



OSCE Ministerial Council in Bratislava, 5-6 December 2019

Statement by Ambassador Guðni Bragason on behalf of

H. E. Guðlaugur Þór Þórðarson, Foreign Minister of Iceland.

Mr Chairman/Madam Chair,

I thank the Slovak Chair for the energetic leadership this year, and Chairman Miroslav Lajcak for his personal engagement, especially regarding efforts to ease the plight of ordinary people suffering because of the conflict in Ukraine, and elsewhere in the OSCE area.

We welcome the recent constructive work of the **Trilateral Contact Group (TCG)** and hope that the up-coming Summit within the **Normandy format** will bring concrete results.

We reaffirm our full support for Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, and call on participating States to adhere to international obligations and commitments under the **Minsk Agreements**. We also reiterate our support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia.

We emphasize the importance of the OSCE missions and the organization's **core activities and operations** to strengthen security in the region and prevent conflict

from breaking out. The **comprehensive security concept** of the OSCE is an integral part of our security policy.

There are reasons for concerns regarding international cooperation on security in the OSCE region and Conventional Arms Control and Confidence and Security Building Measures (**CSBMs**), to which the OSCE has for decades effectively contributed.

We urge all participating States to actively engage in the important endeavors now taking place within the OSCE on the modernization of the **Vienna Document (VD)**.

As the outgoing Chair of the **Joint Consultative Group (JCG)**, Iceland urges all participating States to resume implementation of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty (**CFE**), and honor fully the Open Skies Treaty (**OST**). Both treaties are an important part of the Euro-Atlantic security structure, and contribute to greater security in the OSCE-area.

The issue of non-proliferation of conventional arms should remain high on our agenda, as the agreed measures in the field of small arms and light weapons (**SALW**) demonstrate.

The **Structured Dialogue** has proven to be a useful addition to the politico-military exchange regularly taking place within the organization. We support the discussion on issues such as Risk Reduction and Incident Prevention on and over the High Seas within the Structured Dialogue. While fostering the important instruments already in place, participating States need to come to terms with new challenges and threats to security, such as **Hybrid Threats**, aimed at destabilizing democracy and security.

We must show vigilance in preserving our **democratic and pluralistic societies**, which are being threatened by forces, which do not tolerate democracy, human rights, freedom of thought and expression. We support the OSCE work on counter-terrorism, transnational threats and border security.

We have wholeheartedly supported the Slovak emphasis of energy security and called for energy efficiency through new technology and digitalization, and the increased use of **renewable energy**, especially geothermal energy, in the overall energy consumption, benefitting future generations. The OSCE needs to be an integral part of the global UN **Agenda 2030** and contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

We are fully committed to human rights, gender equality, the protection of children and the rights of LGBTI individuals. Entering an important anniversary year for women's rights, we call for an effective implementation of **UN Security Council Resolution No 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and subsequent resolutions**. We put emphasis on the **election monitoring** of ODIHR and the work of all three independent institutions in strengthening democracy and human rights, freedom of the media and rights of minorities.

Finally, Mr Chairman/Madam Chair,

I wish Albania every success in chairing the OSCE in 2020 and thank Slovakia for the hospitality here in Bratislava.

Thank you.