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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY  
MR. ALEKSANDR VOLGAREV, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1460th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

8 February 2024

**On the report on the activities of the OSCE Chairmanship**

Madam Chairperson,

It is with great concern for our Organization that we are forced to note the flagrant violation of OSCE rules by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malta, Mr. Ian Borg, at the very beginning of his work as Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE.

During his visit to Ukraine on 2 and 3 February, he made assessments and statements of an anti-Russian nature that radically conflict with the mandate of the OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office as set out in the 2002 Porto Ministerial Council decision: “The functions of the Chairmanship-in-Office shall be exercised by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the participating State so designated ... ensuring that its actions are not inconsistent with positions agreed by ... the participating States and that the whole spectrum of opinions of participating States is taken into account.”

This means that the Chairperson-in-Office’s actions must be based solely on the wording of decisions of the OSCE decision-making bodies. Not the European Union, but just the OSCE. The attitudes of individual countries or groups of countries may not supersede this rule. We recall that the OSCE works on the basis of consensus – there is no concept of “majority”. The Chairperson-in-Office does not speak in a national capacity, but on behalf of all, I emphasize all, 57 participating States. If there are disagreements or even conflicts between them, the Chairperson should act equitably, working to overcome the differences, not to reinforce them.

In addition, public statements on behalf of the entire OSCE are governed by Permanent Council Decision No. 485 of 28 June 2002. It says specifically that “formal OSCE positions are expressed in decisions, statements and documents adopted by the decision-making bodies on the basis of consensus” and that “public statements on behalf of the OSCE as a whole are made by the Chairman-in-Office, the Secretary General and by their authorized official representatives. [...] Their statements and public outreach activities are to be made in line with their mandates and should not be inconsistent with OSCE consensus positions.” This decision has also been flouted.

We sincerely hope notwithstanding that the Chairmanship will carefully consider the rules of our Organization and strictly adhere to them in future. We hope for this in the interests of the entire OSCE. It was with this understanding that the Russian Federation joined the consensus at the Ministerial Council meeting in Skopje to endorse Malta's candidature for the Chairmanship. Otherwise, we will have to conclude that the Maltese Chairmanship, instead of diplomacy and constructive work, has chosen to spark confrontation and destroy our common Organization.

Thank you for your attention.