



## PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF PORTUGAL TO THE OSCE

### 2022 Annual Security Review Conference

28-29 June 2022

### Statement by Portugal

Mr. Chair,

Portugal aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union, but please allow me to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

At the onset, I convey out deepest condolences for the victims of the ongoing war and I particular the ones that perished during the barbaric strike of recent days.

**24<sup>th</sup> of February 2022 will remain in History as a shameful date.** On this day, Russia, with the involvement of Belarus, launched an unprovoked, unjustified and brutal war of aggression against a peaceful neighbour. **The Russian invasion of Ukraine is the most serious security crisis the OSCE has ever known.** It totally changed the world, as we knew it. **Let us be clear and call things by their names: this war is unacceptable.** It constitutes the most blatant violation of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and of the agreed OSCE principles and commitments since the Helsinki Final Act.

**We reaffirm our unwavering support to Ukraine and its people** and call on the Russian Federation to fully respect the sovereignty, independence,

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[osce.portugal@mne.pt](mailto:osce.portugal@mne.pt) | + (431) 58550510

and territorial integrity of all its neighbours. **Russia must cease immediately its war of aggression against Ukraine.**

**The consequences of the Russian Federation actions are manifold:** a dire humanitarian crisis, whose true dimension is still hidden from us; the massive displacement of persons; consistent reports of war crimes committed by Russia against the Ukrainian population, the systematic violation of human rights by Russia both against the Ukrainian and its own people; the destruction of cultural heritage in Ukraine; and repercussions across many other fields at a global scale, namely food security.

Mr. Chair,

The Russian acts of aggression and destabilization against Ukraine are the outcome of a process that started several years ago. At this juncture, allow me to draw your attention to the negative impact to security and international trust caused by the protracted conflicts in the OSCE region, and the Russian invasion of Georgia, in 2008. There is certainly room for discussing other topics, other challenges and other threats that remain a high priority for participating States.

Besides contravening the tenets of the European security architecture, it is also worrying this **war is being waged at a time when global challenges require urgent attention and joint action.** We could mention climate change but that is only the tip of the iceberg.

It is thus correct to say that **our common security has been jeopardised in all its aspects.** This war has not addressed any security concern of any participating State. It has only made us all more insecure. This shows, once

again, although for the wrong reasons, the validity of OSCE's concept comprehensive security.

Mr. Chair,

**The OSCE and its acquis provided us with security gains for many years.** However, we must acknowledge that most of our tools cannot be appropriately used in a war scenario. **There is no “business as usual” when a war of aggression is ongoing.**

Nonetheless, **we have no doubt this Organization remains of utmost importance.** The OSCE principles and commitments remain valid, even more so in such a bleak context as we face today. Let's just recall the OSCE Code of Conduct and the commitments enshrined therein regarding the use of armed forces. Compliance with International Humanitarian Law is not optional, it is mandatory. Investigation on war crimes and crimes against humanity will continue and perpetrators will be brought to justice. Again, in this topic, OSCE is doing its share through the Moscow Mechanism expert missions.

As other participating States already mentioned, **the OSCE is still relevant and will be of particular importance in the future. The moment to rebuild trust and confidence will come** – we have no doubt on that. By then, we will revisit and look again into the OSCE documents, namely on arms control and CSBMs. Most probably, this will be a long process. Therefore, **it is up to the Russian Federation to take concrete steps and stop its war, renounce to aggression, and to follow a peaceful approach to international relations.**

Thank you.

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