



Programme of the 2023 OSCE Chairpersonship of North Macedonia

Foreword

IT'S ABOUT PEOPLE

The OSCE was created almost 50 years ago to promote dialogue, trust and co-operation among the countries that have committed to the values and principles of this Organization.

The OSCE's principal purpose is to prevent human suffering. The people of this wide region are not only the beneficiaries of our successes, but they are unfortunately also the first to feel the pains of war and aggression.

The signatory states of the Helsinki Final Act were "motivated by the political will, **in the interest of peoples**, to improve and intensify their relations and to contribute in Europe to peace, security, justice and cooperation...".

Bettering people's lives and improving human security is the OSCE's overall mission and a priority aim.

It is our endgame.



**BUJAR
OSMANI**

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of North Macedonia
OSCE Chairman-in-Office 2023

The Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine has undermined the European security architecture. It has shaken the pillars of our security and challenged the entire international system. It has also disturbed peoples' sense of their own peace and security.

Although we have stepped deep into the 21st century, in times we had envisioned to be a breakthrough era of peace and sustainable, comprehensive growth; paradoxically, we are still haunted by the ghosts of the past century: conflict, human suffering and insecurity.

Today, people are suffering as a result of the geopolitical turmoil. Those directly exposed to war and conflict fear for their lives and livelihoods and suffer acutely. Those further away feel the insecurity, distress and uncertainty. Their way of life is at stake and everyday routines disrupted.

It all comes down to people, across contexts or geography, regardless of who they are or where they live. They all need the same basic things – security, safety, peace. And they look to us to help.

And our list is long. Resolving and preventing conflict. Restoring trust. Addressing climate

change and transnational threats. Combatting corruption. Ensuring good governance. Improving human rights. Fighting discrimination. Promoting freedoms. **It's about people.**

In consequence, the 2023 OSCE Chairpersonship of North Macedonia will focus on people.

It is our obligation as Chair and as an Organization to restore hope and work towards a brighter future.

Being at the helm of the OSCE, the flagship cooperative security Organization, during these turbulent times conveys both obligations and a platform from which to act.

Today, our Organization is needed more than ever. The participating States have invested an immense energy and political capital to develop an Organization that is capable of safeguarding peace, while fostering dialogue as vehicle to improve cooperation. As Chair, it is our aim to preserve the Organization's legacy and to further its mission.

The OSCE must continue to deliver in difficult times and demonstrate its relevance and worth.



The OSCE toolbox has proven to be effective. As a host country of an OSCE field mission, we can testify firsthand to the benefits of OSCE's field presences. Therefore, as one of our overarching priorities, we will strive to reinforce the focus on the ground, which is a crucial prerequisite in empowering people as the final beneficiaries of the OSCE's activities. North Macedonia will promote, support and boost the OSCE's work on the ground, look to improve co-ordination and joint ownership, while integrating the added value of field operations, including their tangible impact on people in the OSCE's daily narrative.

We have complete trust in the important work of the Organization's field missions and autonomous institutions, fostering our concept of comprehensive security.

It is our goal to lead and provide avenues to optimize the scope of this unique concept. We will encourage positive changes across dimensions. However, the responsibility lies not just with the Chair but is shared with all participating States.

The way forward is to ensure the OSCE is a purposeful and effective organization. A perpetual provider. An OSCE whose acquis remains a bedrock of European security; and a platform for dialogue as a conflict prevention and resolution tool.

An organization that rises to the occasion. If we are in agreement on its existence and relevance, then it is our duty to keep it functional and to further invest in its resilience.

It is a great honor to serve as Chairman of the OSCE in 2023. An important mandate has been bestowed on us, and we will be vigilant, goal-oriented and resolute in implementing it.

North Macedonia will work to again promote trust and dialogue as a vehicle for peace and co-operation among the participating States. The success of this effort presupposes full compliance with our agreed principles and commitments, which will serve as the ultimate guidepost of our engagement for the way forward. **For the future of our people.**

Bujar Osmani

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of North Macedonia
OSCE Chairman-in-Office 2023

Working to support
a functional and flexible
OSCE, offering a versatile
toolbox to help restore peace
and security, prevent conflict
and promote co-operation
across the OSCE region.

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Ukraine will remain a central priority and a key security issue. Our priority across all three dimensions will be to provide essential support to Ukraine and its people.

The Chairpersonship will maintain the essential functions and operations of the Organization, ensuring that it is able to support vulnerable regions and remain flexible to address conflicts across the OSCE area. **Regional instability and the potential for new crises** will require continued attention, along with ongoing stabilization and capacity-building processes, including in the South Caucasus, South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

We support the existing formats related to the **protracted conflicts in the OSCE region** and their respective mandates. They are a solid platform for dialogue and conflict prevention. Against the complex geopolitical landscape and extremely difficult context for their functioning, we should think of ways ahead, at the same time preserving their legacy and proven potential in the future.

We will support and promote **cross-regional sharing of experience and best practices**, involving the field missions and through ongoing and new projects.

The OSCE region continues to be challenged by various security threats that have emerged or increased in recent years. We will work on comprehensively addressing **cyber security challenges and hybrid threats** and to improve resilience across different sectors by implementing appropriate confidence-building measures. We will also continue to work on the comprehensive programme of work delivered by the Secretariat and field operations to respond to **border security** - related challenges and risks.

Strengthening of the OSCE's **women, peace and security** agenda is also our objective. We will work to enhance the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in the security sector, as well as their inclusion in decision-making throughout the conflict cycle.

We will pay attention to the **arms control framework acquis** as we support compliance with existing norms and principles, in particular in the fields of risk reduction and conflict prevention and continue assistance to participating States through projects in the fields of **small arms and light weapons** and **surplus conventional ammunition**.

In parallel, we will consider the potential of reinvigorating the **OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security**, as an uncontested unique norm-setting framework.



Working to achieve human security through support for sustainable economic growth and environmental co-operation

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We see great value in second dimension issues, adding to human and overall security.

Corruption deepens social inequalities in the society and erodes trust and confidence. Thus, combating it is a shared priority. We will continue the efforts to **prevent and combat corruption**, focusing on specific niche areas like gender and corruption, digitalization and corruption and corruption in the environment, and consider possible projects for the participating States and regions. We will be also working to link the OSCE commitments and activities to **good governance** tools that the OSCE can use to support participating States.

The impact of **climate change** is one of our greatest global challenges, affecting every region on Earth. It endangers livelihoods and hinders people's access to basic needs such as food, water and energy – regardless of borders. We will work on raising further awareness on the nexus of climate change and security, through concrete project-related actions.

Energy security has become a vital element of our common security agenda. We will be providing a basis for discussion of emerging challenges related to **energy efficiency**; the need for **diversification of energy sources** and **resilient energy infrastructure**.

Given our Organization's holistic approach to security, within and across dimensions, **connectivity** and **people-to-people contacts** will be also priority targets. They have proven beneficial as a part of the confidence-building measures. Coming from South-Eastern Europe, we will be working on sharing of best practices and building on existing initiatives from our region.

Food security and **transboundary water management** pose yet another challenge for all of us. We will support continuous dialogue on these issues.



Working to uphold basic human rights and promoting tolerance and non-discrimination as prerequisites for comprehensive security

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Addressing **discrimination and intolerance**, including **bias-motivated crimes**, by promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms will be one of the signature features of our Chairpersonship. Special focus will be given to the improvement of the situation of **Roma and Sinti** within the OSCE area.

Combating trafficking in human beings will be high on the list of our priorities. We will use the 20th anniversary of the OSCE's *Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings* as an opportunity to take stock of progress made and pave the way for addressing emerging challenges.

In a rapidly evolving media landscape, upholding and promoting the **freedom of media** and other media actors – both off- and online - to address existing and emerging challenges, including those stemming from new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, will remain our priority.

In reviewing the implementation of our principles and commitments, we consider the active engagement of **youth** and **civil society**. A vibrant and resilient civil society is a vital element of a healthy democracy. Further involvement and co-operation with civil society and NGOs will be a key part of our agenda. The appointment of a **Special Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on Civil Society** is a testament to our commitment in this regard.

The **youth portfolio** will be of high priority in the 2023. The Chair will work on further elaborating and supporting youth-related initiatives, as well as

exchanges and opportunities for skill development, including across regions. The goal is to help youth become more resilient to common security threats and challenges. **The reconciliation efforts** of the youth in the OSCE region, as well as their vision of reinforced integration through inclusive dialogue, networking and project activities will be part of our agenda. We will work on integrating youth perspectives across all three dimensions.

Based on North Macedonia's unique model of a **functional multiethnic democracy**, we will initiate and support discussions on the value of **social inclusion and integration** and the means to achieve durable and substantive social cohesion.

The promotion of **women's effective participation in public and political life**, and the **eradication of violence against women**, including women journalists and public figures, remain essential. **Gender equality** is an integral part of the OSCE's comprehensive concept of security.

In implementing the programme, we will be working closely with all participating States, the OSCE's broader structure: the OSCE Secretariat, autonomous institutions, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, special representatives, existing conflict resolution formats and the field missions – our Organization's true value. Given today's security interlinkages, we will also continue working with the OSCE's Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Co-operation.





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