

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

MC.DEL/18/24
6 December 2024

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

**STATEMENT BY
MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE CLOSING SESSION
OF THE THIRTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE
OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Malta, 6 December 2024

Mr. Chairperson-in-Office,

Before anything else, allow me to express our gratitude to the Maltese OSCE Chairmanship, personally to Minister Ian Borg and, of course, to the team in Vienna led by Ambassador Natasha Meli Daudey for the great efforts they have made to bring about effective work by our Organization in 2024, for the successfully held Ministerial Council meeting and for the hospitality extended in Malta.

The Ministerial Council meeting has given the high representatives of participating States an opportunity to compare notes on the situation in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area – a dialogue that is highly challenging and confrontational in many respects. However, it is important that, despite the aroused tempers, a conversation did take place and made it possible to set out different points of view. Therein lies the value of our Organization in these extremely challenging times.

The Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs analysed in detail the dangerously worsening situation in the OSCE's area of responsibility, the state of affairs within the Organization itself and the root causes of the existing situation, which is becoming increasingly alarming.

Unfortunately, the thematic content of the discussions has once again demonstrated the very high level of politico-military confrontation in the Euro-Atlantic area. As the 50th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 approaches, our region is on the brink of a most grave crisis – at the OSCE there is virtually nothing left of security or of co-operation, while the role of our Organization as such has been reduced to crisis communication without any unifying and constructive agenda.

The current scheme of things clearly illustrates the abysmal result of the irresponsible policies of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, the European Union countries and their satellites aimed at systematically ignoring the interests of countries that do not belong to the “Western orbit”, above all Russia. The statements delivered yesterday and today have once again distinctly exposed the fault line running between a group of countries that are pursuing confrontation for the sake of geopolitical opportunism and those that understand the price of irresponsible escalation. In particular, the countries that, in their fight against Russian statehood, are opting to fuel the Ukrainian crisis so that it acquires the dimensions of a continental conflict have surpassed themselves.

We solemnly declare that, despite all the efforts by anti-Russian forces, our country will continue to consistently pursue an independent political course, will not allow itself to be dictated to and will carry on defending its interests and the security of its citizens by all available means.

In our view, there may still be a chance for the OSCE to become involved in meaningful multilateral work on shaping the new contours of international security. But for that to happen, a responsible approach towards rhetoric and, most importantly, towards their own actions must prevail among a majority of the participating States.

At the Ministerial Council meeting in Malta now drawing to a close, important decisions were agreed on with regard to the OSCE's functioning: the Secretary General, the Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Representative on Freedom of the Media have been appointed. Next year's Ministerial Council meeting has also been scheduled and is to take place in Vienna. These decisions give certain hope that our common Organization will be able, after all, to contribute to averting further escalation and to paving the way for the resumption of responsible engagement with one another in the field of security.

We trust that, in 2025, the incoming Finnish Chairmanship will work in strict compliance with its mandate and help to unlock the OSCE's potential for the benefit of all the participating States' security.

Thank you for your attention.