

31st Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council

Malta, 6 December 2024

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

In relation to the decision on the appointment of the Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, we would like to make the following interpretative statement under paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the OSCE Rules of Procedure on behalf of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Iceland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Monaco, Norway, Romania, Switzerland and Sweden:

We reiterate our gratitude to Malta's Chairpersonship for their leadership in forging consensus on critical issues, thereby enhancing the OSCE's effectiveness.

We welcome the appointment of Ms. Maria Telalian as Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

We regret that consensus on the leadership of the organization could not be reached earlier, leading to extended vacancies in these critical positions. This should not set a precedent for future similar decisions.

We reiterate the importance of cooperative decisions on the leadership of the Organization and the autonomous institutions that should be based on individual candidates and their ability to support OSCE principles and commitments. As participating States, we should avoid politicization of the consensus-based process and return to the spirit of multilateralism that guides our collaborative decision process.

Furthermore, we as participating States should strive to ensure gender equality in the leadership of the organization, including by putting forward more women as candidates.

In connection to the decision on the appointment of the Director of ODIHR, we would reiterate our strong support for ODIHR's mandate and autonomous work in the promotion of democracy, the rule of law and human rights. We also recall ODIHR's election observation mandate and note that ODIHR's election observation methodology is based on the principles of independence, impartiality and professionalism, is applied in the same manner in all participating States, and is globally recognized. We highlight the crucial role of its Director in exercising ODIHR's mandate.

In recent years, some participating States have misused consensus to prevent the allocation of resources to the third dimension. We reiterate our position that the OSCE should have adequate resources to fulfill its mandate across all three dimensions.

We would like to request that this interpretative statement be attached to the decision and included in the journal of the day.