

OSCE Moscow Mechanism invoked again on Russia's war in Ukraine: joint statement

Mr. Chairperson,

I am delivering this statement on behalf of Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union Member States.

Today, our delegations will send the following letter to OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) Director Matteo Mecacci, invoking again the [Moscow Mechanism](#), with the support of Ukraine, as we continue to have concerns regarding the humanitarian impacts of Russia's invasion and potential for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

"Director Mecacci,

On February 24, 2022, the Russian Federation, with the support of Belarus, launched an invasion to wage war against Ukraine. This further invasion took place against the backdrop of ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine that has, since 2014, violated Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and territorial waters.

[On 3 March 2022, forty-five OSCE Delegations, following bilateral consultations with Ukraine under the Vienna \(Human Dimension\) Mechanism, invoked the Moscow \(Human Dimension\) Mechanism under Paragraph 8 of that document.](#) We requested that the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) inquire of Ukraine whether it would invite a mission of experts to address the human rights and humanitarian impacts of the Russian Federation's invasion and acts of war, supported by Belarus, on the people of Ukraine, within Ukraine's internationally recognized borders and territorial waters.

A mission of experts were subsequently tasked, inter alia, to undertake the following:

- Establish the facts and circumstances surrounding possible contraventions of OSCE commitments, and violations and abuses of international human rights law and international humanitarian law;
- Establish the facts and circumstances of possible cases of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including due to deliberate and indiscriminate attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure; and to collect, consolidate, and analyze this information with a view to presenting it to relevant accountability mechanisms, as well as

national, regional, or international courts or tribunals that have, or may in future have, jurisdiction.

[On Tuesday, 12 April 2022, OSCE participating States received the independent experts' report, which confirmed our shared concerns about the impact of the Russian Federation's invasion and acts of war.](#)

Concerned of the continuing impact of Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine, the delegations of Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, invoke again the Moscow (Human Dimension) Mechanism under Paragraph 8 of that document. We request that the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) inquire of Ukraine whether it would invite a new mission of experts to consider, follow up and build upon the findings of the Moscow Mechanism report received by OSCE participating States on 12 April.

We also request ODIHR provide any relevant information or documentation derived from any new mission to other appropriate accountability mechanisms, as well as national, regional, or international courts or tribunals that have, or may in future have, jurisdiction. "

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

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Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

[Report by OSCE Head of Centre in Ashgabat: UK response, June 2022](#)

Mr Chair,

I would like to welcome you, Ambassador MacGregor, back to the Permanent Council and thank you and your colleagues for your report and for the work undertaken at the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat over the last year.

The United Kingdom and Turkmenistan have a close and productive relationship. At our first ever bilateral dialogue in February, our foreign ministries signed a joint Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for future dialogues and committed to cooperate on trade, climate change, human rights, Afghanistan, and defence. Many of these issues are relevant to the discussion we are having here today.

We were pleased to read in this report that the Centre stepped up its activities to raise public awareness of the OSCE and promote the Centre’s work through national and international media. We welcome these efforts, and we would be interested to hear about any positive effect you have noticed as a result.

Mr Chair, I would like to focus my remarks on three areas of the Centre’s work – border management, human rights, and gender.

First, on border management. We welcome that the Centre increased its activities to address border security challenges in the region via an expanded Strengthening Border Service Capacities of Turkmenistan project, which the UK was pleased to help support financially. We also welcome the regional events on humanitarian assistance with representatives of relevant border agencies, including Afghanistan.

As our Deputy Foreign Minister agreed recently with Turkmen Foreign Minister Meredov, Afghanistan remains an area of mutual concern. Although we are rightly focusing our attention on Russia’s illegal war of aggression in Ukraine we must not forget what is happening in Afghanistan.

We support the Turkmen Government’s current policy of non-recognition of the Taliban and welcome the humanitarian support they are providing, especially for girls’ education. The UK continues to provide political and humanitarian

support to Afghanistan, and we will not stop our insistence that the Taliban be held to account against UNSC Resolution 2593.

Second, on human rights, and specifically on democratic freedoms. We welcome that the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights were invited to observe the March 2022 elections, but regret that unlike other missions they had unreasonable restrictions placed on them, leading to ODIHR's conclusion that an observation mission was not "feasible". We also note that none of their recommendations following earlier elections had been implemented, in particular those related to political pluralism and enjoyment of fundamental human rights.

With this in mind, we support the Centre's work to promote implementation of international human rights standards, respect for fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law. We urge the Government of Turkmenistan to continue to work with the Centre in Ashgabat on essential issues like constitutional recognition, electoral law, and freedom of expression or movement. Without such action there will be no change to democratic rights in Turkmenistan.

And finally, on gender. We were pleased to read about the Centre's continued work to promote gender equality in Turkmenistan, recognising the particular importance of this area. In this vein, we were encouraged to read about the support you provided to a hotline and shelter for victims of domestic violence. We welcome the work to promote the economic rights and opportunities for women, with a focus on rural and vulnerable women, and engaging men and boys in the advancement of gender equality.

This is particularly important at the moment as we are concerned with recent reports of restrictions imposed in Turkmenistan on women. Any restrictions cut across the most basic concepts of gender equality, which the Government of Turkmenistan's Gender Equality Action Plan is designed to promote.

To finish, I would like to once again thank you, Ambassador MacGregor and your team for your report and wish you every success in future.

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ILO Committee on the Application of Standards: UK statement (June 2022)

Following the Committee of Experts report on China's non-compliance with Convention 111, the United Kingdom is deeply concerned about the continued reports of a widespread and systematic programme of forced labour in Xinjiang involving the Uyghur and other Turkic and Muslim minorities. New evidence continues to emerge to reveal the scale and severity of the human rights violations in the region, including from the Chinese Government's own documents.

In order to effectively implement the recommendations found in the Committee of Experts report, we strongly call for the Chinese Government to accept a high-level tripartite mission in Xinjiang. We urge the Chinese Government to grant all necessary accommodations to enable the mission to carry out its duties in a meaningful and unfettered manner – just as we did prior to the recent visit by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. We request that this mission be conducted before the next sitting of the International Labour Conference in 2023.

In addition, we suggest that the Chinese Government avails itself, without delay, of all available technical assistance to ensure comprehensive compliance with Convention 111 in law and practice.

We request that the Chinese Government provides detailed and complete information on the application of Convention 111 to the Committee of Experts before its next sitting in December 2022.

Such is the seriousness of this case that we believe it merits the inclusion of a special paragraph in the final report.

Furthermore, we take note of the announcement by the National People's Congress to ratify Convention 29 on Forced Labour and Convention 105 on the Abolition of Forced Labour. We call on the Chinese Government to officially

ratify both Conventions, and any accompanying Protocols, by depositing the legal Instruments at the International Labour Office, and to take expeditious action to align its laws.

The United Kingdom pays tribute to the Committee of Experts for bringing this serious issue to the attention of the ILC, and we call on China to immediately cease its repressive and discriminatory policies in Xinjiang.

Thank you, Chair.