

THIRTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

(Malta, 6 December 2024)

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF SWEDEN

(ALSO ON BEHALF OF ALBANIA, BELGIUM, BULGARIA, CANADA, CZECHIA, CROATIA, DENMARK, ESTONIA, FINLAND, FRANCE, GERMANY, GREECE, HUNGARY, ICELAND, ITALY, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, LUXEMBOURG, MONTENEGRO, THE NETHERLANDS, NORTH MACEDONIA, NORWAY, POLAND, PORTUGAL, ROMANIA, SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA, SPAIN, TÜRKİYE, THE UNITED KINGDOM, THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)

Mr. Chairperson,

This statement is delivered on behalf of NATO Allies.

1. Russia's illegal, unjustifiable, and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine has shattered peace and stability in the OSCE area. It is a blatant violation of international law including the UN Charter and contravenes OSCE principles and commitments. We also remain concerned about the challenging security situations in the OSCE area and beyond.
2. We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to a free, democratic, independent and sovereign Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. We fully support its right to self-defence and to choose its own security arrangements, as enshrined in International law, the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris and the Istanbul Charter for European Security. As Ukraine continues its vital work, on democratic, economic, and security reforms we will continue to support Ukraine on its irreversible path to full Euro-Atlantic integration, including NATO membership.
3. There can be no impunity for abuses of human rights, war crimes, and other violations of international law. Russia bears responsibility for the deaths of thousands and for extensive damage to civilian infrastructure in Ukraine. Russia's war has also profoundly jeopardized nuclear safety and food security.
4. We urge all countries not to provide any kind of assistance to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. We condemn all acts, such as by Belarus, the DPRK and Iran, facilitating, or supporting and thereby prolonging this war. We call on the PRC to cease all material and political support to Russia's war effort.

5. Russia remains the most significant and direct threat to our peace, security and stability. Russia seeks to establish so-called “spheres of influence” and direct control through coercion, subversion, disinformation, aggression and illegal attempted annexations. Russia is rebuilding and expanding its military capabilities and continues its airspace violations and provocative activities. We stand in solidarity with all Allies affected by these actions. Russia’s military build-up including in the Baltic, Black Sea and Mediterranean Sea regions and the High North challenges our security. Russia’s posture, intensified hybrid actions, including through proxies and its use of force violates the rules-based international order. We condemn Russia’s behaviour, and we call on Russia to uphold its international obligations.
6. We condemn Russia’s irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and coercive nuclear signalling, including its announced stationing of nuclear weapons in Belarus, which demonstrate a posture of strategic intimidation.
7. Russia has instigated conflicts in the OSCE area and inhibited efforts to resolve them. We call on Russia to withdraw all of its forces and equipment from the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, stationed there without their consent. We firmly support their sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity within their internationally recognized borders. We remain committed to supporting our partners to counter malign influence and aggression.
8. We reject Russia’s claims that NATO is escalating tensions. NATO is a defensive Alliance. We remain willing to maintain channels of communication with Moscow, including in the OSCE, to manage and mitigate risk, prevent escalation and build trust and confidence, based on key principles of transparency, compliance, verification, reciprocity and host nation consent. We remain united in our commitment to effective arms control as a key element of the security in the OSCE region, taking into account the prevailing security environment and the security of all Allies. Allies continue to enhance NATO’s deterrence and defence against all threats and challenges.
9. Russia continues to demonstrate disregard for arms control. Russia has violated and withdrawn from longstanding obligations and commitments, thereby weakening the global arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation architecture.
10. Ahead of the Helsinki Final Act’s 50th anniversary, we reiterate the key importance of the OSCE as a unique forum for dialogue, for advancing comprehensive security and for political accountability. We will continue to support the OSCE’s work across all three dimensions, and advocate for its effective and unimpeded functioning, including the autonomous institutions and field presences.
11. Russia must immediately stop its war of aggression against Ukraine and completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its forces. We welcome and support Ukraine’s continuous commitment to advance a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace through President Zelensky’s Peace Formula and the Peace Summit process.

The participating States subscribing to this statement request its inclusion in the Journal of this Ministerial meeting.