



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Report of the Head of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro, Ambassador Dominique Waag

As delivered by Ambassador Michael Carpenter
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 2, 2022

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ambassador Waag, welcome back to the Permanent Council. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and its ongoing violation of the core values and commitments of this Organization underscore the critical role of OSCE Missions such as yours in assisting participating States in upholding Helsinki Final Act principles and commitments. We greatly value the work of your Mission in partnering with the government of Montenegro on strengthening the rule of law, promoting media independence, and enhancing security cooperation.

Montenegro is an important U.S. ally and a vibrant multiethnic democracy. Unfortunately, it has also been on the receiving end of some of Russia's most destabilizing influence operations in the Western Balkans. The attempted coup in Montenegro six years ago should be seen as a harbinger of Russia's increasingly aggressive hybrid influence operations. The challenge before us today is how to leverage the tools at our disposal to help make the countries of the Western Balkans more secure and more resilient against these sorts of active measures.

We applaud the ability of your Mission to effectively use the full range of its partnerships with the Montenegrin government—such as with the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defense, Parliament, State Election Commission, national public service broadcaster, and Agency for Electronic Media—to magnify the impact of your activities. We particularly welcome your Mission's work on rule of law, anti-corruption, and safety of journalists.

More broadly, your team's support for the reforms that are necessary for Montenegro's European Union membership are of significant importance.

Ambassador Waag, thank you again for your work at the OSCE Mission to Montenegro. You continue to have our full support.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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