

OSCE Ministerial Council, Basel, 4-5 December 2014

Statement by H.E. Liselotte Plesner

Ambassador, Denmark

Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

Thank you also for the valuable personal contribution of the Chairperson-in-Office and for that of his extraordinary team throughout the year.

Denmark fully subscribes to the statement delivered by High Representative Mogherini on behalf of the EU.

This year has been marked by events that have shaken the foundations of international order and have challenged the OSCE. As a result of the crisis in and around Ukraine, the founding principles of the OSCE as enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act have been undermined: the principles of sovereign equality, inviolability of frontiers, and territorial integrity of States. We urge Russia to recognise these principles that it has itself invoked on many occasions and to contribute to solving the crisis and restoring peace and security. We strongly condemn the illegal annexation of Crimea, which we will not recognise, as well as the destabilising actions in eastern Ukraine.

Putting a final stop to the armed conflict that continues to claim lives every day requires the commitment of all sides to fully implement the Minsk agreements. I urge all parties to deliver real actions and note in particular Russia's responsibility in this regard.

In the midst of these challenges, we are witnessing how the OSCE is in a unique position to respond with its vast tools and mechanisms. The condition for this potential to be realised is a political will from all sides to forge consensus. While we have experienced difficulties in this respect, the mechanisms we have established demonstrate the sheer reach of the OSCE's capacities.

The Trilateral Contact Group has played an important role concerning the Minsk Protocol and Memorandum, which provide a platform towards a political solution. The monitoring mission (SMM) constitutes an invaluable tool for monitoring the implementation of these agreements. Denmark strongly supports the SMM and commends the courage of its monitors, 12 of whom are Danish nationals. I also commend the Chairperson-in-Office for his personal engagement in securing the release of hostages earlier this year, including two Danish nationals.

The OSCE has, in line with its comprehensive concept of security, also provided other forms of support to Ukraine. I commend OSCE's three autonomous institutions and the Project Coordinator in Ukraine for their strong engagement. I also welcome the application of OSCE's important politico-military tools in Ukraine under the Vienna Document and the Open Skies Treaty.

However, the OSCE toolbox has yet more to offer. It is a serious shortcoming that effective border monitoring of the Russian-Ukrainian border by the OSCE has, to this day, not been realised. The SMM should immediately take steps to begin border monitoring.

It is also important that we respond to the broader implications the crisis is having for a number of the fundamental OSCE principles and commitments. We must act to reassert these values and to demonstrate that the OSCE's founding values are as relevant as ever.

Denmark assures the incoming Serbian Chairman-in-Office of our support as we work together to protect and promote the OSCE founding principles, institutions and mechanisms. Good luck Serbia!

Thank you.