

Statement by Denmark
Reinforced meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
29 September 2022

As delivered by Deputy Director of the European Neighbourhood Department, Louise Holmsgaard

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

Denmark aligns itself with the statement of the European Union, but let me add the following remarks in my national capacity:

Let me first thank the Chairpersonship for calling this timely meeting. It has been 217 days since Russia launched its illegal and devastating military offensive against Ukraine. In recent weeks, we have seen yet another flood of escalatory rhetoric and action by Russia. We hear of mobilization, nuclear threats, illegal and so-called referenda and annexation schemes.

These are drastic steps that aim to discourage our support for Ukraine and to distract from the fact that nothing is going according to the Kremlin's plan in Ukraine.

But we will not be discouraged. Ukraine can rely on our enduring support.

Mr. Chair,

Denmark believes in the principles of self-determination, but what we are seeing in the occupied territories of Ukraine is an abuse of those principles, which Russia itself has signed up to. The illegal so-called "referenda" in Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhia regions are yet another blatant violation of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and a serious violation of the UN Charter. The EU has already announced that additional restrictive measures against Russia will be brought forward, and those involved in these and other violations of international law

and international humanitarian law in Ukraine will be held accountable. If Russia goes through with the illegal annexation of occupied Ukrainian territories, this will mark another fundamental escalation.

I think we need, particularly in this forum, to be completely clear about our line of reasoning regarding these so-called referenda to counter the air of legitimacy, which Russia seeks to achieve. There is no such thing as a free and fair referendum at gunpoint. There is no such thing as self-determination under threat of ‘filtration’, deportation and enforced disappearance. There is no informed citizenry without media pluralism and public debate. The purpose of a referendum is to determine the free will of the people. This is not by any imaginable measure what Russia is doing in the occupied areas of Ukraine.

We once again condemn the illegal so-called “referenda”. We will never recognize the process, the results, or the actions that Russia want to use them to justify.

Mr. Chair,

With his nuclear threats and his partial mobilisation, Putin demonstrates that he is choosing to walk even further along the path of confrontation. This escalation will only serve to prolong the war and worsen the consequences for millions of people who have no say in the matter in Ukraine, in Russia, and globally – including for food insecurity and rising energy prices. Denmark and the EU will continue to live up to our humanitarian obligations and deliver critical support ahead of the coming winter.

In closing, let me once again reaffirm that Denmark stands firmly by Ukraine and its people. To quote the Danish Foreign Minister during his recent visit to Kyiv: “Ukraine has every right to live in peace and freedom as an independent nation.”

I thank you, Mr. Chair.