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**STATEMENT BY  
MS. MARIA TRIPODI, UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE FOR  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION OF ITALY,  
AT THE THIRTIETH MEETING OF THE  
OSCE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Skopje, 30 November 2023

Mr. Chairperson-in-Office,  
Esteemed colleagues,

In aligning myself with the statement made by the European Union, I should like first of all to congratulate North Macedonia for its efforts in leading the Organization during these difficult times marked by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the continued Russian obstruction of the orderly functioning of the OSCE.

Despite this, the OSCE has remained faithful to its fundamental values and has continued to effectively implement its mandate to protect the security of our countries and citizens.

Italy reiterates its strongest condemnation of the war of aggression waged by Russia against Ukraine, with the complicity of Belarus – an unprovoked, unjustified and illegitimate war that for 21 long months has been causing death, destruction and unspeakable suffering to the Ukrainian people, with negative consequences for the security of the European continent and the entire OSCE area, and aggravating the economic vulnerabilities and food insecurity of many countries in the rest of the world.

We reaffirm our steadfast commitment to supporting the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. A just and lasting peace can be achieved only through the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of Russian forces and equipment from Ukraine's internationally recognized borders.

Italy is committed to safeguarding the OSCE as one of the pillars of the rules-based European security order. Thanks in part to our commitment, the Organization has shown great resilience since 24 February 2022 and has been able to adapt to the new circumstances.

We are very pleased that it proved possible to reach consensus on entrusting Malta with the OSCE Chairmanship for 2024, so as to ensure the truly vital function of the Organization's leadership during the year that will begin in just a month's time. We assure our Maltese friends of our complete and unwavering support as they carry out the delicate task ahead of them. At the same time, we regret the unjustified opposition of some participating States to Estonia's valid candidature and thank it for the high sense of responsibility that it has demonstrated.

Very good work has been done by the Secretary General and the heads of the autonomous institutions in conformity with their respective mandates in circumstances that were indeed difficult both in political and in organizational terms. We sincerely thank them for their excellent work and very much hope that all their mandates will be renewed so as to ensure the continuity of functions that the Organization needs.

Mr. Chairperson,

It is undeniable that the OSCE is going through a difficult and sensitive phase politically and in terms of its functioning. The consensus rule is being abused and instrumentalized, without taking into account what could be irreparable consequences for the proper functioning of the Organization.

We note with great regret that it has not been possible to approve a Unified Budget since 2021. The OSCE must be able to count on adequate financial resources.

As we look ahead to the 50th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act in 2025, I should like to reaffirm Italy's unwavering support for the OSCE and the fundamental principles and commitments on which it is based. These principles and commitments are non-negotiable and not open to revision or reinterpretation.

The OSCE also possesses an *acquis*, built up over more than 50 years of work, on issues that will be crucial at the end of the conflict, such as confidence-building measures, arms control and, above all, the promotion of human rights, with a view to a holistic principle of security.

Italy, which is among the leading contributors to the OSCE in financial terms and in terms of personnel, will continue to commit itself with conviction and consistency to the common good of the Organization. We strongly urge all participating States to do the same.