

Statement by Denmark at the reinforced meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council on 26. September 2023

As delivered by State Secretary for Foreign Policy Lisbet Zilmer-Johns

Thank you, Mr. Chair

First, let me thank the North Macedonian chairpersonship for convening us today to discuss the unprecedented challenges facing the OSCE.

The primary source of these challenges is the choice of one participating state to disregard the principles and agreements that this organization was built on. It is telling indeed, that through its aggression against Ukraine, Russia has violated all 10 principles of the Helsinki Decalogue.

The Russian war of aggression against Ukraine is brutal, reprehensible and in violation of the UN charter. We condemn it and insist once again that Russia can and should stop the war immediately by fully and unconditionally withdrawing from all of Ukraine.

Mr. Chair,

As it is waging this brutal war, detaining OSCE staff and unilaterally seizing OSCE assets, Russia's simultaneous message to the rest of us in the OSCE seems to be that consensus here in fact means simply accepting Russia's demands.

And so, as 2024 draws closer, we find ourselves without agreements on neither a chairpersonship, a budget nor the appointment of the four highest level officials of the OSCE. The OSCE has shown itself to be an adaptable organisation, but we cannot expect it to function next year if these matters are left unresolved.

Mr. Chair,

The Chairpersonship is a very important role for the OSCE to function and deliver. The OSCE must have such political leadership in 2024. There is only one candidate, Estonia, whom we fully support.

The OSCE needs a budget which fully enables it to implement its mandate and continue assisting states and populations to make our region more peaceful, stable, democratic and respectful of human rights. We encourage all participating states to join consensus on the budget as soon as possible.

The leaders of the independent institutions are fundamental to one of the key aims of the OSCE – holding us all accountable for living up to our commitments in the field of human rights. The Secretary General carries the increasingly difficult responsibility to keep the organisation running properly, and works hard also to keep it relevant in the eyes of the surrounding world. We fully support the roll-over of all four incumbents.

Chairperson Osmani,

Let me end by expressing our full support to you in the demanding task of leading us through these difficult times and challenges.

Thank you, Mr. Chair