



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Ministerial Council
Skopje 2023**

MC.DEC/2/23
1 December 2023

Original: ENGLISH

Second day of the Thirtieth Meeting
MC(30) Journal, Agenda item 7

**DECISION No. 2/23
OSCE CHAIRMANSHIP IN THE YEAR 2024**

The Ministerial Council,

Welcoming the readiness by Malta to assume the function of the OSCE Chairmanship in 2024,

Decides that Malta will exercise the function of the OSCE Chairmanship in the year 2024.

MC.DEC/2/23
1 December 2023
Attachment 1

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of Malta:

“Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished colleagues,

I wish to start by expressing my gratitude to you, Bujar, and the distinguished representatives of the participating States, for placing your trust in Malta to assume the Chairmanship in 2024.

In the most unprecedented circumstances, Malta heeded your request. We accepted to take up this vital role, as we remain strong believers in this OSCE, its relevance and the principle of consensus which has underpinned the *raison d'être* of this Organization since its inception in 1975. And this principle remains the bedrock of our joint endeavours and our shared responsibility.

Although quite late in the day, we are pleased that as an OSCE community we could reach consensus. This demonstrates our collective ambition to save our Organization and to put it on the path to make it thrive again for the well-being of all.

Mr. Chairperson,

We are most grateful to Estonia for their candidature. Like the European Union, Malta stood firmly and strongly behind Estonia's candidacy. Estonia respects OSCE commitments and fulfils all the necessary criteria to steer the OSCE as the Chairmanship. We regret that Estonia's candidature could not garner the necessary consensus. For us, Estonia remains a solid, relevant, and dependable partner.

Mr. Chairperson,

Malta takes up its role as Chairmanship in 2024 with absolute commitment.

Sixty years into our independence in 1964, Malta's foreign policy has consistently been rooted in a steadfast belief system, committed to upholding international principles and obligations. Geographically positioned at the crossroads of the Mediterranean, Malta has perpetually embraced a mission to act as a bridge builder, facilitating connections and fostering co-operation.

This is a historic moment for my country as we embark on chairing this august body for the very first time. We feel honoured but also humbled ahead of the great responsibility and duty that lies ahead of us.

To fulfil our role, we depend on the close co-operation and support of all participating States to fulfil the OSCE's mandate, and to return to our shared values in full respect of our agreed principles and commitments.

As so very well expressed in your Chairmanship's motto – 'It's all about people' – it is paramount to work on improving, intensifying, and bridging our relations to overcome distrust for the good of all, and to build back confidence.

Thank you.”

MC.DEC/2/23
1 December 2023
Attachment 2

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND
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By the delegation of the United States of America:

“In connection with the adoption of the decision on the OSCE Chairmanship in the year 2024, the United States would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure.

The United States welcomes the appointment of Malta as Chairmanship for 2024. We thank Malta for answering the call to lead the OSCE at this critical time. We have every confidence that Malta will be a principled and capable Chairmanship that will ensure the OSCE’s continued effectiveness in the next year.

We appreciate also Estonia’s willingness to lead the Organization and look forward to a future Chairmanship.

This decision was taken at the very last minute, which should not be the case. We would like to remind one delegation of its commitment to appoint a Chairmanship ‘as a rule two years before the Chairmanship’s term of office starts.’

We look forward to supporting Malta in every way we can as it takes up the Chairmanship.

I request that this statement be attached to the decision and to the journal of the day.”

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Attachment 3

Original: ENGLISH

**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND
CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE**

By the delegation of the United Kingdom:

“Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

In connection with the approval of the Ministerial Council decision on the OSCE Chairmanship in the year 2024, the United Kingdom would like to make the following interpretative statement under Paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure.

The United Kingdom welcomes the appointment of Malta and wishes them every success in carrying out their duties as Chairmanship for 2024. We particularly appreciate Malta’s willingness to answer the call of its participating State partners to take up this important undertaking at such a late stage. We offer the United Kingdom’s full support to Malta as it prepares, and holds, the Chairmanship. We encourage others to do the same.

The United Kingdom thanks the current Chairmanship, North Macedonia, for their good faith efforts over the last year to try to bring a resolution to this issue.

We strongly endorsed Estonia’s candidacy. The United Kingdom notes with regret that two participating States could not join consensus on that candidacy. Estonia would have been a principled and competent Chairmanship – and still could be in future.

Mr. Chairperson, I request that this interpretative statement be attached to this decision and included in the journal of the day.”

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Attachment 4

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**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER
PARAGRAPH IV.1(A)6 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE
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By the delegation of Norway (also on behalf of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Monaco, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom):

“I am speaking on behalf of the following countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Monaco, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Ukraine, and of my own country Norway in relation to the decision on the OSCE Chairmanship for 2024. In this context, we wish to make the following statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure:

Our delegations endorse this decision and extend our gratitude to North Macedonia's Chairmanship for their exceptional leadership in forging consensus on critical issues, thereby enhancing the OSCE's effectiveness.

We express our deep appreciation to Malta for agreeing to uphold the operational integrity of the OSCE by accepting the Chairmanship for 2024. This gesture demonstrates Malta's commitment and capability, and we pledge our full support to assist in their endeavours. We fully endorse Malta's nomination for the 2024 OSCE Chairmanship and look forward to a productive and co-operative relationship during their term.

We deeply regret that Russia and Belarus have impeded Estonia's candidacy for the 2024 OSCE Chairmanship. We believe that Estonia would have been a principled and reliable Chairmanship for the OSCE. We thank Estonia for its willingness to lead the Organization.

The consensus principle is in the DNA of the OSCE, serving as the bedrock upon which collaborative decisions are made. In our pursuit of collaborative decision-making, we must remain vigilant against the misuse of the consensus principle for unilateral purposes, which erodes the very foundation of our collective trust and co-operation.”

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The delegation of Spain, in its capacity as EU Presidency, passed the floor to the representative of the European Union, who delivered the following statement:

“In connection with the adoption of the decision on the OSCE Chairmanship in the year 2024, the European Union would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure:

The European Union has joined the consensus on adopting this decision and expresses its appreciation to the Chairmanship of North Macedonia for the dedicated efforts in fostering consensus on pressing matters for the effectiveness of the OSCE.

We express our gratitude to Malta for agreeing to step in at the eleventh hour to preserve the functionality of the Organization and assume responsibilities as the Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2024. We commend Malta’s commitment to upholding the values and principles of the Organization. In this regard, the European Union expresses its full support for Malta’s 2024 OSCE Chairmanship nomination and looks forward to co-operating closely and constructively during its tenure.

We reiterate our deep regret that the same two participating States, Russia and its accomplice in its ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine, Belarus, have blocked the candidature of Estonia for the 2024 OSCE Chairmanship. The European Union has remained steadfast in its support of Estonia’s candidacy and is confident that Estonia would serve as a principled and reliable Chairmanship.

We reiterate that all participating States have the responsibility to facilitate and not obstruct the necessary decisions for the effectiveness of the OSCE by using the consensus rule as a weapon.

The candidate countries North Macedonia¹, Montenegro¹, Albania¹, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, and Bosnia and Herzegovina¹, the potential candidate country Georgia, as well as Andorra align themselves with this statement.”

¹ North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

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**INTERPRETATIVE STATEMENT UNDER
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By the delegation of Armenia:

“Mr. Chairperson,

The delegation of the Republic of Armenia would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE in connection with the adoption of the Ministerial Council decision on the OSCE Chairmanship in the year 2024.

We would like to thank Malta for expressing its readiness to assume the leadership of this Organization in this challenging time. We acknowledge that it was not easy to make that decision under the current circumstances. The readiness of Malta to provide its valuable leadership and assistance in resolving the stalemate within the OSCE is greatly appreciated and fully endorsed by Armenia.

We stand ready to constructively engage and support Malta in fulfilling its mandate work in 2024.

I kindly ask this interpretative statement to be attached to the decision adopted and reflected in the journal of the day.

Thank you.”