

Chairmanship: Poland

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
(1350th Plenary Meeting)**

1. Date: Thursday, 13 January 2022 (in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference)

Opened: 10 a.m.
Closed: 1.30 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador A. Hałaciński
Ambassador M. Czapliński

Prior to taking up the agenda, the Chairperson reminded the Permanent Council of the technical modalities for the conduct of meetings of the Council during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

Agenda item 1: ADDRESS BY THE CHAIRMAN-IN-OFFICE OF THE OSCE, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF POLAND, H.E. MR. ZBIGNIEW RAU

Chairperson, Chairman-in-Office (CIO.GAL/4/22), Secretary General (SEC.GAL/6/22), France-European Union (with the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra, Georgia, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/13/22), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/1/22) (PC.DEL/3/22), United States of America (PC.DEL/2/22), Turkey (PC.DEL/9/22 OSCE+), United Kingdom (PC.DEL/4/22 OSCE+), Albania (PC.DEL/7/22 OSCE+), Georgia (PC.DEL/18/22 OSCE+), Switzerland (PC.DEL/6/22 OSCE+), Canada (PC.DEL/17/22 OSCE+), Holy See (PC.DEL/5/22 OSCE+), Armenia (Annex 1), Azerbaijan (Annex 2), Ukraine (PC.DEL/14/22), Belarus (PC.DEL/8/22 OSCE+), Norway, Kazakhstan (Annex 3), North Macedonia (PC.DEL/22/22 OSCE+), Kyrgyzstan, Finland (also on behalf of Sweden) (Annex 4), Romania (Annex 5), Sweden,

Turkmenistan, Iceland (PC.DEL/10/22 OSCE+), Moldova (Annex 6), Japan
(Partner for Co-operation)

Agenda item 2: REVIEW OF CURRENT ISSUES

None

Agenda item 3: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

4. Next meeting:

Thursday, 20 January 2022, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference



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

PC.JOUR/1350
13 January 2022
Annex 1

Original: ENGLISH

1350th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1350, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF ARMENIA**

Mr. Chairperson,

The delegation of Armenia warmly welcomes H.E. Mr. Zbigniew Rau, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland, back to the Permanent Council and thanks him for presenting the priorities that will guide the Polish OSCE Chairmanship throughout this year.

Distinguished Minister,

Since your last appearance at the Permanent Council in July last year, the overall security situation and the politico-military environment in the OSCE area have deteriorated further, adding new challenges to the participating States. These challenges, if not properly addressed, will continue to widen the cracks in the OSCE's concept of comprehensive and indivisible security.

Against this backdrop, we welcome the intention of the Polish OSCE Chairmanship to pay special attention to improving the security situation in the OSCE area by contributing to the peaceful resolution of existing conflicts. In this regard, let me recall that more than a year after the signing of the trilateral ceasefire statement on 9 November 2020, not only have the grave consequences of the war of aggression unleashed against Artsakh and Armenia not been overcome, but Azerbaijan continues to constantly escalate the already tense situation both along the border with Armenia and on the line of contact with Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh.

In particular, on 11 January 2022, the Azerbaijani armed formations that infiltrated into the sovereign territory of Armenia on 12 May 2021 and since then have continued their illegal presence there resorted to yet another provocation across Armenia's eastern borderline. As a result of this unprovoked gross violation of the ceasefire, which featured the use of heavy artillery and combat unmanned aerial vehicles, three servicemen of the armed forces of Armenia were killed, Arthur Mkhitaryan, Rudik Charibyan and Vahan Babayan, and two more were wounded.

The day before this provocation, the Azerbaijani armed forces fired at and set fire to a civilian car parked near a kindergarten in the village of Karmir Shuka in Artsakh. Firefighters who arrived to extinguish the car also came under fire. Fortunately, thanks to the timely

evacuation of children from the kindergarten, no one was injured as a result of this criminal act by the Azerbaijani armed forces. On the same day, the Azerbaijani armed forces fired at civilians working in the field near the village of Nakhijevanik in Artsakh. In the afternoon of the same day, on the Stepanakert-Shushi highway, Azerbaijani soldiers directed their weapons and threw stones at a civilian car containing not only the driver but also the driver's wife and their three-year-old child.

In an interview with local media on 12 January, which was marked by yet another portion of hatred and Armenophobia, the President of Azerbaijan made a number of self-revealing statements indicating that the provocation on 11 January, which resulted in human losses, was launched at his direct command.

This recent escalation shows once again that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is not resolved, despite Azerbaijan's statements. The use of force in the OSCE area cannot resolve any conflict. Furthermore, presenting the use of force as a legitimate tool for conflict resolution undermines the security of the OSCE area and discredits those international organizations, including the OSCE, that have been established for the purpose of the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

In this context, I think it will be interesting for the participating States to know that in his interview the Azerbaijani President also noted that Baku would continue to prevent the attempts of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs to deal with the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, noting in particular that, and I quote, "they should not deal with the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, because it has been resolved. We have solved this problem instead of them. And their absence is due to this."

We believe that under such circumstances, the continued appeals of our partners to both sides is counterproductive and even detrimental, since it serves as an open-ended invitation for Azerbaijan to commit new provocations and ceasefire violations.

Armenia expresses the hope that the Polish OSCE Chairmanship, together with other international partners, will make use of all tools at their disposal to send a clear, unambiguous and powerful message to Azerbaijan that the use of force will not be tolerated and will have repercussions. Azerbaijan should immediately stop its provocations, withdraw its forces from the sovereign territory of Armenia, stop escalating tensions both on the border with Armenia and on the line of contact with Artsakh, and implement its commitments undertaken at the meetings in Brussels and Sochi.

Distinguished Minister,

The situation concerning the Armenian prisoners of war and civilian captives continues to remain unresolved. In violation of its commitments under both the 9 November 2020 trilateral ceasefire statement and international humanitarian law, Azerbaijan continues to refuse to return the Armenian prisoners of war and civilian captives and conducts mock trials against them on trumped-up charges and confessions obtained under duress.

We are also deeply concerned about the refusal of Azerbaijan to provide accurate information on the number of Armenian prisoners of war and civilians it detains, which puts

them at the risk of enforced disappearance. There is ample reason to believe that such disappearances have already resulted in extrajudicial executions. The latest evidence shows that the Armenian prisoners of war have been subjected to inhumane and degrading treatment not only on ethnic but also on religious grounds. These cases of torture and inhuman treatment of Armenian prisoners of war and civilian hostages still await a proper response from the relevant international organizations and partners, including the OSCE.

Esteemed Minister,

We fully share your view that it is the people that suffer the most, and we are encouraged that you intend to maintain a focus on humanitarian considerations. In this regard, it is worth recalling that in addition to its tactics of terrorizing the civilian population and attempts to create an atmosphere of fear, Azerbaijan also continues to prevent the access of international humanitarian organizations to Artsakh. International humanitarian organizations and specialized agencies must have full and unhindered access to Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent areas to carry out their mandated work without interference and restrictions. We expect the Polish OSCE Chairmanship to make additional efforts to address Azerbaijan's undue politicization of this purely humanitarian issue.

Another source of serious concern is the issue of appropriation and/or destruction of the Armenian cultural heritage in the occupied territories of Artsakh, which is still awaiting due and adequate attention.

Mr. Chairperson,

Armenia is ready for dialogue under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs as a logical continuation of the meetings held in New York and Paris last year. We regret that the previously agreed meeting in Stockholm did not take place owing to Azerbaijan's cancellation on implausible and dubious grounds.

Armenia is looking forward to welcoming the Co-Chairs to Armenia for a fully fledged visit to the region which will allow them to assess the situation on the ground first-hand. We are confident that the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and the Co-Chair countries have all necessary tools at their disposal to organize and conduct this long-overdue visit. The intention of the Polish OSCE Chairmanship to "do its utmost to promote and advance the rational, smart and flexible use of OSCE's unique tools and negotiation formats" is an encouraging sign. And we expect and hope that the Chairmanship will keep the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in its focus throughout the year.

Your Excellency,

The recent events in the OSCE area demonstrate once again how much the security issues of all OSCE participating States are interlinked and interdependent. The appearance of foreign terrorist fighters in one part of the OSCE area gives sufficient grounds to expect their inevitable reappearance in other parts of the OSCE area. Armenia and Artsakh have issued warnings about the transfer and deployment of foreign terrorist fighters to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone, urging participating States and the OSCE executive structures to take adequate measures to address this issue. We continue to insist that the existing tools in the OSCE make it perfectly possible to engage in effective counterterrorism

activities. Therefore, we reiterate our call to the OSCE and its relevant executive structures to address this issue seriously and effectively.

Mr. Chairperson,

In closing, let me wish you, your colleagues in Warsaw, and your able team here in Vienna led by our distinguished colleague Ambassador Hałaciński every success in steering the OSCE through the year 2022. We assure you of Armenia's support.

Thank you.



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

PC.JOUR/1350
13 January 2022
Annex 2

Original: ENGLISH

1350th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1350, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF AZERBAIJAN**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

The delegation of Azerbaijan warmly welcomes the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland, H.E. Mr. Zbigniew Rau, to the Permanent Council.

Azerbaijan highly values the core priority of the Polish OSCE Chairmanship to uphold the OSCE comprehensive concept of security based on our shared commitments laid down in the Helsinki Final Act and the OSCE decisions. The principles governing inter-State relations, in particular those related to respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders, remain the bedrock of the European security and the basis for our co-operation.

Poland has assumed the Chairmanship of our Organization amidst the continuing erosion of multilateralism and growing rivalry among politico-military and economic blocks. Indivisibility of security underpinned in fundamental OSCE documents needs to be strictly adhered to and implemented in practice. For a non-aligned and non-block country as Azerbaijan, the importance of the OSCE and strict compliance by its participating States with the aforementioned fundamental principles gains particular relevance. Participating States that are part of politico-military blocs and alliances must guarantee territorial integrity, sovereignty and inviolability of borders of non-block participating States.

We welcome your priority to respond to common threats, including post-COVID challenges through effective multilateralism. We hope that Poland, as OSCE Chairmanship, will be able not only to navigate this complex environment, but also to register progress towards peace, security and development. For that vision to materialize, hard work and collective efforts are required.

Building security and restoring confidence among the OSCE participating States is possible only through unconditional respect for the above-mentioned principles enshrined in the core OSCE documents, starting from the Helsinki Final Act. These are the foundational principles that are not subject to any reinterpretation or negotiation. They must be observed and implemented equally and unreservedly without any exception, double standards, geographic or any other preferences.

We believe that implementation of confidence- and security-building measures in the politico-military sphere could provide a significant contribution to peace, security and stability in the OSCE area. At the same time, one has to acknowledge that politico-military instruments do not exist in a vacuum and that their main purpose is to sustain peace and stability, giving effect and expression to our shared foundational principles and commitments.

As the Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) in the first trimester of 2022, Azerbaijan's major task and cross-cutting priority will be upholding and strengthening compliance with fundamental OSCE principles and commitments along with enhancing implementation in good faith of politico-military commitments. During our FSC Chairmanship, we will focus on compliance with international humanitarian law and protection of civilians, the issue of small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition, mine action, United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, countering terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, post-conflict rehabilitation and the place and role of non-aligned countries in the European security architecture.

The trilateral statement of 10 November 2020 by Azerbaijan, Armenia and the Russian Federation put an end to the three-decade long armed conflict. Azerbaijan has restored its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the fundamental rights of nearly one million displaced Azerbaijanis were ensured.

The position of Azerbaijan in the post-conflict period, including on the possible role and contribution of the OSCE and its structures is well-known and has been conveyed to counterparts on a number of occasions. It is clear that there can be no business as usual. To be relevant, the OSCE and its structures, including the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, must take into account and stay abreast of the new reality on the ground. Azerbaijan's expectations on what the Co-Chairs should do, and what they should not do have been clearly communicated, including at the highest political level. The discussions on future potential programmatic activities of the OSCE Minsk Group and its Co-Chairs, in light of the aforementioned trilateral statements and the new realities they created, are still ongoing, including within the OSCE Unified Budget process.

Now that the conflict has been resolved, the Government of Azerbaijan has already initiated practical steps aimed at eliminating the consequences of decades-long occupation followed by massive destruction. The priorities of Azerbaijan at the current post-conflict stage include soonest and effective post-conflict rehabilitation, reconstruction and reintegration work in the liberated territories, which will ensure safe and dignified return of hundreds of thousands of displaced Azerbaijanis to their homes.

Despite Armenia's international wrongdoings and despite the devastating consequences and unhealed wounds of the almost three-decade old war and occupation, the post-conflict realities offer a unique opportunity and real prospects for consolidating peace and stability in the region. In the post-conflict period, Azerbaijan has repeatedly expressed its readiness for the reconciliation and normalization of inter-State relations with Armenia based on mutual recognition and respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity within their internationally recognized borders, including through signing a peace treaty based on these principles.

Unfortunately, we have not seen yet any positive reaction from Armenia regarding our peace agenda. On the contrary, we still witness military provocations by Armenia along the international border between the two States, as was the case two days ago, when an Azerbaijani serviceman was shot and killed in the direction of the Kalbajar district of Azerbaijan along the State border. Armed forces of Azerbaijan took countermeasures to suppress the fire from the Armenian side. It is apparent that a revanchist attitude still prevails in Armenia. Armenia bears full responsibility for aggravating the situation. Azerbaijan will continue to adequately respond to Armenia's provocations and will eliminate any threat to its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Armenia should draw lessons from the consequences it suffered from the latest provocation and during the 44-day war in 2020.

Responding to the comments of the Ambassador of Armenia, I reiterate that instead of reciting its narratives and unfounded allegations, Armenia must follow suit of the Co-Chairs and other participating States, accept and reconcile with the new realities on the ground, and reciprocate the peace agenda offered by Azerbaijan. I will not respond to every allegation just voiced by the Armenian Ambassador, because he is already becoming repetitive. With regard to allegations on detainees, suffice it to say that the only reason why situation with detainees is "unresolved" as he alluded to, it is because Armenia arrests the individuals whom Azerbaijan hands over to the Armenian side.

Mr. Minister,

The economic and environmental dimension is an important pillar for enhancing security and stability. Our delegation is a staunch advocate for increasing the relevance of the economic and environmental dimension and increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the OSCE's work in this area. We welcome that the Polish Chairmanship will focus on the transition to the green economy, post-pandemic recovery through innovation and new technology, as well as transparency and the fight against corruption, which is also a priority for the Government of Azerbaijan. We also welcome that the Polish Chairmanship included promoting transport and trade facilitation in its priorities.

The human dimension is undeniably linked to the issues of security, stability and development within the OSCE's comprehensive security concept. A balanced and holistic approach between the three dimensions is a necessary prerequisite for building a common security space in the OSCE and ensuring full respect for human rights and the rule of law, which are interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

In conclusion, we once again thank H.E. Mr. Zbigniew Rau for his appearance at the Permanent Council and wish him and his able team in Vienna led by Ambassador Adam Hałaciński a successful Chairmanship of our Organization in 2022.

I kindly request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



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

PC.JOUR/1350
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Annex 3

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1350th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1350, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF KAZAKHSTAN**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

We would like to join our colleagues in congratulating Poland on assuming the Chairmanship of the OSCE.

We warmly welcome the new Chairperson-in-Office, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland Mr. Zbigniew Rau, to the Permanent Council and thank him for presenting Poland's priorities for 2022.

We value the fact that the Chairmanship is ready to help and support Kazakhstan in continuing political reforms in full compliance with OSCE commitments, through the OSCE Programme Office in Nur-Sultan and by other means.

Mr. Chairperson-in-Office,

I would like to address some of the concerns that have been raised regarding the current state of affairs in my country. I believe that these concerns have been partly shaped by misinformation that distorts understanding of the events unfolding in Kazakhstan. I am therefore calling upon all concerned to wait for the results of the official investigation currently under way before drawing conclusions and making affirmative statements.

Kazakhstan has experienced unprecedented violence across the country. As the investigation unfolds, it appears that this may even have been an orchestrated act of aggression, a direct assault on our Statehood, an attempt to undermine the peaceful constitutional order that has been the mainstay of our country for over 30 years.

Well-organized criminals resorted to militant tactics simultaneously in 11 regions. They rejected the government's attempts to engage in dialogue. The terrorists mobilized sleeper cells all over the country and attacked administrative buildings, TV stations, military bases, police precincts and civil facilities.

Our biggest city – Almaty, which is the financial and cultural centre of the country – has suffered the most. No fewer than 18 law enforcement personnel have been killed by these extremists, and more than 1,300 have been injured. There have also been casualties among

civilians. A total of 1,300 businesses have been destroyed, and more than a hundred trading premises and banks have been looted. More than five hundred police vehicles have been burned, and more than five thousand captured by rioters. The economic damage amounts to an estimated 2.5 to 3 billion dollars.

Protesters in a democratic society do not engage in this level of violence, with this level of massive destruction and killings of law enforcement personnel. The high volume of targeted destruction is evidence of the sophisticated level of co-ordination and the measure of long-term preparedness with the goal of creating a zone of controlled chaos and ultimately, we believe, seizing power by force.

Kazakhstan has not used and will not use armed force against peaceful protestors. In confronting armed criminals and terrorists, our police and National Guard were protecting civilians and restoring order.

In accordance with the right of self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, the President approached the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). A small peacekeeping contingent with the participation of all CSTO Member States has been deployed. It provides protection at strategic sites, in and around Almaty and elsewhere. As the President foresaw on 11 January, the peacekeeping contingent began its withdrawal from Kazakhstan today. It will take only ten days to withdraw all troops.

Kazakhstan remains committed to the protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms. The President will continue democratic reforms, as he confirmed in an address to Parliament on 11 January. The democratization process in Kazakhstan is genuine and irreversible. We have come a long way over the last thirty years to build up our State from scratch. And we will do everything it takes to protect our democracy and our people from any unlawful interference both at home and from abroad.

In conclusion, we wish the Polish Chairmanship every success in its endeavours. We trust that it will, as mentioned, be based on the goal of strengthening implementation of the OSCE's and the United Nations' founding principles, including sovereign equality of States, territorial integrity and the inviolability of borders, non-interference in internal affairs, freedom of choice of alliances and co-operation among States, refraining from the threat or unilateral use of force, and peaceful settlement of international disputes.

Mr. Chairperson, I kindly request that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.

I thank you.



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

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Annex 4

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1350th Plenary Meeting
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**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF FINLAND (ALSO ON BEHALF OF SWEDEN)**

Mr. Chairperson,
Chairperson-in-Office Rau,

Finland and Sweden fully align ourselves with the European Union (EU) statement, and we would in addition like to deliver a joint statement in our national capacities.

Finland and Sweden would like to thank you, Foreign Minister Rau, for your address to the Permanent Council, and for outlining the priorities of the Polish OSCE Chairmanship in 2022. We strongly support your efforts to improve dialogue, confidence and security in order to return to a “Helsinki culture”, as you expressed it. On behalf of Finland, I would also like to sincerely thank Sweden for the excellent work as the Chairmanship of the OSCE last year.

We welcome the Chairperson-in-Office’s underlining of the OSCE as a relevant platform for discussing all aspects related to the comprehensive concept of security. The OSCE is uniquely placed as a forum for dialogue on European security since it brings together the widest range of States. It is vital that all European States have a say in discussions about European security.

We agree with the Chairperson-in-Office that any such discussions should be held in full conformity with international law and our common principles and commitments, including the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris for a New Europe. These principles are non-negotiable. Non-adherence to the principles undermines not only European security order but also the rules-based international order and effective multilateralism, which should be a matter of concern to all countries.

In this regard, and in light of ongoing discussions on Russian proposals for security guarantees, we would like to underscore the crucial importance of upholding the European security order, including our common commitment to the sovereign equality, territorial integrity and political independence of States and the freedom of States to choose their own security arrangements.

As stated in the Charter for European Security from 1999, no State, group of States or organization can have any pre-eminent responsibility for maintaining peace and stability in

the OSCE area or can consider any part of the OSCE area as its sphere of influence. As members of the EU, we stand ready to engage in discussions within the OSCE on how to strengthen our common commitments across all three dimensions, including in the area of confidence- and security-building measures.

We would like to wish our Polish friends all the best for your Chairmanship. Poland can count on our full support during your time as Chairmanship.

Mr. Chairperson, I would kindly request that you attach this statement to the journal of the day.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



1350th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1350, Agenda item 1

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF ROMANIA

Romania fully subscribes to the statement presented on behalf of the European Union and would like to make some remarks in national capacity.

First of all, Romania congratulates Poland on the assumption of the Chairmanship of the OSCE, warmly welcomes Minister Rau at the Permanent Council of the OSCE, and fully supports the objectives that the Polish Chairmanship of the OSCE has just presented.

Romania and Poland share a strong strategic partnership and in this context, I would like to make a special emphasis on contributing to finding peaceful, comprehensive and sustainable solutions to protracted conflicts and to putting into practice all OSCE's available instruments to restore the quality of our debates. Minister Rau, I reassure you of Romania's very strong support on the path to implement the priorities you have just announced. In this context, we welcome the appointment of Romanian Ambassador, H.E. Viorel Moşanu, as Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office for South Caucasus.

Second, I would like to highlight the role of the OSCE as a platform of dialogue. This organization is an inclusive diplomatic forum, which rose from a collective understanding of the imperative need for dialogue, security and co-operation. What was possible then, should be also possible nowadays. When there is political will, there is always a way through dialogue.

The principles we have all embraced led us to commitments which paved the path to a better life for our citizens. Drawing from lessons learnt, honest and meaningful discussions as often as needed are key to avoiding escalation, ensure peace and stability, as conflict prevention and resolution are the core mandate of the OSCE.

Third, the OSCE's concept of co-operative and comprehensive security continues to be of utmost relevance and so are the core principles of European security, enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act, the Paris Charter and all the other documents to which we all agreed. In this context, let us all recall and reaffirm that we stand for our international obligations and commitments with regard to each State's sovereignty and territorial integrity within internationally recognised borders, host nation consent and the freedom of each State's choice of foreign policy conduct and security arrangements, free from outside interference.

Security and stability in the OSCE area can be restored only by implementing in good faith international law, all existing agreements and abiding by the OSCE principles, values and commitments on all three dimensions.

Romania wishes every success to you, Minister Rau, and to your teams in Vienna and Warsaw. Rest assured of our support.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, and I would like to kindly ask that this statement be attached to the journal of today's meeting.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
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13 January 2022
Annex 6

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1350th Plenary Meeting
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**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF MOLDOVA**

Dear Minister Rau,

The delegation of the Republic of Moldova warmly welcomes you to the Permanent Council as OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for 2022.

Mr. Chairperson,

Poland is taking over its mandate at a very challenging time for the OSCE and for the entire European security architecture. Our region faces both a risk of serious military escalation on the one hand, and on the other a potentially very serious dialogue on the fundamental pillars of the security system. We believe that the dialogue should be chosen as the only suitable tool, but to produce a meaningful result such a dialogue should take place in a proper atmosphere. Therefore, we support calls for military de-escalation and the return of Russian military forces to their peacetime locations.

We welcome the fact that the OSCE has been agreed as one of the key platforms for dialogue. We strongly believe that the OSCE can and should serve as a venue where we can discuss ways to strengthen our comprehensive security and improve confidence- and security-building measures. We also consider that these comprehensive discussions should be conducted with full respect for the principle of the equal sovereignty of the States concerned and for the legitimate security concerns of all countries in the region. In this regard, my country has also certain security concerns which cannot be overlooked.

These discussions should not take place in an axiological vacuum, as we have a number of fundamental principles commonly enshrined in many documents and agreements from the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter through to the Charter for European Security and the Astana Commemorative Declaration of 2010. Amongst these fundamental principles is that of the right of each country to choose its own security arrangements.

We acknowledge that the international community, including the OSCE participating States, is working hard on dealing with emerging crisis situations. However, long-standing security issues should not be neglected. Security and stability in the wider OSCE area should still claim our constant attention. The recent crisis in Kazakhstan shows how quickly situations can deteriorate. We deeply regret the loss of lives and hope the situation will be

stabilized as soon as possible by the Kazakhstan authorities, and likewise that a thorough investigation will shed light on the deeper causes of and mechanisms behind the crisis.

We welcome Poland's clear statement on its Chairmanship priorities for the year 2022 and in particular its commitment to paying special attention to finding peaceful solutions to existing conflicts in the OSCE area.

We consider that the Transnistrian settlement process requires constant and committed involvement on the part of the OSCE, including pro-active and consistent efforts on the part of the Chairmanship. Various factors have led to the dynamics of the negotiation process lagging behind the desired schedule. However, Chişinău remains open for co-operation with mediators and observers on ways to advance the conflict settlement process. The negotiations in the "5+2" format remain the key in this regard.

Excellencies,

The Moldovan authorities remain seriously concerned about the systematic and grave violations of human rights to which we pointed out on numerous occasions, including in this forum. Regrettably, no improvements have been registered so far. We would like to reiterate our call for practical support for the unconditional release of the political prisoners Adrian Glijin, Oleg Horjan, Ruslan Lomaca and others, who are illegally sentenced and detained by the Tiraspol regime. Unfortunately, Tiraspol continues to undertake unilateral and obstructive actions that derogate from agreements and approaches established within the "5+2" negotiations format.

In this regard, Moldova counts on greater support from the OSCE and also from its international partners on closely monitoring the infringements committed by Tiraspol, which must be halted. Work should be continued on finding lasting solutions for such pressing issues as the good functioning of the Latin-script schools in the Transnistrian region and ensuring Moldovan farmers free access to their lands.

Mr. Chairperson,

For the Republic of Moldova, one of the major issues of concern and security risk is the continuing foreign military presence in the Transnistrian region of my country – which does not enjoy the consent of the Moldovan government. On the basis of international law, the commitments undertaken at the OSCE Summit in Istanbul, and Moldova's constitutional neutrality, we underline the obligation of the Russian Federation to resume the unconditional and complete withdrawal of its military forces from the territory of the Republic of Moldova.

We reiterate our readiness to engage in a constructive dialogue as practical follow-up to the initiative launched two years ago by the Russian Federation regarding the disposal of the non-transportable munitions. This process should be conducted in a transparent manner and the OSCE could play a relevant role in it in accordance with its mandate.

We would like to use this opportunity to welcome your decision to reappoint Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting as Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for the Transnistrian Settlement Process and we reaffirm our readiness to continue co-operation.

We look forward to working with you and your team constructively this year and wish you every success in fulfilling your mandate.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

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