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ENGLISH only

Speech Ambassador David Roet – 1580th OSCE Permanent Council – Permanent Mission of Israel – under Any other Business – 8th October 2026.

Mr. Chair,

Dear colleagues,

It is a pleasure to mark the fifth anniversary of the Study Visit Programme for OSCE Partners for Co-operation.

My sincere thanks go to the OSCE and to the Permanent Mission of Germany for organising this programme and for sustaining it over the past five years.

It is a valuable platform for exchange, but also for something more practical: building the relationships and understanding on which effective security cooperation depends.

This is especially meaningful as we meet one day after commemorating the victims of October 7.

That day showed, in the most brutal way, what happens when terrorism is allowed to cross borders, exploit divisions and target people simply for who they are.

On 7 October 2023, Hamas terrorists attacked communities across southern Israel, broke into homes and hunted down young people at the Nova festival.

Children, women and men were murdered. Families were destroyed. Hundreds were taken hostage. The torture, sexual violence and cruelty remain almost impossible to comprehend.

This is a reminder that security cannot be taken for granted, and that cooperation between countries and institutions is not an abstract principle, but something with very real consequences for people's lives.

The value of the Study Visit Programme is perhaps best expressed by those who take part in it.

Our delegate, Shir Hasan, reported to us that she particularly valued the opportunity to interact with the different departments of the OSCE Secretariat and its institutions, and to gain a deeper understanding of their respective mandates and projects.

She also highlighted the programme's added value in bringing together young diplomats working on OSCE and security-related affairs from across the OSCE region, creating connections that we hope will endure as their paths cross again in the future.

Thank you again to the OSCE, to the Permanent Mission of Germany, and to everyone who has contributed to the programme over these five years. I wish it many more successful editions.

Mr. Chair,

This was my prepared statement for today. But on my way here, I heard the remarks made today by the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, who chose to make this statement just one day after the anniversary of October 7.

I cannot leave those remarks unanswered.

The suffering in Lebanon is real. But any honest account must acknowledge a central cause: Hezbollah and its attacks on Israel.

The absence of Hezbollah's name from the statement is a glaring omission.

I am deeply disappointed by the ICRC President's portrayal of the situation in Judea and Samaria and Gaza.

It stands in stark contrast to the constructive, solution-oriented dialogue we maintain with the ICRC in Israel.

We are astonished by the claim of success in securing our hostages' release.

The ICRC's role was only to facilitate their transfer once an agreement had been reached.

For two years, our hostages endured brutal captivity and starvation without a single ICRC visit.

The organisation's failure to gain access to them was profound.

We are also astonished that the same statement places the release of hostages abducted by Hamas terrorists alongside the release of convicted Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorists, as though the two were equivalent.

Equating innocent people taken hostage with convicted terrorists is an immoral comparison.

Humanitarian credibility requires accuracy, consistency and a clear acknowledgment of the responsibility of terrorist organisations for the suffering they cause.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.