

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/29/21
3 December 2021

ENGLISH only



**Buantoscaireacht na hÉireann
don Eagraíocht um Comhoibriú agus Slándáil san Eoraip**
Permanent Mission of Ireland to the
Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe

Rotenturmstrasse 16-18
1010 Vienna
Austria

National Statement as delivered by Minister of State for European Affairs Thomas Byrne at the OSCE Ministerial Council on 2 December 2021

Madam Chair,

Ireland fully aligns with the statement made by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union. These remarks are made in our national capacity.

First, let me thank you and the whole Swedish team for your leadership and unstinting efforts throughout the year. We look forward to working with Poland as the next Chair-in-Office, and assure them of our full support. We extend our appreciation to those who have expressed a willingness to lead the organisation – I mention here North Macedonia and Finland. I commend the willingness of Estonia to take on the role a regret that consensus has not proved possible on their candidacy.

The Swedish Chairpersonship made ‘back to basics’ their theme this year, with good reason. If the pandemic has taught us anything, it is the importance of acting together for the collective good.

A comprehensive approach to security demands that we address security issues in all their complexity. Key to this is ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of women, a demonstrable commitment to gender equality, and recognising the critical need for a gender-responsive approach in all our work.

Madam Chair,

Ireland values the opportunity that HDIM provides to engage with civil society. It was a source of deep regret that, despite the Chair’s tireless efforts, it was not possible to reach a consensus to hold the meeting this year. Ireland will strongly support Poland in hosting HDIM in 2022. We believe this event is a priority for this organisation’s credibility on human rights.

Democratic values are inseparable from the OSCE concept of security. I regret I must mention the ongoing situation in Belarus where the past year has seen repression of independent voices, journalists and other media actors, as well as civil society and human rights defenders.



**Buantoscáireacht na hÉireann
don Eagraíocht um Comhoibriú agus Slándáil san Eoraip**
Permanent Mission of Ireland to the
Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe

Rotenturmstrasse 16-18
1010 Vienna
Austria

Ireland's support for the OSCE's institutions is unwavering. For the organisation to deliver, we need to move beyond zero nominal growth to provide the OSCE with the resources it requires. The Organisation is not one of high cost, but it is of high value. We all need to consider the price to pay if we fail to provide it with the means to carry out the tasks we have set it.

The illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia and the violation of the territorial integrity of Ukraine continue to be of grave concern, the increase in ceasefire violations, closure of the border mission, and impediments to the SMM's freedom of movement – give us cause for further unease. The protracted conflicts in Georgia and Moldova, and ongoing situation surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh also represent significant challenges to OSCE principles and commitments. They can only be resolved by continued engagement including through the OSCE. Ireland's national experience of conflict means that we testify to the transformative effects of sustainable peace and reconciliation.

Madam Chair,

Ireland remains committed to multilateralism as an instrument for international cooperation and resolution of conflict. We view the OSCE as an essential component of that architecture.

Thank you, Madam Chair