

Delegation of Italy

**OPENING STATEMENT BY MR. GUGLIELMO PICCHI,  
ITALIAN DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND  
INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION, AT THE 2018  
ANNUAL SECURITY REVIEW CONFERENCE**

26 June 2018

Mr. Secretary General,  
Deputy Minister Grushko,  
Ambassador Mayr-Harting,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour for me to be here today, representing the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Co-operation, Enzo Moavero Milanesi, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office.

The OSCE is an organization that is particularly close to my heart, that I appreciate and that I know first-hand, having been a member of its Parliamentary Assembly.

The Annual Security Review Conference is the main event of the first dimension. A major meeting that, from year to year, allows us to take stock of the situation, verify the progress made, but also recognize missed opportunities, stalemates and setbacks in our common goal of building a safer Europe.

The Conference also offers us the opportunity for a frank, constructive and substantial dialogue and allows us to analyse along with ongoing crises also the opportunities for greater international collaboration, essential for tackling and defeating transnational threats together.

It is not by chance that we have chosen, for the title of this important security event, a reference to our motto. We believe in dialogue, understood as a constructive exchange and as an opportunity not to be wasted, especially at such a complex stage in international relations.

The OSCE is the largest regional security organization. For this reason, we must fully exploit its potential, with a renewed sense of responsibility and collective ownership.

As you know, the Italian Chairmanship has, among its priorities, the resolution of the Ukrainian crisis through the full implementation of the Minsk agreements and support for the activities of the Special Monitoring Mission, whose monitors must be able to operate in safety.

\*) recirculation due to change of distribution status, text remains unchanged

The information reported by the OSCE Mission is not encouraging: civilian casualties are increasing and the number of displaced persons and refugees continues to grow. There is also an increase in hostility and violence, caused by the deployment of heavy weapons that should have already been withdrawn. The increasingly serious threats to the safety of the OSCE monitors and attacks on their equipment such as long-range unmanned aerial vehicles are also worrying.

We need a renewed commitment to improve the situation. We cannot ignore the appeal of the civilian population on both sides of the line of contact asking to be able to live their lives in peace again. All the parties must fully assume their responsibilities, starting with full respect for the ceasefire and the confident relaunch of the political process within the Trilateral Contact Group and the Normandy format to resolve the crisis.

Likewise, we must intensify our efforts to resolve the protracted conflicts.

I am encouraged by the recent positive developments in the Transdniestrian process, which Italy has actively supported by hosting a meeting of the “5+2” format at the end of May. This resulted in the signing of the Rome Protocol, which confirms the commitment to finalize all the aspects of the so-called “eight-point package”, in other words the priorities outlined last year.

We continue to work towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh through full support for the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group.

We support the Geneva International Discussions for a solution to the conflict in Georgia and recognize the importance of a solution to the problem of internally displaced persons.

Italy believes with conviction in the opportunities offered by the Structured Dialogue, a valuable and unique exercise, which has already provided important results, starting with the acknowledged need to put our exchanges on a more concrete and less ideological basis and to face with renewed commitment the challenges to our collective security in the politico-military field, while firmly maintaining our principles and our commitments.

We cannot afford to be overwhelmed by events. And we cannot allow the progressive erosion of the European security architecture, without doing everything in our power to remedy it and restore transparency, trust and predictability in the politico-military sphere.

We need to relaunch the logic of co-operative security and re-establish the full functionality of existing instruments, starting with the Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, which must be substantially modernized, and the Treaty on Open Skies, whose functioning is at an impasse.

At the same time, we also need to know how to look ahead, identify the limits of existing instruments and explore new solutions.

An effective and functioning arms control regime, in keeping with the times, is essential for maintaining and deepening security in Europe.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Italy believes that the future of our Organization also depends on a deepening of the collaboration with our partner countries and other international organizations.

I am thinking, in particular, of the Partners for Co-operation on the southern shore of the Mediterranean, with whom we are ready to talk about many common challenges, including an orderly management of migratory flows.

Security is comprehensive and we need to be able to look beyond the boundaries of our Organization to successfully face transnational challenges and threats such as terrorism, cyberattacks, corruption, organized crime, illicit trafficking and trafficking in human beings. These are challenges that affect not only the quality of our international relations, but also the security and well-being of our societies.

Italy is also investing heavily in the fight against trafficking in cultural goods, which represents a threat to our identity and a source of funding for terrorism. We believe that the OSCE can do a great deal, together with other competent organizations, to counter this threat too.

Finally, I should like to say a few words about the negotiations on the Scales of Contributions that the Italian Chairmanship relaunched with yesterday's meeting in Rome.

A positive outcome of the negotiations cannot just be a priority of the Chairmanship; it must be an absolute priority for all participating States. If we fail to successfully renegotiate the Scales of Contributions, we may not be able to guarantee the resources necessary for the Organization's activities.

I therefore appeal to your sense of responsibility and to your sensibilities to ensure that your State will contribute constructively to the adoption of the new Scales of Contributions during the meetings that we have planned before the end of the year.

We can thus strengthen the effectiveness of the OSCE, as we all wish. This is because we believe that, in a global world characterized by interdependent challenges, the OSCE, with its principle of "comprehensive security", can and should play a major role in strengthening dialogue in an inclusive manner and contributing to collective security. This is the basic theme of the Conference that opens today and for which I extend my best wishes to you all for a productive meeting.

Thank you.