

Chairmanship: Switzerland

1577th PLENARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

1. Date: Thursday, 17 September 2026 (in the Ratsaal)

Opened: 10 a.m.
Suspended: 1.15 p.m.
Resumed: 3.05 p.m.
Closed: 5.15 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador R. Nägeli
Mr. F. Milan
Mr. N. Plattner

The Chairperson welcomed the new Permanent Representative of Sweden to the OSCE, H.E. Ambassador M. Hagström, the new Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the OSCE, H.E. Ambassador C. Goy, the new Permanent Representative of Finland to the OSCE, H.E. Ambassador O. Hyvärinen, the new Permanent Representative of the European Union to the OSCE, H.E. Ambassador F. Knab-Lunny, the new Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the OSCE, H.E. Ambassador K. Khasiyev, and the new Permanent Representative of Iceland to the OSCE, H.E. Ambassador B. Kjartansdóttir, to the Permanent Council.

Russian Federation (Annex 1)

Chairperson, United States of America (PC.DEL/860/26)

3. Subjects discussed – Statements – Decisions/documents adopted:

Agenda item 1: THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION
AGAINST UKRAINE

Chairperson, Ukraine, Ireland-European Union (with Albania, Andorra, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment)
(PC.DEL/861/26), United Kingdom, Türkiye (PC.DEL/885/26 OSCE+), Canada (PC.DEL/868/26), Norway (PC.DEL/844/26), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/874/26)

Agenda item 2: ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT ON THE 2004 OSCE
GENDER ACTION PLAN

Chairperson, Secretary General, Ireland-European Union (with Albania, Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/862/26), United Kingdom, Russian Federation (PC.DEL/842/26 OSCE+), Türkiye (PC.DEL/883/26 OSCE+), Azerbaijan (PC.DEL/877/26 OSCE+), Turkmenistan, Armenia (PC.DEL/880/26), France (Annex 2), Netherlands (also on behalf of Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine and the United Kingdom), Afghanistan (Partner for Co-operation), Director of the Office of the Secretary General

Agenda item 3: REPORT BY THE DEPUTY HEAD AND
OFFICER-IN-CHARGE OF THE OSCE PROGRAMME
OFFICE IN DUSHANBE

Chairperson, Deputy Head and Officer-in-Charge of the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe (PC.FR/10/26 OSCE+), Ireland-European Union (with Albania, Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino, Serbia and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/863/26), United Kingdom, Türkiye, Russian Federation (PC.DEL/846/26 OSCE+), Turkmenistan (also on behalf of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan), Italy (also on behalf of Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) (PC.DEL/853/26 OSCE+), Japan (Partner for Co-operation), Uzbekistan, Tajikistan

Agenda item 4: REVIEW OF CURRENT ISSUES

- (a) *The ongoing hybrid war waged by NATO and the European Union against Russia:* Russian Federation (PC.DEL/872/26), United Kingdom
- (b) *International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, observed on 30 August 2026:* Ireland-European Union (with Albania, Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/864/26), United Kingdom (also on behalf of Canada, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/843/26 OSCE+), Armenia (PC.DEL/881/26), Azerbaijan (PC.DEL/878/26 OSCE+), Belarus, Turkmenistan
- (c) *Eighteen years since the act of full-scale military aggression against Georgia by the Russian Federation:* Georgia (PC.DEL/875/26 OSCE+), Ireland-European Union (with Albania, Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino, Ukraine and the United Kingdom, in alignment) (PC.DEL/866/26), Canada

(PC.DEL/869/26 OSCE+), Türkiye, United States of America, Russian Federation (PC.DEL/845/26)

- (d) *Incident at Leipzig/Halle Airport on 4 August 2026*: Germany (Annex 3), Montenegro (PC.DEL/847/26 OSCE+), Ireland-European Union (with Albania, Andorra, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/865/26), Canada (PC.DEL/871/26 OSCE+), Italy, United Kingdom, Poland, Estonia (also on behalf of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden) (PC.DEL/858/26 OSCE+), Belgium (also on behalf of Luxembourg and the Netherlands) (PC.DEL/882/26 OSCE+), France (Annex 4), Romania, Ukraine (Annex 5), Greece (PC.DEL/849/26 OSCE+), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/873/26), United States of America
- (e) *Ongoing violations of the freedom of religion by Kiev*: Russian Federation (PC.DEL/856/26), Ukraine (Annex 6)
- (f) *Reform of the OSCE*: United States of America (Annex 7)
- (g) *Ratko Mladić's funeral and grave concerns over the glorification of war crimes*: Bosnia and Herzegovina (PC.DEL/876/26 OSCE+), Ireland-European Union (with Albania, Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino, Türkiye and Ukraine, in alignment) (PC.DEL/867/26), Albania (PC.DEL/857/26 OSCE+), Canada (PC.DEL/870/26 OSCE+), United Kingdom, Türkiye (PC.DEL/884/26 OSCE+), Croatia (PC.DEL/848/26 OSCE+), Serbia, Russian Federation
- (h) *Human rights situation in Belarus*: Denmark (also on behalf of Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Ukraine) (PC.DEL/851/26 OSCE+), Ireland-European Union, Belarus, Russian Federation

Agenda item 5: REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE
 CHAIRMAN-IN-OFFICE

- (a) *Workshop on Human Rights-Based Civic Engagement and Alliance Building: Supporting Muslim Youth Participation at the Local Level, held in Warsaw from 25 to 27 August 2026*: Chairperson
- (b) *Co-facilitation by the Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office for the South Caucasus, Ambassador C. Späti, of the 134th Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism meeting, held in Ergneti, Georgia, on 8 September 2026*: Chairperson

- (c) *Visit of the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism, Rabbi A. Baker, the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims, Ms. E. Dağdelen Akgün, and the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, also Focusing on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians and Members of Other Religions, Mr. W. Palaver, to Bosnia and Herzegovina: Chairperson*
- (d) *Participation of the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for the Promotion of Dialogue and Confidence-Building, Ambassador S. Rumin, in a meeting of the Security Committee, held in Vienna on 15 September 2026: Chairperson*
- (e) *Conference entitled “De-escalation in cyberspace: mediation and preventive diplomacy”, to be held in Zug, Switzerland, on 29 and 30 September 2026: Chairperson*

Agenda item 6: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

- (a) *Announcement of the distribution of a written report of the Secretary General (SEC.GAL/107/26 OSCE+): Director of the Office of the Secretary General*
- (b) *Informal briefing on Records Management in the OSCE, held in Vienna on 18 September 2026: Director of the Office of the Secretary General*

Agenda item 7: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Presidential election in Bulgaria, to be held on 25 October 2026: Bulgaria*
- (b) *Outcome of the first parliamentary election to the unicameral Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Kuryltai), held on 23 August 2026: Kazakhstan, Ireland-European Union, Armenia, Russian Federation, Uzbekistan*
- (c) *Early parliamentary elections in Serbia, to be held on 25 October 2026: Serbia*

4. Next meeting:

Thursday, 24 September 2026, at 10 a.m., in the Ratsaal



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1577
17 September 2026
Annex 1

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

1577th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No.1577, Point 2

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Mr. Chairperson,

It is disappointing that the Swiss Chairmanship-in-Office, bending to the political climate, continues to include a confrontational item on “Russian aggression against Ukraine” in the Permanent Council’s agenda.

Such actions by the Chairmanship are directly incompatible with standing agenda items as established by the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE (chapter IV.1(C)). This precludes the possibility of equal and non-discriminatory participation in a discussion of the developments in and around Ukraine.

The convening of Permanent Council meetings must be fully in line with the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE as regards consultations with all the participating States (paragraphs IV.1(C)1 and IV.1(C)3) and may not run counter to the provisions of the mandate of the Chairmanship-in-Office, which unambiguously obligates the Chairmanship to take the whole spectrum of opinions into account in its actions (Porto Ministerial Council Decision No. 8 of 2002).

We request that this formal reservation be reflected in the journal of today’s meeting of the Permanent Council in accordance with paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE.

Thank you for your attention.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1577
17 September 2026
Annex 2

ENGLISH
Original: FRENCH

1577th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1577, Agenda item 2

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF FRANCE

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank the Secretary General for his report on the action plan to promote gender equality. France fully aligns itself with the statement by the European Union and the forthcoming statement by the Netherlands in support of the Roadmap on Women, Peace and Security. I should nevertheless like to add a few remarks in a national capacity.

The President of the French Republic has made equality between women and men the major national cause of his two five-year terms. This led us, in 2019, to become the fourth country worldwide to adopt a feminist foreign policy, based on an international strategy for 2025–2030 led by the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and involving, in particular, institutional and international partners, French civil society, the private sector and the research community.

Through our feminist foreign policy, we intend to combat all forms of gender-based inequality and violence, notably in armed conflicts. We defend women's rights and freedoms, in particular sexual and reproductive rights and health (such as access to safe abortion), women's participation and representation in all decision-making processes, and women's empowerment and equal access to economic resources.

In 2025, France hosted the Fourth Ministerial Conference on Feminist Foreign Policy and co-chaired the Feminist Foreign Policy Group (FFP+ Group), reflecting its high-level commitment.

On 8 March 2026, France launched its Fourth National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2026–2030), which is structured around five pillars:

- The full, equal and effective participation of women in all decision-making processes;
- Preventing conflicts and all forms of violence against women and girls;
- Protecting women and girls from all forms of gender-based violence in all contexts;

- Combating impunity and ensuring reparation for victims;
- Strengthening ownership and raising the profile of the Fourth National Action Plan and the women, peace and security agenda.

Across all multilateral forums we are committed to supporting major initiatives. At the United Nations, we support the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund and the Women and Climate Security Initiative. We are also pursuing our commitment to the universalization and implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (also known as the “Istanbul Convention”).

We will similarly continue to combat all forms of sexual violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, and will work to end impunity for perpetrators by supporting the International Criminal Court’s Trust Fund for Victims.

At the European level, we support the European Commission’s 2025 Roadmap for Women’s Rights, which is aimed at mainstreaming this dimension into all public policies all the while preventing and eliminating gender inequalities.

France’s commitment to access to sexual and reproductive rights and health is reflected at the national level as well, and on 8 March 2024 we enshrined in our Constitution “the freedom guaranteed to women to have recourse to a voluntary termination of pregnancy”. We would like this right to voluntary termination of pregnancy to be incorporated into the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

At the OSCE, in addition to honouring the Organization’s fundamental commitments on gender equality, France has also signed up to the optional Roadmap on Women, Peace and Security drawn up by the 2025 Finnish Chairmanship.

Under its French Chairmanship, the Forum for Security Co-operation addressed the issue of women in armed conflicts. We put the national “#JamaisSansElles” (“Never Without Her”) pledge into practice by ensuring perfect gender parity among speakers at Security Dialogues.

Lastly, within the Permanent Representation headed by me, a gender equality road map is being implemented to ensure that this fundamental requirement is fulfilled in all aspects of our day-to-day operations and throughout our work at the OSCE.

Thus, dear colleagues, in the face of a proliferation of crises and surging anti-rights movements, France remains devoted to promoting equality between women and men. This commitment is based on the principle of equal rights, respect for fundamental freedoms and equal opportunities for all human beings. France resolutely reaffirms the universality of the rights of women and girls, and supports the full realization of gender equality as an essential enabler of sustainable development and the construction of peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

I would be grateful if you could attach this statement to the journal of the meeting.

Thank you.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1577
17 September 2026
Annex 3

ENGLISH
Original: GERMAN

1577th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1577, Agenda item 4(d)

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF GERMANY

Mr. Chairperson,
Dear colleagues,

As announced, I should like to inform the Permanent Council, too, about the incident at Leipzig airport. On 4 August, a drone fitted with explosives was discovered in a security area on the premises of Leipzig airport in Germany, close to two parked Ukrainian cargo aircraft. Footage from the airport's surveillance cameras shows that the drone collided with the right-hand wing of one of the parked Ukrainian freighters and crashed shortly afterwards. Fortunately, the collision did not trigger an explosion. The investigation suggests that several drones and several perpetrators were involved in the incident.

The German security authorities have for some time been observing a high level of threat from hybrid actions in Germany and Europe. These are directed against critical infrastructure, defence companies and, more generally, our support for Ukraine.

Findings obtained by our intelligence services and partner agencies, along with investigations in Germany and in partner countries, clearly point to Russian involvement in hybrid actions that were being planned or that it proved possible to thwart. These hybrid actions follow recurring patterns, having similar objectives, similar instrumentalities, similar *modi operandi* and similar perpetrator profiles. Time and again we find ourselves dealing with reconnaissance, sabotage, espionage, disinformation and the preparation of attacks.

In the attempted act of sabotage at Leipzig airport, which was intended to cause serious damage and could have resulted in significant loss of life, specific means were employed – such as drone configurations, components, explosives and detonation technologies – which are known from other Russian hybrid operations and from Russia's war against Ukraine.

The technical components recovered from the scene, along with the interaction between the various elements, must be assessed as being of a professional level. They testify to the high technical expertise and considerable organizational effort that went into the planning and execution of this act of sabotage. The eventual carrying out of the attempted attack may be attributed to "low-level agents".

The overall picture of the incident in Leipzig fits into the familiar pattern of Russian hybrid operations in Europe. Intelligence findings confirm this conclusion. The persons involved were acting on behalf of Russian State agencies.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Federal Government thanks its allies and partners that have expressed their solidarity, including here.

This is not an isolated event, neither for Germany nor for our allies and partners. Germany therefore welcomes the fact that the OSCE is addressing the topic of “hybrid threats”, including within the framework of the Security Committee, and it will continue to play an active and constructive role in the discussions at the OSCE.

We will not allow Russia’s attacks to shatter our social cohesion or to intimidate us. And we continue to stand firmly with Ukraine. Federal Chancellor Merz emphasized this last week in the German Bundestag. I quote: “We are supporting Ukraine, and we will continue to support it, because Ukraine is also defending our freedom here in the middle of our European continent.”

Mr. Chairperson, I ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the meeting.

Thank you for your attention.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1577
17 September 2026
Annex 4

ENGLISH
Original: FRENCH

1577th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1577, Agenda item 4(d)

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF FRANCE

France fully aligns itself with the statement by the European Union, but I should like to add a few words in a national capacity.

I thank Germany for drawing the Council's attention to the serious incident that took place at Leipzig airport on 4 August, when a drone laden with explosives was discovered near two Ukrainian aircraft.

In this context, France reaffirms its full solidarity with Germany, whose investigative authorities established, on 2 September, that Russia was responsible for the very serious events in question. At the request of the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the Russian chargé d'affaires was summoned to Paris.

In recent weeks, Russia has first opted for escalation by continuing and expanding its war of aggression against Ukraine. Subsequently, Russia has been opting for escalation vis-à-vis Europe by intensifying its hybrid actions against several European States.

France condemns these hybrid actions in the strongest possible terms and will continue to play its full part in shaping and implementing firm responses to them. In the face of this Russian policy of escalation and intimidation, France reaffirms its support for its partners and allies, and will continue to work with them to strengthen the protection of our countries, our democracies and our citizens. France also intends to continue supporting Ukraine, its independence and its sovereignty.

Mr. Chairperson,

The war of aggression must end, and France remains determined to establish a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, in accordance with the principles of international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations and the Helsinki Decalogue.

I would be grateful if you could kindly attach this statement to the journal of the day.
Thank you.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1577
17 September 2026
Annex 5

Original: ENGLISH

1577th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1577, Agenda item 4(d)

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE**

Mr. Chairperson,

Ukraine stands in full solidarity with Germany and strongly condemns an attempted act of sabotage at Leipzig/Halle Airport organized by the Russian Federation.

Regrettably, we continue to see Russia intensify its multi-layered hybrid campaign across Europe. Russia is moving from the sustained pressure it has used against Ukraine to active operations targeting European Union and NATO member States.

Sabotage targeting defence manufacturers in a dozen EU countries, covert recruitment through proxies, GPS jamming affecting aviation, drone and missile incursions into NATO airspace, and cyber-attacks are all part of this broader campaign.

Ukraine understands these tactics better than anyone. Moscow used hybrid methods to test our defences, undermine our internal unity, weaken our resistance, and create the conditions for further military action.

The attack on Leipzig/Halle Airport is a serious and extremely dangerous escalation. As the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Andrii Sybiha, stated in his reaction, such incidents must be taken seriously and treated as co-ordinated components of a broader malicious strategy.

Europe therefore needs a decisive strategy to counter the Russian threat. These measures are necessary to protect Europe's economy, democratic systems and institutions and, above all, its citizens.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

1577th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 1577, Agenda item 4(e)

**STATEMENT IN EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT OF REPLY BY
THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE**

Mr. Chairperson,

The Russian delegation is not defending religious freedom.

It helps Russia hide the Kremlin's influence and distracts attention from Russia's own persecution of believers.

Freedom of religion or belief remains fully protected in Ukraine, including under martial law. No restrictions on religious activity have been introduced, and religious communities of different denominations continue to function freely throughout the country.

The law does not restrict religious beliefs or worship. Instead, it addresses security risks linked to the influence of religious structures based in Russia.

These concerns arise first of all from Russia's war of aggression. The leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church has openly supported and justified the war. Ukrainian law enforcement authorities have documented cases where religious premises were used to distribute pro-Russian propaganda, including materials denying Ukrainian statehood and inciting religious hatred.

Russia's supposed concern for religious liberty ends exactly where its occupation begins. In temporarily occupied Crimea and elsewhere, Russian authorities imprison Crimean Tatar Muslims and Jehovah's Witnesses under so-called "extremism" laws, suppress Protestant, Catholic and independent Orthodox communities, seize places of worship, and abduct, torture and kill priests.

On 15 June, the Dormition Cathedral of the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra, one of the most sacred Christian sites in our region and part of a UNESCO World Heritage site, caught fire as a result of a Russian drone attack. According to the International Religious Freedom or Belief Alliance, more than 800 religious buildings have been damaged in Ukraine since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion, around 100 of them completely destroyed.

A state that burns churches, jails believers and weaponizes a patriarchate to justify conquest has no credibility lecturing Ukraine on freedom of religion or belief.

Russia should end its aggression, withdraw its forces and release all those persecuted for their faith in the territories under its control.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/1577
17 September 2026
Annex 7

Original: ENGLISH

1577th Plenary Meeting
PC Journal No. 1577, Agenda item 4(f)

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

As now Assistant Secretary Hanrahan said at last year's Ministerial Council, "If properly reformed, this Organization can still play a meaningful role." We have made significant strides forward, but more is needed to meet the moment. This body, and this Organization as a whole, needs to be an effective venue to pursue work on pressing security issues.

With this in mind, I want to outline five key reform priorities that are essential for the OSCE's future.

First, fiscal discipline through zero nominal growth until results are delivered. The OSCE has taken positive steps on fiscal reform, agreeing on a budget for the first time in five years designed to save 15 million euros. We must hold the line with a 2027 zero-nominal-growth budget to ensure these savings are fully institutionalized. Only once we have consolidated these savings can we look at investing in initiatives that directly support the OSCE's core mission. Everyone here today should be prepared to join consensus on a zero-nominal-growth budget for 2027.

Second, refocus the work of extrabudgetary projects. The proliferation of extrabudgetary projects drains the OSCE's limited management and administrative resources and spreads thin the contributions from donor participating States. While extrabudgetary projects are a flexible means to respond to host country and participating State requests, the OSCE must focus exclusively on extrabudgetary projects that deliver concrete results on core priorities. Projects that lack sufficient financial support to be implemented should not remain on the books indefinitely, incurring administrative costs without outcome. We call on all participating States with extrabudgetary projects to make these projects more impactful or shut them down.

Third, modernize OSCE operations. Internal operational procedures frequently hinder the OSCE's ability to achieve its objectives. We must fully modernize the Secretariat, field operations, and administrative procedures. This includes evaluating current staffing requirements and organizational structures for effectiveness, revising recruitment, procurement, and management procedures to mirror international best practices, and instituting strict professional codes of conduct. It is time to look to an outside consultant who can help us modernize salary and benefits packages and update procurement processes.

Fourth, modernize the management of the OSCE. To make this Organization effective, it must be easier for participating States and the Chairperson-in-Office (CiO) to guide and manage its work. We should strengthen processes supporting the CiO and reform the process for selecting future CiOs to ensure the transition between Chairpersons is smooth and does not hinder the Organization's work. Specifically, we must select Chairpersons-in-Office in advance for 2027 and 2028 to re-establish the Troika so that this body can function.

Fifth, update the Scales of Contributions. Funding the OSCE falls disproportionately on a few key States – most of all the United States. If the OSCE is doing its job, everyone benefits. We must implement a reasonable floor for contributions while lowering the ceiling to ensure fair burden-sharing. Every participating State in this room must have a stake in the success of this Organization and should come prepared, with instructions, to negotiate.

This reform package requires prioritization. In instances where OSCE structures cannot or will not prioritize, we will need to make tough decisions. That is why we have decided not to invite the OSCE to observe mid-term elections in the United States this year. In this constrained budget environment – one in which the ODIHR had to cut its budget by over 1.3 million euros – it is important that the ODIHR focus its limited resources on those elections where it can have the biggest impact, and not on elections in one of the oldest constitutional democracies with a robust independent media and legal system.

This morning, I asked that we lower the temperature in this council. The Permanent Council should focus on constructive discussions for the diplomats in the room, rather than grandstanding. We should be prepared to adjust agenda items if necessary to foster genuine dialogue. This is foundational to everything we do here and for preparing this Organization to meet today's and tomorrow's challenges.

Mr. Chairperson, dear colleagues, reform cannot be an open-ended project with tepid intent; it must be serious and urgent.

We are grateful to you and the Finnish delegation for starting these discussions, and we are committed to delivering solutions. I hope everyone here is willing to work with us through the Advisory Committee on Management and Finance, through Informal Working Groups, and in support of the Chairperson to make this Organization more relevant. We invite all delegates to join us in shaping an OSCE prepared to meet today's – and tomorrow's – challenges.