

Joint Statement on “Universality and Indivisibility of Human Rights for All”

In reference to the Russian and Belarusian events at the Hofburg

1480th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council

4 July 2024

I deliver this statement on behalf of the delegations of the Nordic-Baltic countries (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, and Sweden), Poland and Ukraine, as well as Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechia, France, Georgia, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Slovenia, and the United Kingdom.

We feel compelled to take the floor with reference to the announcement by the delegations of Belarus and Russian Federation of a discussion on the “Universality and Indivisibility of Human Rights for All” and a round table on “Formation of a multipolar world order”. The latter was attended by former members of the illegitimate Russian administrations in the temporarily occupied or controlled Luhansk and Donetsk regions of Ukraine known for justifying the subjugation of a sovereign state and violations of human rights.

Both those events are attempts to divert attention from Russia’s abuses and violations committed during its illegal and unjustified war of aggression in Ukraine.

Russia, together with Belarus, complicit in Russian aggression, are trying to create an alternative narrative and spread disinformation. This will not find any acceptance among the participating States of the OSCE as we have all witnessed Russian and Belarusian total disregard for our common OSCE commitments and their utmost contempt towards its instruments like the Moscow Mechanism and Vienna Mechanism. We remind Russia that we are still waiting for its reply to the questions posed through Vienna Mechanism.

In this context, we fully support the OSCE’s autonomous institutions and appreciate the ongoing and continuing work done in support of the principles and commitments, which all participating States have subscribed to.

In addition, we note that Russia – an aggressor state - whose war crimes as well as violations of International Humanitarian Law have been well documented; a participating State who has denied the sovereignty of another country - does not hesitate to make use of common OSCE resources for such events, including the Hofburg premises, even though it has not paid its dues to the organization for years.

Events like those held on 1 July and 5 July go against the OSCE’s core principles.

We call on Russia to end its illegal, unprovoked and unjustifiable war of aggression against Ukraine and completely and unconditionally withdraw all its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and start constructive work in the OSCE, including on human rights issues through the HDIM and all Human Dimension Mechanisms.

Thank you.