

Statement by

ENGLISH only

**Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms. Margot Wallström**

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Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks to Austria for your efforts and your great hospitality. Sweden aligns itself with the EU statement.

Dear colleagues and friends.

Why are we here today? Do we have the same answer to the question of why we sit around the same table? My understanding is that it is because we believe that a rules-based security order is something that we build together. In Helsinki, Paris and onwards, we agreed to uphold a set of fundamental principles. We have agreed that there can be no security between states without respect for human rights within states. We have agreed to hold each other to account in order to uphold and maintain these principles.

Today, we see severe challenges to what we have agreed: The deteriorating situation for human rights in the region. The protracted conflicts in Georgia, Moldova and Nagorno-Karabakh. And not least: Russia's aggression against Ukraine, its illegal annexation of Crimea and its direct involvement in destabilizing military activities in Eastern Ukraine. Hearing Crimean Tatars share their experiences this morning underlines the urgency.

As a member of the UN Security Council, Sweden would welcome a viable UN mission contributing to restoring Ukraine's territorial integrity and with a continuous presence along the state border between Ukraine and Russia. We are working with partners and allies to see if and how this could be achieved.

The strength of this organization lies in our commonly agreed principles and commitments from Helsinki and Paris and onwards. The OSCE must remain the guardian of these principles.

Of course, we have to do more to ensure that we increase the level of transparency and predictability in the politico-military field. We have to ensure implementation and modernization of our instruments and we welcome the structured dialogue. That is how we develop our work.

In no other region of the world has security cooperation reached the same level as in the OSCE. Therefore, we must safeguard the European security order.

We cannot continue to accept that a few participating States block important decisions which could take us forward.

Security is not a zero-sum game and the rules-based order can only function when everyone adheres to the rules. It is my firm belief that if you want peace, you must prepare for peace.

Thank you.