

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

MC.DEL/54/23
6 December 2023

ENGLISH only



PERMANENT MISSION OF ROMANIA
to the International Organizations in Vienna

Statement by Romania OSCE Ministerial Council, 30 November – 1 December 2023

Mr. Chairperson,

Romania fully subscribes to the statement of the European Union. In addition, we would like to make the following remarks in national capacity.

We join other speakers in thanking North Macedonia, H.E. Minister Osmani, for hosting us today, as well as for his and his entire team's tremendous efforts in steering our organization during these extraordinary times. We welcome the principled, firm position of North Macedonia regarding Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and for continuing to ensure that the organization is bringing its contribution to addressing its multiple consequences.

Mr. Chairperson,

We are facing an unprecedented security and humanitarian crisis, caused by Russia's full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine, in blatant violation of the basic principles of international law, the UN Charter and OSCE commitments. Once more, we strongly condemn this unprovoked, unjustified, war of aggression and the continuous attacks on Ukrainian civilian infrastructure, including on the ports at the Danube, close to Ukraine's border with Romania. We reiterate our firm call on the Russian Federation to immediately and unconditionally stop this unprovoked and unjustified aggression and withdraw all its military forces and equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine, within its internationally recognized borders. We also reiterate our call on Belarus to stop enabling the Russian aggression and to abide by its international obligations.

Deliberate attacks on civilian infrastructure and killing of innocent civilians by the Russian Federation are horrendous. They constitute blatant violations of international humanitarian law and must stop immediately. We are determined to make those responsible of all the heinous crimes committed in Ukraine, including war crimes and crimes against humanity, accountable for their acts. Romania is joining all efforts of the international community in holding those responsible accountable, including within the OSCE, by joining the participating States that invoked the Moscow Mechanism.

Romania will continue to stand with Ukraine. Together with all EU and NATO Member States, Romania has been supporting Ukraine and the Ukrainian people affected by Russia's war of aggression, by providing humanitarian aid, macro-financial and military assistance. We have been providing shelter, food, medical assistance, access to education and labour market to all those fleeing the war and entering Romania, and we will continue to do so. Our support remains solid, for as long as it takes.

We have been witnessing an incredible resilience of the Ukrainian people in defending their country and resisting in front of the aggressor. People of Ukraine are also fighting for their European future: thus, the granting of status of candidate country to Ukraine is of historical importance, together with the recent recommendation by the European Commission to open the accession negotiations.

Mr. Chairperson,

As Russia continues its blatant war of aggression, it is important to address and alleviate its consequences which are felt beyond Ukraine's borders. We welcome the efforts of the OSCE to increase the resilience of the R. of Moldova, including in the field of combating corruption and money laundering, combatting trafficking in human beings or building democratic institutions. Let me underline that Romania will continue to provide all relevant support to the R. of Moldova, to strengthen its resilience in face of destabilizing activities by external actors and to support its European accession path. Romania firmly supports a comprehensive, peaceful, and sustainable settlement of the conflict in the Republic of Moldova, based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognized borders and without affecting the European perspective of the country. In this context, let me reiterate once again the importance of withdrawing Russian troops and ammunition from the territory of the Republic of Moldova, in accordance with international law and the OSCE commitments. In this context, we expect also the mandate of the OSCE Mission to be extended in accordance with the regular procedure.

Ambassador Viorel Moșanu, Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office for Southern Caucasus, is investing professionalism, energy, and dedication in supporting the Geneva International Discussions. We reiterate our support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia.

This year, another humanitarian crisis unfolded in the OSCE area. We continue to closely monitor the difficult situation on the ground. We reaffirm our support for the sovereignty, inviolability of borders and territorial integrity of Armenia and Azerbaijan. We also encourage Armenia and Azerbaijan to continue their diplomatic engagement, with the support of the EU, in order to find comprehensive solutions to all outstanding issues.

The impact of the war is felt beyond Ukraine, as Russia recklessly exploited energy and food as a weapon of war. Russia bears responsibility for the global food security crisis it has provoked by instrumentalizing food in its war against Ukraine. Romania, together with all EU Member States, will continue to support timely and stable delivery of Ukrainian agricultural products to global markets. More than 30 million tons of grains transited through our country.

Mr. Chairperson,

This unprecedented security crisis has affected also the OSCE as a whole. By abusing the consensus rule, the Russian Federation has been systematically hampering the well-functioning of the organization, limiting its ability to act on the ground and depriving it on much-needed financial resources. Russia is the sole responsible for the current state of the organization.

But the organization has proven its resilience. We warmly thank the previous Polish and current Macedonian Chairs, the Secretary General, the field operations and the autonomous institutions that have kept the organization operational and have provided valuable support to its participating States and its people. Thus, the organization has continued to provide valuable support to Ukraine, through: The Support Programme for Ukraine (to which also Romania is a donor) and the Special Representative, as well as through the work of the autonomous institutions - ODIHR (monitoring the human rights situation or strengthening the capacity of civil society and human rights defenders to act) and RFoM (with its watchdog function, continuing monitoring the media freedom and safety of journalists on the ground). This is a testimony of the importance of our organization, of its institutions, and the reason for all of us to make further, strengthened efforts to ensure its continuous functioning.

In this difficult context, we welcome that consensus has been reached on the next Chair of the OSCE and we are grateful to Malta for assuming this responsibility. However, let me state that Estonia was perfectly able to lead the organization, defend our common principles and commitments, and ensure that the organizations remains relevant on the ground and credible on the international arena. The Russian Federation has never provided a solid argument why this would not be the case.

We also need to ensure continuity at the top management level of the organization and thus support the extension of the mandates for the current incumbents of the four top positions: Secretary General, ODIHR Director, Representative on Freedom of the Media and High Commissioner on National Minorities. We are grateful for their tireless work and that they stand ready to continue in these unpredictable times, with limited resources at their disposal. Let me use this opportunity to reconfirm our support for the mandates and autonomy of the institutions.

We also believe that the organization should be provided with adequate resources and we have supported the Chairpersonship in its assiduous efforts to ensure it, by exploring different avenues. We also provide voluntary contribution to several projects of the organization.

Mr. Chairperson,

We need a robust and principled OSCE, that continues to bring its contribution in maintaining peace and security, to hold Russia to account for its aggression against a sovereign state, and to deliver on the ground, for its participating States and its people. We will support Malta in their efforts to contribute to this end.

Thank you.