



Buantoscaireacht na hÉireann
don Eagraíocht um Comhoibriú agus Slándáil san Eoraip
Permanent Mission of Ireland to the
Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe

Rotenturmstrasse 16-18
1010 Vienna
Austria

**Statement by Ireland's Minister of State for European Affairs and Defence,
Peter Burke TD**
OSCE Reinforced PC on 26 September 2023

Mr. Chair, Dear Minister Osmani,

Let me thank you for convening this reinforced meeting of the Permanent Council at a critical time for our Organisation. I would also like to extend Ireland's appreciation to you and the team of the North Macedonia chairpersonship for your strong and dedicated leadership under difficult circumstances.

The unprecedented challenges that the OSCE faces today are rooted in Russia's unprovoked and illegal aggression against Ukraine. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine demonstrates a blatant disregard for the foundational commitments of the OSCE set out in the Helsinki Final Act, commitments that are fundamental to the security of Europe.

Ireland reiterates its call on Russia to respect Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and to immediately and unconditionally withdraw its forces from within Ukraine's internationally recognised borders. We also call on Russia to immediately release all those who have been arbitrarily and unjustly detained as part of its war of aggression, including the three OSCE SMM officials, who have now been imprisoned for more than 500 days.

I will now turn to the key decisions facing the OSCE before the end of this year concerning:

- the four most senior positions in the organisation,
- the Chair-in-Office in 2024,
- and the OSCE Budget.

Ireland has full confidence in the current leadership of the OSCE and supports a rollover of the terms of all four senior officials for a further three years.

I would like to acknowledge the tireless and dedicated contributions of OSCE Secretary General, Helga Schmid; Representative on Freedom of the Media, Teresa Ribeiro; ODIHR Director, Matteo Mecacci; and High Commissioner on National Minorities, Kairat Abdrakhmanov.

As regards the role of Chair-in-Office for 2024, Ireland fully supports the candidacy of Estonia.

Finally, for an organisation to function effectively, it requires an approved budget and the resources necessary to fulfil its mandate. Ireland greatly values the OSCE and is among those stepping up to provide extra-budgetary funding at this critical time. However, this situation is not sustainable. We wish to see a unified budget agreed and we call on all participating States to act responsibly in the best interests of the organisation.

Thank you.