



**PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF PORTUGAL
TO THE OSCE**

**26th Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council
Bratislava, 5 and 6 December 2019**

Plenary Session / Portugal

**H.E. the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and
Cooperation, Ms. Teresa Ribeiro**

Mr. Chairperson,

Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to commend the **Slovak Chairmanship** for taking the helm of the OSCE in these times of great transformation. Let me also thank, personally, Minister Miroslav Lajčák for his commitment and for the great hospitality in Bratislava.

Portugal is deeply worried about the **erosion of the international system**.

Therefore, we need to rethink our **collective security** and enhance our **cooperation**.

With its wide and multipolar membership, OSCE offers an important collective, cooperative and comprehensive forum to address some of these challenges.

It can help prevent unintended crises, mitigate the escalation of conflicts and promote their resolution.

The security challenges in Europe are worrying.



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The crisis in and around **Ukraine** remains one of the situations that raises great concern to the OSCE area.

Portugal reiterates its commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and supports all diplomatic efforts to bring a political and lasting solution to the conflict.

Portugal also reiterates its full support for **Georgia** 's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as to the negotiations to settle the **Transnistrian** conflict and the political process led by the OSCE Minsk Group, on **Nagorno-Karabakh**.

I have already alluded to some other overlying and crosscutting global threats that we need to take into account.

We cannot neglect the impact of **climate change** for our collective security.

In the fight against climate change, but also beyond, the nexus between **development** and security is more crucial than ever.

Climate change, development, arms race and security are undeniably intertwined. Therefore, the OSCE can also provide added value and facilitate solutions in some of these areas, namely, by bringing together governmental and non-governmental actors to promote better water management, food production and environmental sustainability.

Furthermore, I would like to stress the importance of the protection of **human rights and fundamental freedoms**, including media freedom, the safety of journalists and the equality between women and men for the development of democratic societies.

In the same vein, I would like to stress the relevance of preventing and eradicating **torture** and acknowledge the positive global trend against the **death penalty**.



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We believe that the OSCE should reinforce its network with other global and regional organizations. Thus, we are supportive of the **OSCE Partnership with Mediterranean and Asian partners**.

But we cannot talk about OSCE without mentioning the **politico-military** aspects of security.

In this context, I would like to highlight the recent joint proposal for the **modernisation of the Vienna Document** presented by 32 participating States, including Portugal.

Portugal also actively supports the **Structured Dialogue** and stands ready to contribute to its development in accordance with the "From Lisbon to Hamburg" Declaration, as a forum for dialogue and bridge building that embodies the OSCE spirit and its true added value.

This is the best opportunity to ensure the OSCE keeps abreast of important threats and challenges in Europe and that it contributes to upholding the multilateral system.

Let us work together, in a spirit of compromise, to reach consensus on a balanced and meaningful package of decisions to drive us forward.

Portugal remains fully engaged and committed to the OSCE.

I conclude by expressing Portugal's best wishes of success to the **incoming Albanian Chairmanship** and by conveying it our full support.

Thank you.