



**PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF PORTUGAL
TO THE OSCE**

1390th meeting of the Permanent Council

22 September 2022

**Statement by Portugal on the
Moscow Mechanism invoked regarding the
Russian Federation**

Mr. Chair,

Portugal aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union and has subscribed the statement on behalf of the countries invoking the Moscow Mechanism.

Allow me to emphasize some points in my national capacity.

The conclusions of the Moscow Mechanism report unfortunately confirm a **climate of fear and intimidation in the Russian Federation** imposed on the civil society through the **gradual, yet systematic, restrictions on freedom of expression, of the media, of peaceful assembly and of association**. The internal repression in Russia is a reflection of the war of aggression against Ukraine. On the latest developments of that aggression, we made our position clear this morning.

The assessment presented by Professor Angelika Nußberger, to whom I express our appreciation, is very clear and extensive. For this reason, and for the sake of time, I will not dwell on it in detail.

Instead, allow me to use this opportunity to stress the importance of **preserving our Organisation and all its consensually agreed mechanisms and instruments, such as the Moscow Mechanism**. This is now more important than ever, in light of the aggression against Ukraine and the unprecedented obstruction to the OSCE's functioning, which is curtailing its ability to properly defend the *acquis* built over decades.



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Invoking the Moscow Mechanism is not, as some participating States insist, a “finger-pointing exercise”, much less an attempt to “interfere in domestic issues”. On the contrary, it arises from a **genuine and legitimate concern regarding the respect for OSCE commitments and principles, to which all participating States are equally accountable for**. We all agreed that human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy, and the rule of law do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of a State – they lie at the core of the OSCE human dimension. We also explicitly agreed that human dimension is an integral element of the comprehensive security concept.

Portugal deeply regrets that Russia chose once more not to engage with the Expert Mission and even the Mechanism itself. **This choice cannot, however, be used to delegitimise the findings of the Report.**

We urge the Russian Federation to reconsider its approach towards the OSCE and its instruments and mechanisms in all three dimensions and to effectively address all the issues identified in the Moscow Mechanism reports.

Thank you.

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