

United States Mission to the OSCE



**Response to the Report by Coordinator of OSCE
Economic and Environmental Activities Igli Hasani**

As delivered by Deputy Chief of Mission Courtney Austrian
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 12, 2022

The United States welcomes Ambassador Hasani again to the Permanent Council.

Ambassador Hasani, Igli, we thank you for your detailed report. As you correctly point out, these are not normal times. And unfortunately, this is not – nor can it be – business as usual. Russia’s premeditated, unprovoked, and brutal war against Ukraine will go down in history as one of the most horrific and shameful acts of the 21st century. The Kremlin’s aggression has shaken the foundations of the international order and European security.

In light of Russia’s barbaric war of choice against Ukraine, the urgency of the Second Dimension’s work on economic and environmental issues is clear to all. The Moscow Mechanism Experts Mission report, presented on April 13 at the Permanent Council, stated that Russia’s brutality has entailed “clear patterns of international humanitarian law violations” by Russia’s forces. The report found indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks on specially protected objects such as hospitals, and on civilian infrastructure such as schools, cultural properties, water stations, and electricity systems. There have been thousands of strikes on transportation, economic, and industrial sites, apparently as part of the broader effort to destroy Ukraine’s economy. The resulting devastation will undoubtedly have economic and environmental consequences for years to come. I welcome your insights on how OSCE can help to identify and mitigate those impacts. Moreover, Russia’s reckless military operations in and around Ukraine’s civilian nuclear facilities raise the specter of radiological and environmental disasters with unfathomable consequences for Ukraine and far beyond Ukraine.

Ambassador Hasani, we agree with your assessment of the far-reaching human, economic, and environmental consequences of Russia’s war in Ukraine. We are all recalibrating our approach to support the victims of Russia’s aggression and mitigate further harm in the OSCE area. We recognize, as you do, that the impact of this war on food security, energy supplies, and economic development is global.

We applaud the steps your team is taking to address the new and compelling challenges arising from the devastation and disruption caused by Russia’s war of choice. We strongly encourage you and your team to move as quickly as possible to develop and implement new projects to address the ever widening economic and environmental consequences of Russia’s aggression. In particular, we urge you to work with the Executive Structures in the “whole of OSCE approach” you describe to accelerate this work. I welcome hearing your thoughts today on how you believe this can be achieved.

Ambassador Hasani, thank you again for your report and your work in these extraordinarily challenging times. You continue to have our full support.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.