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MC.DEL/71/24  
12 December 2024

ENGLISH only

**CLOSING SESSION OF THE 31<sup>st</sup> OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL MEETING**  
**6 December 2024, Malta**  
**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF CANADA**

Mr Chair,

In addition to the statements that Canada has joined, I would like to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

First, I extend my gratitude to Malta, especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Malta's OSCE delegation, for their warm hospitality during this Ministerial Council and the various meetings hosted in your beautiful country over the past year.

I also wish to commend the OSCE staff for their creativity, determination, and resilience in upholding the organization's mandate despite the challenging circumstances.

The OSCE offers a robust set of tools to prevent conflict and enhance security.

The issues we face today are not due to the OSCE's shortcomings but stem from the blatant refusal of some states to adhere to the Helsinki final act principles and their OSCE commitments more generally, with Russia's actions in Ukraine being the most egregious example.

To support all OSCE participating states in meeting their commitments, it is essential that the Secretariat, Field Missions and Autonomous Institutions—ODIHR, RFOM, and HCNM be allowed to fulfill their mandates.

No single participating State should be able to block unilaterally the OSCE's budget or other important decisions and, in the process, weaken the OSCE, its Autonomous Institutions and Field Missions.

We regret that the consensus principle continues to be abused.

Mr. Chair,

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine shows its rejection of the UN Charter and OSCE commitments. Its attacks on civilians and atrocities in occupied areas reveal a blatant disregard for human rights and international humanitarian law and its threat of escalation is a rebuttal of its Helsinki Final Act commitments.

Canada stands with Ukraine in its defense of independence, freedom, and democracy. We regret that Belarus has been complicit in Russia's actions and in undermining the OSCE from within.

The OSCE, created during a time of division, remains a crucial platform for finding common ground and restoring Euro-Atlantic security.

We look forward to supporting Finland as the Chair-in-Office in 2025. We are confident that Finland will guide the organization with integrity, upholding and defending the OSCE's fundamental principles and commitments.

We welcome Cyprus' offer to chair the organisation in 2027.

Canada thanks you, Chair, for the steadfast and principled leadership you have demonstrated, and for the exemplary work of your team.

Thank you.

I would like to request that this statement be attached to the Journal of the day.