploitation, as well as other forms of sexual exploitation of children constitute grave and heinous crimes, in many cases involving organized crime, that must be prevented, investigated, prosecuted and penalized,

Recalling that the 2013 Addendum to the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings calls on participating States to develop and implement policies and actions, including law enforcement co-operation between participating States, to prevent the tourism industry from being used for all forms of trafficking in human beings, in particular for sexual exploitation of children,

Acknowledging that the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism, which can include travel from one country to another, is a serious crime and contributes to the demand that fosters trafficking in children for sexual exploitation,

Commending participating States that are working with the travel and tourism industry, including airlines and other modes of transportation, as well as hotels, the broader hospitality industry, civil society, and relevant international organizations to prevent all forms of child trafficking, including for sexual exploitation, as well as other forms of sexual exploitation of children, and to establish and implement procedures for identifying, reporting and addressing suspected child trafficking,

Underlining that information and communications technologies (ICTs) can play a positive educational, developmental, and awareness-raising role for children, but can also be misused to facilitate access to children for exploitation or for advertisement of children for sexual exploitation, and that social media platforms can be misused to groom children who may be subjected to sexual exploitation as well as all forms of child trafficking,

Recalling that the 2013 Addendum to the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings calls on participating States to train border officials, law enforcement officials, judges, prosecutors, immigration, and other relevant officials regarding the use of the Internet and other information and communication technologies for human trafficking and related crimes, including all forms of child trafficking and sexual exploitation of children,

Concerned that children who access pornography on the Internet may become desensitized to it and more likely to become a victim of or perpetrate sexual exploitation,

Taking note that new forms of age verification technologies have been developed over the last decade and could help protect children from accessing pornography on the Internet,

Expressing concern that children in migration flows, particularly unaccompanied minors, can be particularly vulnerable to human trafficking and sexual exploitation and that specialized facilities, adequate security, training for and sufficient numbers of staff, as well as of female patrollers, can mitigate these risks,

1. Encourages co-operation among participating States, international organizations, and civil society in combating all forms of child trafficking, including for sexual exploitation, as well as other forms of sexual exploitation of children, taking note of their efforts to combat these crimes;
2. Encourages participating States to adopt a victim-centred and trauma-informed approach that takes into account the respective gender-specific concerns of girls and boys, in the best interests of the child, and fully respects the human rights and fundamental freedoms of children subjected to human trafficking or sexual exploitation;
3. Calls on OSCE participating States which have not already done so to consider legal measures that would allow them to prosecute their citizens for serious sexual crimes against children, even if these crimes are committed in another country;
4. Calls on OSCE participating States to prevent all forms of child trafficking and sexual exploitation of children, including in tourist destinations, through education and awareness-raising, and to work with the private sector and civil society to raise awareness among the tourism industry, as well as business travellers and tourists, to help eliminate demand that fuels child trafficking and sexual exploitation of children;
5. Calls on OSCE participating States to strengthen co-operation and co-ordination among relevant authorities, such as law enforcement and immigration and border services of participating States, Partners for Co-operation, and destination States outside the OSCE region, including through considering measures, in full accordance with national laws and national and international data protection frameworks, such as:
  - (a) Adopting additional administrative measures in relation to perpetrators, such as the registration in sex offender registers of persons convicted of child sexual exploitation or abuse, as appropriate;
  - (b) Where relevant, a means to exchange and/or receive information transnationally among law enforcement agencies and/or judicial authorities on persons convicted of child sexual exploitation or abuse;
6. Urges participating States to prosecute human traffickers and perpetrators of sexual exploitation of children, including those who misuse information and communication technologies to recruit children or facilitate access to children for the purpose of subjecting them to trafficking or sexual exploitation, and impose penalties that are effective, dissuasive, and proportionate to the crime;
7. Calls on participating States which have not already done so to promote the implementation of age verification technologies with a view to limit the access of children to pornographic websites;
8. Encourages participating States to call on information and communication technologies and social media companies to prevent the distribution of and take down child sexual abuse content online, and to protect children by combating grooming by human traffickers online for all forms of child trafficking as well as other sexual exploitation of children, including through the development of new tools and technologies;

9. Calls on participating States to share data, as appropriate and while protecting personal data from criminal use, concerning child trafficking and sexual exploitation of children with the Interpol International Child Sexual Exploitation (ICSE) image database, which is a hub for victim identification worldwide and also can help identify traffickers and their collaborators, and trace the financial flow to dismantle criminal networks;
10. Calls on participating States to enhance further specialized training on information and communications technologies for border officials, law enforcement officials, judges, prosecutors, immigration and other relevant officials as well as teachers and health professionals, as appropriate, to combat all forms of child trafficking as well as other sexual exploitation of children;
11. Encourages participating States to raise public awareness on the vulnerabilities of children in migration flows to all forms of child trafficking, including for sexual exploitation, as well as other forms of sexual exploitation of children, to increase the capacity and broaden the scope of first line responders to identify child victims of trafficking and other sexual exploitation, and provide them with protection, as well as appropriate assistance and referrals for legal assistance as well as effective remedies and other services as applicable, in line with the relevant provisions of the 2013 Addendum to the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings;
12. Tasks the relevant OSCE executive structures in accordance with their mandates and in co-ordination with the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings to continue to assist participating States, upon their request, with implementation of their commitments related to all forms of child trafficking, including for sexual exploitation, as well as other forms of sexual exploitation of children;
13. Invites OSCE Partners for Co-operation to share voluntarily the commitments of the participating States on combating all forms of child trafficking, including for sexual exploitation, as well as other forms of sexual exploitation of children.

MC.DEC/7/17  
8 December 2017  
Attachment

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER  
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of the Russian Federation:

“In joining the consensus regarding the OSCE Ministerial Council decision on strengthening efforts to combat all forms of child trafficking, including for sexual exploitation, as well as other forms of sexual exploitation of children, we should like to express our satisfaction at the adoption of a document on such an important topic as countering trafficking in children, which, as we have repeatedly emphasized, is a priority for our country. We are grateful to our United States, Belarusian and Italian colleagues for such an important initiative.

However, we express disappointment that our proposal on the importance of protecting children not only from pornographic content, but also from other forms of harmful information, which threatens their life, physical and mental health, and also increases the risk of them falling victim to exploiters, was not included in the decision. We believe it necessary to further reflect these aspects in similar documents.

At the same time, we should like to emphasize that in the light of the importance of the issues considered in the document, we expect the participating States to implement it in its entirety.

We request that this statement be appended to the decision adopted and the journal of the day.”



**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 7

**DECISION No. 8/17**  
**PROMOTING ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION IN THE OSCE AREA**

The Ministerial Council,

Recalling the relevance of, and our full respect for all OSCE norms, principles and commitments related to our co-operation in the economic and environmental dimension, and bearing in mind the comprehensive approach of the OSCE to security,

Reaffirming the commitments related to aspects of economic participation contained in the OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension adopted at the Maastricht Meeting of the Ministerial Council in 2003, the Ministerial Council Decision on promoting equal opportunity for women in the economic sphere adopted in Vilnius in 2011, the Ministerial Council Declaration on Strengthening Good Governance and Combating Corruption, Money-Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism adopted in Dublin in 2012, the Ministerial Council Decision on the prevention of corruption adopted in Basel in 2014, the Ministerial Council Declaration on Youth adopted in Basel in 2014 and the Ministerial Council Decision on strengthening good governance and promoting connectivity adopted in Hamburg in 2016,

Highlighting that promoting economic participation implies job creation, better access to education, vocational training and the labour market, as well as improvement of conditions for employment and entrepreneurship,

Reaffirming that peace, good international relations, the security and stability of the State and the security and safety of the individual within the State, based on the rule of law and respect for human rights, including internationally recognized workers' rights, are crucial for the creation of a climate of confidence which is essential to ensure positive economic and social development and to promote economic participation,

Recognizing that economic participation, social inclusion and sustainable growth are interdependent and contribute to prosperity, trust, stability, security and co-operation in the OSCE area,

Acknowledging that co-operation on economic activities can strengthen sustainable economic, social and environmental development, thereby promoting social cohesion, stability and security and positively contributing to the prevention of terrorism and the fight against organized crime,



Reaffirming that good governance at all levels implies a clear, transparent and predictable framework of economic policies, institutions and legislation in which business can thrive and the confidence of investors can grow, thereby enabling States to reduce poverty and inequality, and to increase social integration and opportunities for all,

Recognizing that more effective prevention of corruption and the promotion of good governance reinforce trust in public institutions, improve corporate social responsibility and thereby promote economic participation and enhance economic growth,

Acknowledging the importance of the active participation of the private sector, including small and medium-sized enterprises, trade unions, civil society and media, in preventing and combating corruption, enhancing good governance, fostering integrity and promoting a sound business and investment climate, thereby contributing to social inclusion and broader economic participation,

Recognizing that regional and subregional integration or co-operation processes and agreements can give an important impulse to trade and sustainable development in the OSCE area and the OSCE participating States,

Recalling the need for economic and social policies aimed at promoting social justice and improving living and working conditions,

Acknowledging the potential of young people to contribute to economic, political and social development, and recognizing the importance of facilitating the integration of young people into professional life, thereby promoting economic participation,

Recognizing that women's participation in the economic sphere contributes significantly towards economic development, sustainable growth and the promotion of cohesive societies,

Welcoming the substantial discussions held in the framework of the 25th Economic and Environmental Forum on "Greening the economy and building partnerships for security in the OSCE region" and of the thematic Economic and Environmental Committee meetings held in 2017,

1. Calls upon participating States to:
  - Strengthen co-operation on economic activities, where appropriate, thereby promoting sustainable economic, social and environmental development and contributing to confidence and trust, stability, security, the prevention of terrorism and the fight against organized crime;
  - Continue their efforts to improve social conditions, provide adequate and effective safety nets, promote education and vocational training, strengthen health-care services and increase employment opportunities;
  - Promote good governance and strengthen the legal and institutional frameworks conducive to a positive investment climate and the development of businesses,

including small and medium-sized enterprises, thereby promoting social inclusion and economic participation;

- Further strengthen the co-operation of labour market institutions, including local employment services and training institutions, trade unions and employers' organizations as social partners, business community, higher education institutions and other relevant stakeholders to improve labour market transparency, access and conditions for employment and entrepreneurship;
  - Continue their efforts to promote economic participation of and employment opportunities for young people by, *inter alia*, ensuring the necessary conditions for the education and vocational training of youth, and through programmes facilitating youth access to the labour market;
  - Strengthen measures that enable the development of women's entrepreneurial and other work-related skills, and promote and protect equal opportunity for participation of women in the labour market;
2. Encourages participating States to make use of the OSCE to foster the exchange of best practices and to promote capacity-building initiatives in line with the provisions of this decision;
  3. Tasks relevant OSCE executive structures, including field operations, within their mandates, to assist participating States, upon their request, in implementing the provisions of this decision;
  4. Encourages the OSCE Partners for Co-operation to voluntarily implement the provisions of this decision.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
Ministerial Council  
Vienna 2017**

MC.DEC/9/17  
8 December 2017

Original: ENGLISH

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**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 7

**DECISION No. 9/17  
TIME AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OSCE  
MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

The Ministerial Council,

Decides that the Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council will be held in Milan on 6 and 7 December 2018.



**Second day of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting**  
MC(24) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 7

**DECISION No. 10/17  
SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS AND STOCKPILES  
OF CONVENTIONAL AMMUNITION**

The Ministerial Council,

Recognizing the importance of OSCE measures aimed at combating illicit trafficking in all its aspects with regard to small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA) and their contributing to the reduction and prevention of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation and uncontrolled spread thereof,

Reaffirming the commitments of the participating States as per the OSCE Documents on SALW (FSC.DOC/1/00/Rev.1, 20 June 2012) and SCA (FSC.DOC/1/03/Rev.1, 23 March 2011),

Willing to complement and thereby reinforce the implementation of the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA, particularly by promoting co-operation, transparency and responsible action by participating States in the export, import and brokering of SALW and conventional ammunition,

Remaining committed to undertaking efforts to address illicit trafficking of SALW and SCA and noting the threat posed by the illicit conversion, transformation or reactivation of SALW and mindful of the security and safety risks and threats in this regard,

Taking note of the Arms Trade Treaty, which entered into force in 2014,

Taking note of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime,

Noting the United Nations Security Council's focus on addressing issues related to SALW and the importance of regional organizations to those efforts,

Recalling FSC Decision No. 8/08 and taking note of ongoing activities in the United Nations General Assembly on related issues,

Taking note of United Nations Security Council resolutions 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), and 2370 (2017) where relevant to the mandate of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC),

Recalling Basel Ministerial Council Decision No. 10/14 on SALW and SCA,

Recognizing the continuing importance of OSCE measures aimed at addressing security risks and the safety of stockpiles of SALW, SCA, explosive materials and detonating devices in surplus and/or awaiting destruction in some States in the OSCE area,

Recalling Ministerial Council Declaration on OSCE Assistance Projects in the Field of SALW and SCA (MC.DOC/3/16),

Also recalling the broad range of OSCE assistance in the field of SALW and SCA,

Taking note of the efforts of the OSCE executive structures for SALW/SCA project management, including through the related OSCE trust fund repository programmes, encourage them to continue to promote co-ordination and assessment of progress with the view to enhancing synergies and avoiding duplication and call upon them to further assist participating States in implementing projects in an efficient and transparent manner, in accordance with the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA and relevant FSC decisions,

Commending the successful projects conducted by the OSCE on the destruction of surplus SALW and SCA while recognizing in this regard the importance of appropriate sustainable national SALW and ammunition management structures and procedures in participating States where projects are being conducted,

Recalling FSC Decision No. 2/16 on enabling the provision of assistance to OSCE Partners for Co-operation and welcoming FSC-related activities on SALW and SCA with the OSCE Partners for Co-operation in the context of the FSC and using procedures outlined in the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA,

1. Welcomes the OSCE Meeting to Review the implementation of OSCE assistance projects in the field of SALW and SCA and takes note of other related FSC activities since the 2016 Ministerial Council:
  - The ongoing efforts of the FSC aimed at improving the implementation of commitments set out in the OSCE Document on SALW, the OSCE Document on SCA, and related FSC decisions, including the OSCE Plan of Action on SALW (FSC.DEC/2/10, 26 May 2010);
  - The conduct of capacity-building events at the national, regional and OSCE-wide level on SALW and SCA to enhance the full implementation of OSCE-relevant commitments;
  - The focused discussions in the Security Dialogues on national projects, improving the physical security and stockpile management of SALW and conventional ammunition, measures to prevent uncontrolled spread of SALW, regional efforts in combating the illicit trade of SALW, and sharing international and national experience in the field of management of SCA and destruction of its surplus;

- Efforts by the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) to ensure coherence and complementarity with the relevant United Nations framework aimed at, *inter alia*, enabling the synchronization and implementation for voluntary online submission of national implementation reports on SALW to the OSCE and the United Nations;
- The Implementation Meeting on Deactivation of SALW (SEC.GAL/181/17), recognizing the specific threat posed by the illicit conversion, transformation, or reactivation of SALW, in particular with regards to their use for terrorism and transnational organized crime;
- The progress in and results of OSCE SALW and SCA projects;
- The development of a voluntary online tool for the submission of OSCE SALW-related information exchanges;

2. Tasks the Forum for Security Co-operation, in accordance with its mandate, in 2018, to:

- Continue to strengthen efforts to fully implement the existing measures and commitments set out in the OSCE Document on SALW, the OSCE Document on SCA, and related FSC decisions;
- Promote OSCE achievements in combating illicit trafficking, reducing and preventing the excessive and destabilizing accumulation and uncontrolled spread of SALW at the Third UN Conference to Review Progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects and its International Tracing Instrument to be held from 18 to 29 June 2018 in New York;
- Consider commencing biennial meetings to assess the implementation of the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA;
- Continue discussing the outcomes of the Review Conferences and Biennial Meetings of States on the Programme of Action to improve coherence and complementarity with the relevant United Nations framework;
- Continue further steps to improve the efficiency and outcome of SALW and SCA projects to ensure the maximum possible value in dealing with the challenges associated with SALW and SCA in line with the OSCE assistance mechanisms as outlined in the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA and relevant FSC decisions;
- Continue holding periodic meetings to review practical assistance projects on SALW and SCA;
- Further intensify efforts to continue implementing the OSCE Plan of Action on SALW in all its aspects;
- Continue to support the timely and full submission of OSCE SALW-related information exchanges, making use of the reporting template introduced by the CPC

- for one-off information exchanges related to the OSCE Document on SALW, including sample formats for national end-user certificates and/or other pertinent documents, regulations concerning brokering activities with regard to SALW and the annual information exchange on the points of contact on SALW and SCA;
- Explore the possibility of a voluntary use of the United Nations International Ammunition Technical Guidelines in OSCE assistance projects on SCA;
  - Continue to explore ways to review and, where appropriate, supplement the OSCE Document on SALW, the OSCE Document on SCA and the OSCE Handbooks of Best Practices on SALW and on Conventional Ammunition, as well as the CSCE Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers;
  - Consider adopting a best practice guide regarding the deactivation of SALW and having further discussions on this topic;
  - Continue to exchange views and information and share best practices, on a voluntary basis and if relevant to the mandate of the FSC, on:
    - Addressing the impact of excessive and destabilizing accumulation and uncontrolled spread of SALW and SCA on women and children;
    - Creating equal opportunities for women’s participation in policymaking, planning and implementation processes to combat illicit SALW as well as with regard to the OSCE Assistance Projects in the field of SALW and SCA;
  - Explore ways to prevent the diversion of SALW and SCA to illicit markets;
  - Explore ways to complement the existing OSCE measures aimed at addressing the illicit trafficking of SALW;
  - Explore ways to enhance outreach to the OSCE Partners for Co-operation on issues related to SALW and SCA in line with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and OSCE commitments and further develop co-operation with Mediterranean partners;
  - Submit progress reports, through its Chairperson, to the Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the Ministerial Council in 2018 on work in relevant areas, in accordance with its mandate;
3. Invites the participating States to:
- Continue providing extrabudgetary contributions on a voluntary basis to support FSC assistance projects on SALW and SCA;
  - Explore possibilities to provide, where appropriate, voluntary expert advice in OSCE assistance projects on SALW and SCA by participating States having specific knowledge;
  - Continue, within the Security Dialogue, discussions on topical security issues related to SALW and SCA;

- Continue, within the Security Dialogue, as appropriate, general discussions related to the Arms Trade Treaty;
  - Organize capacity-building events at the national, regional and OSCE-wide level in support of the implementation of OSCE commitments on SALW and SCA;
  - Make use of the voluntary online tool for the submission of OSCE SALW-related information exchanges and provide extrabudgetary contributions for its further development;
4. Encourages the OSCE Partners for Co-operation to voluntarily implement the provisions of this decision.