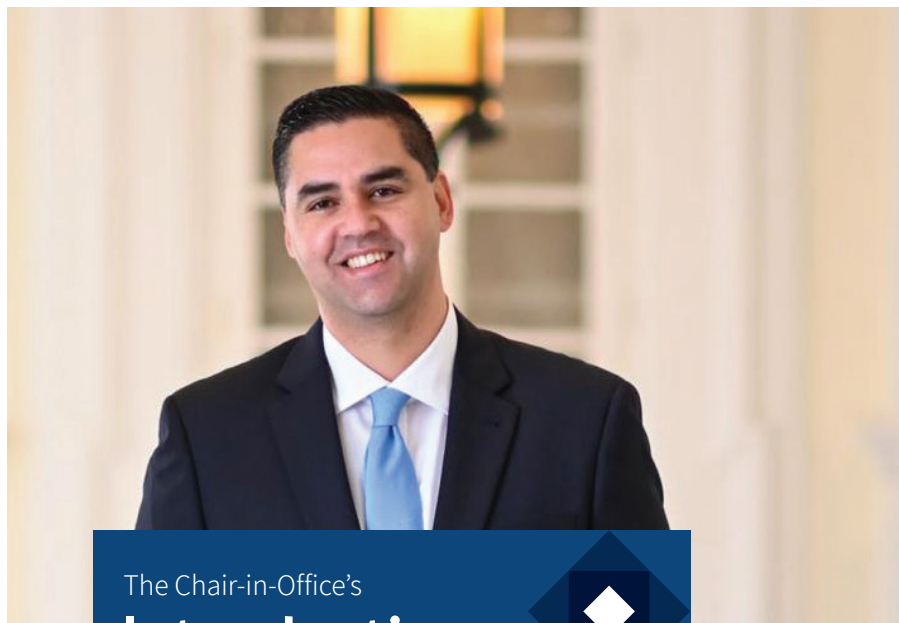


Strengthening Resilience, Enhancing Security

Malta's OSCE Chairpersonship 2024





The Chair-in-Office's

Introduction



It is with great honour that Malta assumes the Chairpersonship of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe for the first time. In a world marked by evolving geopolitical dynamics, complex security threats, and global uncertainties, we believe that the OSCE plays a pivotal role in fostering dialogue, promoting security and stability, and enhancing cooperation among its participating States.

Against this backdrop, we take up this role with a deep sense of commitment, humility, and pride, fully aware of the critical juncture at which we are doing so.

This document serves as a roadmap, providing a detailed overview of

Malta's strategic priorities during its Chairpersonship. It encapsulates our approach to fostering regional security and addressing existing and emerging threats. It is a testament to our commitment to strengthening the OSCE's resilience and capabilities to respond effectively and flexibly to the evolving security landscape.

The OSCE principles and commitments, including those enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act and Charter of Paris, serve as the bedrock of Malta's approach to the Chairpersonship in 2024. We reaffirm our shared obligation to uphold these principles, emphasizing that they are not optional but integral to the functioning of this Organisation.

At the core of Malta's engagement is the imperative need to restore the international system to a state of peace. With its unique position at the crossroads of East and West, Europe and Africa, Malta is well-placed to serve as a bridge in this volatile global landscape. This is coupled with our longstanding commitment to collaborative diplomacy, demonstrated by Malta's dual role as OSCE Chair-in-Office and an elected member of the United Nations Security Council.

The first of the Maltese Chairpersonship's overarching priorities is our commitment to keeping Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine at the top of the OSCE agenda. We will remain steadfast in demanding Russia's full and immediate withdrawal from Ukraine. This war must end. Until then we will provide space for political dialogue, call out breaches of OSCE commitments, and help ensure accountability. Malta pledges to strengthen the OSCE's support for the people in Ukraine, particularly through the Support Programme for Ukraine. Ukraine will also be a cross-cutting theme addressed in our thematic discussions during the year.

We will also prioritise the OSCE's role in helping to find a resolution to other conflicts across the OSCE region, preventing escalation, and restoring stability. Our Chairpersonship will rely on the OSCE's toolkit and expertise to support peace by facilitating dialogue towards durable and sustainable political solutions, particularly in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus. We will also work to provide support to our Field Operations and strengthen their capacity to assist host authorities in implementing OSCE principles and

commitments.

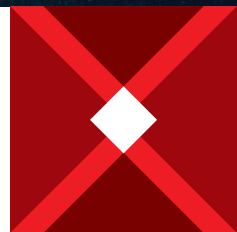
Malta's Chairpersonship will also focus on ensuring the broader functionality of the OSCE and finding effective and sustainable solutions for its leadership. Our mission, to build a bridge between Skopje and Helsinki, is guided by the principles of resilience and security. This means finding an urgent solution to deliver a solid Unified Budget and predictable leadership beyond September 3rd, 2024.

In the spirit of inclusivity, Malta will build on North Macedonia's success in placing the region's one billion people at the centre of all OSCE initiatives. This approach will focus in particular on effectively mainstreaming gender and increasing the meaningful engagement of youth in discussions.

Malta's leadership in the OSCE is not to be seen in isolation, as we work to optimise links with our non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council. This dual role provides us with a unique position and opportunity to identify constructive synergies with UN's largest regional partner organisation and promote peace and security globally.

Our Chairpersonship will leverage Malta's diplomatic initiatives in New York concerning the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. Additionally, we aim to give a new impetus to the OSCE's mission to enhance resilience against cyber threats, tackle transnational threats, and ensure adherence to conventional arms control commitments.

Fully cognisant of the fact that the security of our citizens is intrinsically connected to their



The Chair-in-Office's Introduction *continued*

economic prosperity and the quality of their environment, the Maltese Chairpersonship will prioritize efforts to narrow digital divides, facilitate broader access to digital technologies and skills, and foster increased collaboration on climate resilience, adaptation, and mitigation. Simultaneously, we will intensify our commitment to combat corruption and bolster food security.

Malta is convinced that our shared human rights commitments are an essential part of our comprehensive approach to security. At a time when media freedom is more under threat than ever before, Malta's Chairpersonship is committed to advancing initiatives focused on enhancing media literacy and ensuring the safety of journalists, with a special emphasis on the well-being and protection of female journalists, both online and offline. Additionally, we will actively engage in endeavours to counter violence against women and combat human trafficking.

Above all, as Chair of the OSCE, Malta will spare no effort to strengthen the organization's capabilities, maximize its potential, and pursue comprehensive and cooperative security, leaving no stone unturned in pursuit of these shared goals.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all those who have contributed to the development of this comprehensive document. It reflects the collective efforts of our dedicated diplomats and experts who have worked at pace, in difficult circumstances to articulate Malta's vision for safeguarding and upholding the OSCE's principles and commitments.

As we assume the Chairpersonship, we recognize the challenges ahead and the responsibility that comes with this role. Malta is ready to engage with all participating States, partners, and stakeholders in a spirit of openness and principled collaboration. Through our joint work, we will together strive to build a safer, more secure, and cooperative future for all within the OSCE region and beyond.

Ian Borg

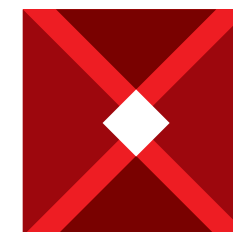
Minister of Foreign and European Affairs and Trade of Malta

OSCE Chairperson-in-Office 2024



Strengthening resilience, enhancing security:

The Maltese Chairpersonship's overarching priorities.



The Maltese Chairpersonship has put at the centre of its programme the mission to strengthen the resilience of the OSCE and its people in pursuit of a secure and peaceful future. We aim to facilitate and deliver decisions that leave the organisation more prepared and flexible to meet current and emerging challenges.

We commit to keeping Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine at the top of the OSCE agenda, working for an end to the human suffering that this war has caused. We will continue to demand Russia's full and immediate withdrawal from the entire territory of Ukraine. Our support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity will not waver. The war must end. Until then we will engage pro-actively, condemn breaches of our commitments, and help ensure accountability. Ukraine will also feature as a cross-cutting theme addressed throughout our programme.

The OSCE has a key role to play supporting Ukraine. We pledge to continue the important work of the Support Programme for Ukraine and pledge our support for even more engagement.

We will also prioritise the OSCE's role in helping to find a resolution to other conflicts and security challenges across the OSCE region. We will work to advance existing political processes while also providing support for our field operations. The OSCE also has an essential role in addressing new and emerging threats, protecting regions vulnerable to future conflict by building capacity, sharing experience, and thereby enhancing security.

It is essential that we work together to safeguard the OSCE's functionality and find solutions for its leadership. We will start work immediately to find common ground as quickly as possible on a solid Unified Budget. We will then work to ensure that the organisation and its four institutions have predictable leadership beyond September 2024.

Malta supports an inclusive approach to managing security and we will focus on two cross cutting priorities, ensuring gender is effectively mainstreamed and that youth are meaningfully engaged across the work of the OSCE.



Conflict cycle management, compliance with arms control, and a comprehensive, inclusive approach to addressing transnational threats



We will continue the OSCE's work to manage the threats to peace, security, and stability across the whole conflict cycle, reducing the risks associated with current and potential conflicts and addressing new security challenges.

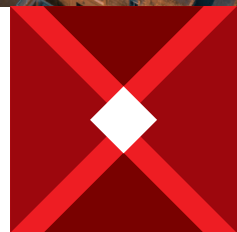
We will renew the OSCE's efforts to strengthen resilience against cyber threats, supporting implementation of the related Confidence and Security Building Measures. This will be delivered through capacity-building efforts across all sectors and sharing information and experience between States and across regions.

Complementing Malta's diplomacy in the UN Security Council on the Women, Peace and Security agenda, we will build on the OSCE's existing work to deliver on the commitments made under UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Ensuring full, equal, and meaningful participation of women and girls in all aspects of work in the Security Sector, is a basic prerequisite for comprehensive security and supports more peaceful and sustainable societies. We will seek ways to ensure women's inclusion across all areas of conflict management, support Participating States to develop and implement

their national action plans and mainstream gender through our conflict management work.

It is essential that the OSCE remains able to address transnational threats that have emerged or have the potential to increase. We will also adopt a comprehensive approach to addressing transnational security challenges, advocating for an inclusive and human rights-focussed approach, and learning from recent conflict experience. This will include supporting programmes of work in the field run by the Secretariat and Field Operations.

We will support the conventional arms control framework, promoting compliance with both the letter and spirit of the existing norms and principles, an essential element of early warning, risk reduction, and conflict prevention. We will maintain continued assistance to participating States in the delivery of projects in the field, including the safe and secure management of Small Arms and Light Weapons and Conventional Ammunition and destruction of surplus stocks, whilst reinforcing commitment towards humanitarian mine action.





Enhancing our people's security by promoting economic prosperity and protecting the environment in which they live.



Malta will focus on the most pressing, contemporary economic and environmental issues, playing an integral part in the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security.

Digitalisation and technological change call for a renewed focus on leveraging education and human resource development to support economic stability, that in turn strengthens security for all. We will work to counter digital and educational divides and promote more inclusive economic participation. This is essential to achieve economic transformation, economic prosperity as well as sustainable and inclusive growth.

The climate-security nexus has been gaining traction within the OSCE in recent years. Climate change exacerbates existing challenges, including the risks of conflict, which in turn, can have negative consequences on a changing climate. In order to address these concerns, we will consider the importance of capacity-building, new technologies, and youth engagement in creating opportunities for better environmental management and governance by participating States.

Corruption weakens institutions, erodes public trust, and exacerbates criminal activities, impacting social and economic development and creating the potential for security risks within the OSCE region. We will focus on ways to prevent and combat corruption and money laundering, including effective methods for asset recovery and the opportunities and challenges of digital transformation, between Participating States and across regions.

The OSCE region faces increasing political instability and conflict as well as the adverse impacts of climate change, demographic change, and global market developments, all of which impact food security. We will consider the importance of sustainable agriculture, food systems and supply chain security while harnessing the potential of digital tools and new technologies to strengthen climate resilience and enhance food security.



Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy, and the rule of law as the basis for a peaceful and secure world.



Malta will continue to place a strong emphasis on the OSCE's work to protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law, as well as work on the promotion of tolerance and non-discrimination. We will support the essential work of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. In a year when over one billion people will have an opportunity to participate in electoral processes, election observation will be in focus. Across our work, the OSCE will continue to offer an essential platform for dialogue with civil society.

In today's rapidly evolving security environment and digital information space, promoting media and information literacy is key to strengthening resilience to counter disinformation, strengthening our common security and functioning democracies. We will work with all generations to provide the skills to distinguish facts from fakes, supporting a well-informed citizenry and thriving democracies. In particular, we will work with youth to navigate online information with awareness.

Democratic societies rely on free and independent media for accurate public information and to hold those in power to account. In the face of physical threats and attacks, as

well as digital surveillance, legal harassment, or online violence, it is essential to ensure the safety of journalists and media professionals. We will build on the important work of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, to enhance the protection of women journalists, who continue to be targets for hate and harassment online.

Combating and preventing violence against women is an essential prerequisite to achieve their full, equal, and meaningful participation. The 20th anniversary of the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality will be an important opportunity to step up efforts across the OSCE to ensure that women and girls are free from violence. We will focus on engaging men and boys who have a key role in this endeavour.

Trafficking in human beings remains an acute security challenge, exacerbated by conflict and particularly impacting vulnerable individuals. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has created a heightened risk, especially for women and children fleeing the war. Working across OSCE structures and institutions, we will continue OSCE efforts to combat trafficking in human beings. We may also consider the links between combating human trafficking and the economic dimension.

Strengthening Resilience, Enhancing Security

