



TIRANA “QUINT” STATEMENT ON IMPLEMENTING OUR COMMITMENTS TOGETHER

We, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Slovakia, Albania, Sweden, Poland, and North Macedonia, representing the previous, current, incoming, and future Chairs of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), reaffirm that our commonly agreed OSCE commitments and the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security must be upheld by the organization's participating States – every day and in every undertaking.

In this regard, we particularly thank the OSCE Secretariat, the OSCE institutions, the special and personal representatives of the Chairperson-in-Office and the various OSCE field operations for their valuable continued support and contributions. We welcome the new Secretary General and heads of institutions; strong management of our institutions is critical to our ability to meet the tasks before us.

Our shared principles date back to the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 and the Paris Charter of 1990, and it is high time that all OSCE participating States live up to these shared commitments.

The most serious challenge to security and stability in Europe is the conflict with respect to Ukraine, and its continued, devastating humanitarian impact. While we welcome the improved situation on the ground in eastern Ukraine in the second half of 2020, a sustainable political solution to the conflict must be found that upholds OSCE principles and commitments, in line with the Minsk agreements, and in full respect of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. We continue to support the ongoing, active efforts undertaken in the Normandy format and the Trilateral Contact Group, and note the OSCE's continued and valuable engagement through the work of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM). We state again that the SMM needs to be able to fully implement its mandate without restrictions throughout all of Ukraine.

We similarly reiterate our support for the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders. We underline our concern about the continuing deterioration of the human rights situation in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. We express our unwavering support for the Geneva International Discussions (GID) in facilitating a peaceful resolution of this conflict; the GID remains the key international platform in this regard and the OSCE is ready to continue its leadership of this format, together with the European Union and the United Nations.

We cannot let this Ministerial Council close without referencing the recent military escalation in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict context, where thousands of lives were lost and the humanitarian situation remains worrying. We welcome the cessation of fighting and the efforts that made this possible, and express our full support for initiatives under the auspices of the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group to relaunch the negotiation process; substantive negotiations must be continued in good faith in order to reach agreement on the steps for a comprehensive, peaceful and lasting resolution to the conflict.

The OSCE remains a vital instrument for preventing and settling other conflicts in the OSCE area in a peaceful and negotiated manner, and continues to facilitate the Transdniestrian settlement process. We welcome the Ministerial Statement on the Negotiations on the Transdniestrian Settlement Process in the “5+2” Format. And we reiterate the strong resolve to attain a comprehensive, peaceful and sustainable settlement of the Transdniestrian conflict based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognized borders with a special status for Transdnistria that fully guarantees the human, political, economic and social rights of its population.

With regards to arms control and security cooperation, we support initiatives aimed at strengthening and modernizing the Vienna Document. We call on all participating States to fully implement their commitments under the relevant instruments of Conventional Arms Control and Confidence and Security Building Measures – both to their letter and spirit – in order to make practical contribution to enhancement of military transparency and risk reduction.

We value and support the Structured Dialogue on the current and future challenges and risks to security in the OSCE area. We will continue this informal, open-ended, and state-driven dialogue in order to promote greater understanding of these issues in the wider political-military context, including in the areas of threat perception, transparency, risk reduction, and incident prevention.

We also reaffirm the importance of the economic and environmental dimension as an integral part of the OSCE’s approach to security and its potential for confidence building. We recognize that, while new and emerging digital technologies have the potential to enhance security and co-operation, they also have the potential to create new risks and challenges across all aspects of comprehensive security.

Across the world and in our region we see democratic values, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law being challenged and eroded. It is in the OSCE’s third dimension that our comprehensive concept of security is at its most powerful. We deeply regret the inability to hold the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) this year due to the unprecedented challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, and look forward to an even more vibrant HDIM in Warsaw in 2021.

We underline our continued concern about the situation in Belarus. OSCE commitments must be fully complied with and we invite Belarus to avail itself of the tools at the OSCE’s disposal to monitor the implementation of the commitments that the participating States have undertaken in the field of human rights and democracy. We are deeply worried by reports of grave human rights violations in the wake of August presidential elections, including excessive use of force against peaceful protestors, widespread detentions and arbitrary arrests, including of journalists, and

reports of violence against protestors and those in detention. We call for the immediate and unconditional release of all those arbitrarily detained, and for a complete and transparent investigation into all allegations of human rights violations and to hold those responsible accountable. We encourage efforts to find a way out of the situation through an end to violence through an inclusive, open, and constructive national dialogue. We regret that the offer by the current and incoming Chairpersons-in-Office to support and facilitate communication and co-operation in Belarus was not yet accepted; it could be an opportunity to move from confrontation to dialogue.

With challenges to our principles threatening our comprehensive security, it is through dialogue, inclusivity, and respect for our commitments that we have the best chance to make a positive difference for the people we serve. We believe the OSCE can still make that difference. To do so, we must keep dialogue open even when the odds are against us. We therefore urge the full and continued use of the OSCE's existing forums for dialogue and decision-making, in order to foster better implementation of commitments, peacefully manage relations between States, and rebuild trust and confidence.

We also need to continue to implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda. It is essential that we include and secure the meaningful participation of women and men in all phases of the conflict cycle.

We also acknowledge that security in the OSCE area is strongly interlinked with that of the neighboring regions and commend that our partnership with the OSCE Asian and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation has been steadily strengthened over the years. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the OSCE Asian Partnership for Co-operation, we renew our commitment to deepen and expand dialogue and co-operation with Afghanistan, Australia Japan, Korea and Thailand, the Asian Partners for Co-operation in the OSCE.

The OSCE's strength lies in its participating States being firmly grounded upon, and steadfast in their respect for, our principles and commitments. We must always be committed to them; there can be no retreat. These are our principles, and they must be upheld.