



MINISTERUL AFACERILOR EXTERNE

**Statement of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania,  
H.E. Mr. Bogdan Aurescu,  
at the 27th Ministerial Council of OSCE  
3 December 2020**

*Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Thank you Prime Minister Rama and your team for leading the OSCE throughout 2020, and for your efforts deployed under these exceptional circumstances generated by the ongoing pandemic.

*Distinguished colleagues,*

We have celebrated in 2020 45 years since the genesis of our Organization as the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. It was an “act of creation”, and “the most forceful expression” of our people’s desire to live in peace, as once said by the Romanian diplomat Valentin Lipatti, who had an active role during the Helsinki process.

We have also celebrated 30 years since the adoption of the Paris Charter. It was a moment that marked the end of confrontation and division on our continent and paved the way for a new beginning based on strong commitments to democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms, prosperity through economic liberty and social justice.

These two documents have established the principles and commitments that continue to guide the activity of our Organization. However, as was said by many leaders gathered in 1975 to sign the Helsinki Final Act, we are not judged by the promises we make, but by the promises we keep.

This is still valid today when we see the values and principles of the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter being under heavy strain. We have seen this year violations of human rights and of the freedom of expression. Furthermore, national borders continue to be violated and international law disregarded. A new escalation of violence in Nagorno-Karabakh, unfortunately with considerable loss of human

lives, reminded us of the need to put conflict prevention and conflict resolution back on top of the agenda of our Organization.

Bringing an end to the protracted conflicts around the Black Sea region remains the most important task of the OSCE: this is the core mandate of the Organization and its biggest potential contribution to regional security.

The full use of the OSCE conflict cycle toolbox is needed more than ever. Therefore, the upcoming 10th anniversary in 2021 of the Ministerial Decision No. 3 of 2011 on "Elements of the Conflict Cycle" should enable a greater sense of responsibility.

We stress the importance of field missions that must be allowed to fulfil their mandates. I underscore that any limits imposed on the Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine or on the OSCE Mission to the Republic of Moldova are unacceptable. Here, I would like to reiterate the importance of *withdrawing foreign troops and ammunition* from the territory of the Republic of Moldova, in accordance with the norms of international law and the commitments previously made within the OSCE.

At the same time, the resolution of the conflict in the Republic of Moldova remains an issue of high priority. We support a comprehensive, peaceful and sustainable settlement of the conflict within the 5+2 format, based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognized borders, and without affecting the pro-European future of the Republic of Moldova.

We are particularly encouraged by the overwhelming victory of Maia Sandu in the presidential elections of 15 November 2020. This is a victory of democracy.

The conflict in Ukraine continues to represent a pressing challenge for the OSCE and its Participating States. We are concerned about the high volume of forces and weapons mobilized near the Line of Contact in spite of the agreed ceasefire. We support the efforts paving the way for a sustainable political solution to the conflict in full respect of Ukraine's sovereignty, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

Romania welcomes the ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh, but the fighting proved once again how easily protracted conflicts revive. This reminds us of the paramount importance of durable negotiated political solutions, reached within the internationally agreed formats, based on the principles and norms of the international law and human rights law. In this context, let me also reaffirm Romania's strong support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders.

We still need a solution to the crisis in Belarus that outburst in the aftermath of the presidential elections of August. I deplore the fact that the situation in Belarus continues to deteriorate. In September, seventeen participating States, including Romania, invoked the OSCE Moscow

Mechanism over allegations of human rights abuses. The objective and well-documented Report by Professor Wolfgang Benedek showed serious human rights violations and made consistent recommendations. We urge the Belarusian authorities to reconsider their approach and to implement these recommendations.

*Distinguished colleagues,*

It is regretful that the COVID-19 pandemic had a direct impact on our Organisation, mainly on the political-military dimension. We are in favour of continuing the process of Structured Dialogue as an open ended process, without predetermined results, in accordance with the mandate we have established, four years ago, in Hamburg.

Preservation of the functionality of the conventional arms control system is paramount. In this regard, the full implementation of the three pillars of the European security architecture, namely the CFE Treaty, the Treaty on Open Skies and the Vienna Document, represents the basis of restoring trust and confidence among participating states, enhancing the military stability and predictability in the OSCE area. We support the updating of the Vienna Document, according to the proposal put forward by the 34 participating states.

Regarding the Economic and Environmental Dimension, we believe in a strong OSCE engagement as an integral part of the Organization's comprehensive approach to security.

Another topic of high interest for us is the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They are essential for free, democratic and resilient societies.

Let me conclude by expressing my confidence in the OSCE potential for consultation, negotiation and action and I wish every success to the incoming Chairmanship-in-Office, and assure our Swedish colleagues of our full support and cooperation.

Thank you!