

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 12 March 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the briefing provided by Her Excellency Ms. Ann Linde, Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, as well as the statements delivered by the representatives of Estonia, France, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, the Niger, Norway, the Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, the United States of America and Viet Nam in connection with the video-teleconference on “Briefing by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe” convened on Wednesday, 10 March 2021.

In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter dated 7 May 2020 by the President of the Security Council addressed to Permanent Representatives of the members of the Council (S/2020/372), which was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, this briefing and these statements will be issued as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Linda **Thomas-Greenfield**
President of the Security Council



Annex I**Briefing by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Ann Linde**

I thank you for this opportunity to brief the Security Council about the Swedish chairpersonship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). As the world's largest regional security organization under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, the OSCE plays an important role in many of the challenges on the Council's agenda. Our 57 members span three continents — North America, Asia and Europe — a diverse group of countries bound together by joint commitments dating back to the Helsinki Final Act of 1975.

Close collaboration between the United Nations and the OSCE remains essential, an example of the partnerships that the Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations (General Assembly resolution 75/1) called on us all to strengthen. The Secretary-General's vision for networked multilateralism gives new impetus to our partnership and provides a framework for how we can work together.

We have a security situation in the OSCE region that calls for more, not less, common solutions. Old rivalries continue to fuel conflicts and pose challenges to international peace and security. And new conflicts, crises and threats call for our increased attention — from climate change to cybersecurity.

We are in the midst of a historic and devastating pandemic that will have long-term effects on the world.

As Chairperson-in-Office, I will do my part to ensure that the OSCE can make a real difference on the ground and to defend the principles on which the organization rests. Ultimately, our efforts aim to contribute to resolving the conflicts and improving the lives of people in our region.

My first priority is to focus on the basic commitments and principles on which the OSCE was founded — the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris for a New Europe of 1990. These documents clearly state the sanctity of sovereignty, territorial integrity, the freedom from threat or use of force and the right of all States to choose their own security policy path. Underpinning these documents, of course, are international law and the Charter of the United Nations. They are relevant not only to Europe but globally. The participating States of the OSCE made commitments that constitute the foundation of the European security order and that remain valid and relevant to this day. Our task is to implement these commitments.

We will also seek to strengthen the OSCE's unique comprehensive concept of security, which makes a clear link between security and respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law. This is a link well-known to the United Nations. Through this concept we will contribute to conflict resolution in our region in accordance with international law. We know that societies where human rights are fully enjoyed by all are more secure and have better prospects for sustainable, resilient and prosperous development. This is why the women and peace and security agenda is a guiding theme of our chairpersonship.

One of my main priorities as Chairperson-in-Office will be to seek continued engagement at the highest levels towards sustainable solutions to crises and conflicts in the region, in line with international law and with full respect for the OSCE principles and commitments

The crisis in and around Ukraine remains the most serious challenge to the European security order. It was therefore important for me to visit both Kyiv and the contact line in Donbas during my first trip as Chairperson-in-Office in January.

Seven years into the crisis, it is clear that efforts towards conflict resolution need to intensify. As Chairperson-in-Office, I fully support the work of the Normandy format and the Trilateral Contact Group to achieve the full implementation of the Minsk agreements and will seek to contribute to a sustainable political solution in line with OSCE commitments and principles, while respecting the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

During my visit to the contact line, I saw first-hand the dedication and courage by which the women and men of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission carried out their tasks on the ground. Their work is essential to the peace effort and must remain unimpeded throughout Ukraine.

The conflict also has dire humanitarian consequences, and the ceasefire in force since July of last year should now pave the way for further steps to ease the burden on civilians. Recent violations of the ceasefire are deeply worrisome. Respect for international law, including international humanitarian law, is of course essential. As long as contact line crossing points remain closed, communities and families are separated, elderly people struggle to receive care and access to Government services is restricted for many citizens. I hereby reiterate my call to fully open the two new crossing points in the Luhansk region on both sides of the contact line, as well as to reopen the existing ones. These were also some of my key messages during my recent visits to Kyiv and Moscow.

During my visit to Georgia in February I had an opportunity to meet President Zourabichvili, and then Prime Minister Gakharia, and to reiterate the OSCE's full support for the Geneva international discussions and related incident prevention and response mechanism formats. This dialogue process, co-chaired by the OSCE, the United Nations and the European Union, is another important example of United Nations-OSCE cooperation in conflict resolution.

In addition to meeting with leaders in both the Government and civil society, I also visited one of Georgia's administrative boundary lines in its conflict context, where I saw first-hand the need for increased contacts and communication between local communities. Together with the European Union, the United Nations and the OSCE should seek to step up our joint efforts to build the confidence necessary to bring the conflict closer to its resolution.

In my talks with President Sandu and other leaders in Moldova the prospects to move forward with talks in the 5+2 format and to continue building on the Berlin Plus package were discussed. I also confirmed our readiness to hold 5+2 talks in Stockholm this year. This message was reiterated in my discussions with the representative from Transnistria and was generally well received. Although I remain realistic, there may be some cause for cautious optimism in making progress on the settlement process this year. But to make progress, the full support of all the parties to the conflict is needed.

The unresolved Nagorno-Karabakh conflict remains a serious challenge to international peace and security. Last autumn, we witnessed a renewed outbreak of the armed conflict, resulting in thousands of casualties and immense suffering, including among civilians. The ceasefire achieved in November, with the assistance of Russia, brought about a welcome stop to hostilities. Now we must seize this moment to renew efforts towards a lasting peace agreement. The OSCE has been given the international mandate to lead this process, under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group co-Chairs. As Chairperson-in-Office, I fully support their continued engagement in the peace process, and I will use my planned visits to Baku and Yerevan next week to express my expectation that the sides recommit to talks on a sustainable political solution. We must also address a number of humanitarian needs, reminding us all of the need to implement international humanitarian law in this as in other conflicts.

In situations where trust between States has eroded, confidence- and security-building measures play an important role in supporting transparency and predictability. As Chairperson-in-Office, I call on all participating States of the OSCE to comply with the measures that are at the heart of confidence- and security-building in our region, including the Vienna Document and the Open Skies Treaty. These measures must be kept up to date and fully complied with and comprise as many States as possible to ensure their continued functioning and relevance.

When crises erupt despite our efforts to prevent them, I remain ready to engage directly with the stakeholders involved to offer the OSCE's good offices to facilitate solutions. In line with this, the offer that Albania's Prime Minister Rama as Chairperson-in-Office and I extended last year to facilitate a genuine dialogue between the Government and the opposition in Belarus still stands.

Secretary-General Guterres' call for a global ceasefire during the pandemic is much-needed. The adoption of resolution 2532 (2020) on 1 July 2020 and the recent resolution 2565 (2021), on vaccine access in conflict areas, show the importance that the Security Council attaches to combating the pandemic and resolving conflicts. It is my strong wish to see these resolutions implemented to support peace efforts in the OSCE region.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has added another layer of challenges by putting strains on open society. During the past year, we have seen a backsliding of democracy and respect for human rights in the OSCE region, as we have seen elsewhere. The Swedish chairpersonship will emphasize the right to freedom of expression and freedom of the media, as well as other democratic rights that our States have committed to respect. As Chairperson-in-Office, our efforts will be carried out in support of, and be complementary to, the important work done by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Representative on Freedom of the Media and the High Commissioner for National Minorities.

As Chairperson-in-Office, we will draw on the expertise of civil society to ensure that their contributions inform all aspects of security. Before this meeting, I met with civil society organizations from across the OSCE region, including from countries affected by unresolved conflicts, to exchange views on the women and peace and security agenda. Key takeaways were that impunity for sexual and gender-based violence prevails and that the pandemic's negative effects on women's economic and social rights are especially hard-felt for those in already vulnerable situations. The meeting reconfirmed my conviction in the need to involve civil society organizations in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, to engage women in all parts of peace processes and to address threats to civil society actors. In that regard, close cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE in the field can make a difference.

Our strong focus on advancing the women and peace and security agenda will continue in the same spirit as during our tenure in the Security Council in 2017-2018. We also plan to work together on this agenda with UN-Women, including on how to promote women's economic empowerment in our region. I have appointed an advisory group of experts on these issues, which held its first meeting at the end of February. Through their support, I hope that our work to mainstream the agenda will gain further momentum and continue long after we have passed the baton to Poland and successive OSCE Chairperson-in-Office.

In the period ahead, I plan to visit OSCE field presences across our region from South-East Europe to Central Asia. I will continue to highlight the priorities outlined at this meeting today, while seeking common solutions to the challenges facing our region.

Annex II**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Estonia to the United Nations, Sven Jürgenson**

I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Ann Linde, for taking on the challenging task of leading the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) this year. I am sure this will be a natural continuation of Sweden's dedicated work in the Security Council. I thank her also for briefing us on Sweden's chairpersonship priorities. Estonia absolutely shares her view that multilateral cooperation is the best way to address our common challenges and that we should uphold our common rules and fulfil commitments, including notably those on which the OSCE was founded upon. Respecting the norms and principles of international law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations as well as the Helsinki Final Act is of the utmost importance. Global and regional organizations need to work hand in hand — we stand for stronger cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations.

We welcome the Swedish chairpersonship's focus on the conflicts in the OSCE region, which constitute a threat to international peace and security and contribute to great human suffering. Unfortunately, for the seventh year in a row, violations of international law and the Helsinki principles, as well as a number of bilateral and multilateral agreements and commitments, including the Budapest Memorandum, continue. The Russian Federation has illegally annexed Crimea and occupied certain parts in eastern Ukraine. We underline Russia's responsibility as a signatory of the Minsk agreements and urge Russia as a party to the conflict and to the Trilateral Contact Group to implement the provisions that it has committed itself to.

We regret that the restrictions imposed on the freedom of movement of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission have persisted, notably in non-Government-controlled areas of eastern Ukraine, hindering the Mission from fully implementing its mandate. We further call on Russia to stop fuelling the conflict by providing financial and military support to the armed formations it backs. Foreign Minister Ann Linde, how could the OSCE and the Security Council further assist in advancing the steps needed to bring about a solution to the conflict?

On Georgia, I would like to highlight that we are deeply concerned about the Russian military build-up in the occupied regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. We call on the Russian Federation to fulfil its obligations under the ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008 and its subsequent implementing measures of 8 September 2008 and withdraw its military forces from Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions without delay. We are also deeply worried about Russian military exercises, infrastructure reinforcements and borderization activities in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. We urge Russia and the de facto authorities that it backs to refrain from any new provocative steps that could further escalate the already fragile security and humanitarian situation on the ground. In that context, we remind the Russian Federation of its responsibilities in line with the judgment of 21 January of the European Court of Human Rights in the case *Georgia v. Russia*. We reiterate our call for access for the European Union Monitoring Mission to the whole territory of Georgia, as well as for human rights monitoring mechanisms and humanitarian and other civil society organizations.

Estonia supports the efforts of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, her Special Representative and the OSCE Mission to Moldova to resolve the Transnistrian conflict. In addition to confidence-building measures, we should also seek to resolve the main underlying issues of the conflict. We are carefully following developments on the ground, and we encourage a results-oriented meeting in the 5+2 format as

soon as possible in 2021. I would like to ask Foreign Minister Linde on what issues the OSCE would expect to advance in the 5+2 format during this year.

With regard to the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, we continue to support the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group co-Chairs to find a comprehensive and sustainable settlement to the conflict.

In addition, we commend and support the OSCE chairpersonship's offer of dialogue with Belarus, and we call on the Belarus authorities to respond to the offer, as well as to bring their policies and practices into compliance with their OSCE commitments. We also repeat our call on Belarus to follow up on the recommendations from the Moscow Mechanism report, as presented in November 2020.

As a crosscutting priority, we must protect and promote human rights. We agree with Foreign Minister Linde that the link between security and respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law is crystal clear. Upholding human rights is not merely compatible with conflict-resolution strategies; it is an essential element in ensuring peace and democracy. Human rights violations can be an early indicator and a driver of conflict and, regrettably, are also its constant feature.

We strongly welcome the focus of the Chairperson-in-Office on women and peace and security. We support the work of the OSCE on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), and we see merit in further cooperation and exchange between the United Nations and the OSCE in that regard.

As an expression of the Estonian commitment to the OSCE, let me reiterate that the Government of Estonia has confirmed its readiness to assume the role of the OSCE chairpersonship for 2024.

Annex III

Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, Nathalie Broadhurst Estival

[Original: English and French]

I join all my colleagues in welcoming Ms. Linde and thanking her for her briefing. I would also like to congratulate Sweden on its programme of work during its chairpersonship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

In line with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, the Organization and the OSCE have the responsibility for coordinating their work to respond to threats to international peace and security. I would therefore first like to refer to several of those threats.

On the Ukrainian issue, France and Germany are continuing efforts, which remain difficult, in support of the full restoration of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine more than a year after the Paris summit in December 2019. We fully support the mediation role played by the OSCE within the Trilateral Contact Group, in coordination with the Normandy format. We also welcome the work carried out by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, whose role in monitoring the ceasefire is crucial. The mandate of the Special Monitoring Mission should be fully implemented throughout Ukraine, which means including close to the Russian-Ukrainian border. We strongly condemn all actions that undermine the security of the men and women who make up the Mission or that seek to impede their work.

With regard to Nagorno-Karabakh, France, as co-Chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, is committed at all levels, together with its Russian and American partners, to achieving a peaceful and lasting solution. We are determined to fully play our role in seeking that lasting solution following the ceasefire agreement reached on 9 November 2020. That is the mandate that we have been given by the OSCE members. We will continue to attempt to fulfil the mandate. Particular attention must be paid to humanitarian access, the return of displaced persons, the situation of prisoners of war and other detainees and the protection of cultural heritage.

With regard to Belarus, where human rights have been violated and where the democratic aspiration of the people has been suppressed by violence, we fully support the mediation initiative that Ms. Linde launched with her predecessor, Mr. Rama, and welcome his achievements during his chairpersonship in 2020. We call for the implementation of the recommendations of the report of independent expert Wolfgang Benedek following the activation of the Moscow Mechanism, which we requested with 16 other members of the OSCE.

France fully supports the OSCE in its attempt to resolve other crises in our neighbourhood. That applies to the international discussions in Geneva, which must allow Georgia to restore its territorial integrity. We also support the OSCE mediating role within the 5+2 format so as to achieve a comprehensive, peaceful and lasting settlement to the Transnistrian conflict, in full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within its internationally recognized borders.

France remains committed to the multidimensional approach to security that prevails within the OSCE. In the context of the political and military dimension, the weakening of arms control tools undermines our collective security interests and the European security architecture. We must put an end to that pernicious dynamic.

Through its human dimension, the OSCE also focuses on the crucial link between collective security and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In that regard, France reiterates its full support for the human dimension institutions, which continue to demonstrate their usefulness, and welcomes the priorities that have been defined by the Swedish chairpersonship, particularly with regard to gender equality and safeguarding freedom of expression and press freedom. We believe that on all those issues we must also give full consideration to the civil society of the States participating in the diplomatic and field activities of the OSCE.

The economic dimensions and, increasingly, the environmental dimensions of collective security must also be taken into account. The OSCE is the model in Europe for an effective form of grass-roots multilateralism, which was built on the foundation of a common set of values at a time when there were stark political differences. In cooperation with regional organizations, the United Nations can continue to develop multilateralism that produces results capable of responding to all the crises and challenges of our time.

Annex IV**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, Nagaraj Naidu Kakanur**

At the outset, let me begin by welcoming Her Excellency Ms. Ann Linde, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, to the Security Council. I also thank her for her comprehensive briefing on the activities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and its priorities.

The role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as their cooperation with the United Nations, is provided for in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. We welcome the briefing by the OSCE's Chairperson-in-Office.

The adoption of the Helsinki Final Act and the creation of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) at the height of the Cold War demonstrated that dialogue and cooperation were possible even in times of the most serious confrontation. The CSCE transformed into the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Today the OSCE, with its 57 participating members from three continents, including countries from the extended neighbourhood, respecting the principles of the comprehensiveness and indivisibility of security, an allegiance to shared values and a commitment to upholding norms of behaviour, plays a significant role in the promotion of international peace and security and empowers its membership to build a better and more secure future.

Peace and security are essential prerequisites for the growth and development of humankind. We all have a collective responsibility for the prevention of conflict and creating conditions for sustaining peace and ensuring security. Today the international order is facing multiple challenges to peace and security. The parochial policies of certain States and their perceived notion of existential threats have contributed to insecurity in many regions. Purely bilateral issues are being brought to regional and international forums, thereby diminishing the chances for direct and mutual dialogue.

The challenges confronting the OSCE community come from different sources. They include not only potential challenges to sovereignty but also threats to peace from ethnic tensions and violent separatism within States. As the largest regional security organization, the OSCE also addresses some of the toughest transnational threats that its membership faces, such as weapons proliferation, terrorism, cybersecurity, migration, environmental damage and drug trafficking. Despite those challenges, the OSCE has broken new ground in developing effective tools for conflict prevention, peacebuilding, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation to address such risks and threats to security.

We believe that the bilateral agreements negotiated between the parties concerned provide the basis for a negotiated and peaceful resolution of disputes. The commitment to upholding a rules-based international order, underpinned by respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, the rule of law, transparency, freedom of navigation in international seas and the peaceful resolution of disputes, remains critical and relevant as well.

We support active engagement between the United Nations and the OSCE based on the framework for cooperation and coordination between the United Nations Secretariat and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, signed in 1993, and in line with the Charter of the United Nations.

While noting the ongoing global counter-terrorism efforts and contribution of the OSCE, we would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the importance of

that issue. It is evident from recent lone-wolf attacks in many parts of Europe that terrorists have significantly enhanced their capabilities. We need to ensure that our collective resolve to fight terrorism is not weakened.

The OSCE was among the first regional organizations to strongly condemn the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament in 2001. We believe that the OSCE has an important role to play in our continued fight against terrorism and other new and emerging threats. In that context, I would like the Security Council to take note of the eight-point action plan on counter-terrorism proposed by India's External Affairs Minister on 12 January while addressing the Council (see S/2021/48, annex 5), which also merits the serious consideration of the OSCE.

Lastly, the OSCE's contribution to the rules-based international order and multilateralism is immense. With the current pandemic putting a severe strain on societies all over the world, Sweden will take on the OSCE chairpersonship in truly challenging times. We welcome Sweden's strong focus to further the women and peace and security agenda during its chairpersonship. We believe that the inclusion and meaningful participation of women are vital for the successful prevention and mitigation of conflicts, as well as for consolidating peace. We also appreciate Sweden's strong emphasis on dialogue, inclusion and respect for agreed principles in approaching the challenges that we face today. My delegation would like to join all the other members of the Council in extending its good wishes for Sweden's chairpersonship of the OSCE.

Annex V**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations, Jim Kelley**

I would like to thank Minister Linde for briefing us on her priorities as Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2021. I want to assure the Minister of Ireland's full support in her important role.

Listening to the Minister's briefing, I was very struck by the close links between the work of the OSCE and the work of the Security Council and the wider United Nations. It is a reminder that the importance of multilateral cooperation in the face of our common challenges simply cannot be overstated.

As a founding member of the OSCE, Ireland regards the organization as a vital instrument for European stability and security. We greatly value the OSCE's work on conflict resolution and prevention, its activities on human rights and its regional role as well.

The OSCE's comprehensive approach to security is as pertinent and relevant as ever. Respect for human rights, the rule of law and economic progress are all essential elements for sustaining peace and prosperity. We look forward to working closely with the Chairperson-in-Office to ensure strong, complementary partnerships between the United Nations and the OSCE.

We strongly support the priorities that Ms. Linde outlined this morning, in particular her efforts to strengthen gender equality in all aspects of the OSCE's work, including by seeking women's economic empowerment and supporting the meaningful implementation of the Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security in the OSCE region, including through dialogue with women peacebuilders and civil society representatives.

Indeed, the women and peace and security agenda is a priority for Ireland in our work on the Security Council, including as co-Chair of the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security. The truth is that neither the OSCE nor the Security Council can successfully address peace and security challenges without the full, equal and meaningful participation of women at all stages in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding. Like Minister Linde, we believe that the United Nations and regional organizations such as the OSCE have a special responsibility to lead the way in those efforts and should work together to reinforce each other's messages.

In Ukraine, for example, we have seen how women on the ground are playing a central role in peacebuilding efforts. Ensuring space for those women and civil society in the peace process will be key to delivering effective and sustainable conflict resolution.

Let me say as well that Ireland is a firm supporter of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and we call for the full implementation of the Minsk peace agreements. We also remain seriously concerned by the humanitarian situation in Ukraine. During our discussion in the Security Council on 11 February, we heard worrisome information regarding the humanitarian impact on civilians of the almost complete closure of crossing points along the line of contact (see S/2021/159). Like others, we call again today for the Shchastia and Zolote entry and exit crossing points to become fully operational and for all currently closed entry and exit crossing points to be reopened to avoid exacerbating the acute humanitarian crisis.

Ireland strongly supports Sweden's intention to keep conflict prevention and resolution at the top of the OSCE's agenda. The Chairperson-in-Office has already

demonstrated this commitment through her recent visits, including to Georgia, where we commend her focus on the incident-prevention mechanism and on people-to-people links between Tbilisi and the breakaway republics. Ireland also commends Sweden's focus on the Transnistrian settlement and plans for holding 5+2 talks.

We were reminded last autumn of the tragic human cost of conflict in the region when we saw a return to hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh. Ireland welcomes the cessation of hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan. It is essential that both sides now engage in finding a sustainable solution to the issues around Nagorno-Karabakh under the auspices the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group.

Let me conclude by assuring Foreign Minister Linde once again of Ireland's steadfast support for her important work.

Annex VI**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations, Michael Kiboino**

Let me welcome Her Excellency Ms. Ann Linde, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden and Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and thank her for her briefing. I also congratulate Ms. Linde on assuming her role at the helm of the OSCE and wish her success as she advances the Swedish priorities for the organization, which focus on maintaining the European security order, addressing protracted conflicts and enhancing democracy, gender equality, human rights and the rule of law.

The importance of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is critical to the maintenance of international peace and security. In this regard, the cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE as the primary organ for the maintenance of international peace and security throughout the OSCE region is commendable.

Kenya lauds the OSCE for its record of preventive diplomacy and multilateral cooperation on peace, security and development. We note that the organization has made efforts in Ukraine as it continues to execute its mandate in monitoring the implementation of the 2015 Minsk agreements, endorsed by the Security Council in resolution 2202 (2015). I reaffirm Kenya's support for the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, which should continue to have unobstructed access in order to monitor and verify compliance with the Minsk agreements pursuant to its mandate.

Kenya believes that it is the responsibility of all relevant parties, including the OSCE, to ensure a sustainable environment conducive to Kosovo's long-term peace and stability.

On Nagorno-Karabakh, we support the work of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries, particularly their call on all the parties to the conflict to comply with their commitments, including to the non-use of force to settle the dispute. We commend the Chairperson-in Office of the OSCE for stressing the inclusion and meaningful participation of women in all phases of the conflict cycle and the importance of moving forward on the women and peace and security agenda in line with the organization's concept of comprehensive security. I also commend the OSCE for its inclusion of civil society in the interests of the people and the stability of the broader region to ensure lasting solutions to conflict.

I take note that the OSCE works to prevent conflicts from arising and promotes peacebuilding and post-conflict rehabilitation. In particular, we commend the organization for putting in place a wide range of early-warning and conflict-management tools, such as its network of field operations and the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre. We recommend that the OSCE share its experiences and expertise with other regional organizations across the world.

As I conclude, let me reiterate that Kenya supports the OSCE in its pursuit of genuine dialogue as the primary option in resolving all conflicts within the OSCE region. With political will and genuine inclusive dialogue, tangible and sustainable peace can be achieved in all conflict situations.

Annex VII**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations, Juan Ramón de la Fuente Ramírez**

[Original: Spanish]

I welcome Foreign Minister Linde and wish her every success in her term of office and thank her for the information she has kindly shared with the Security Council.

As an international community, we face challenges that, because of their complexity and urgency, are impossible to solve at the strictly national level. Mexico supports the work of regional bodies in support of the efforts of the United Nations to find solutions to these challenges. In this regard, we recognize the work of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) on several of the issues on the international peace and security agenda, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Multilateralism harnesses common action and cooperation to build sustainable peace founded on a rules-based system.

We recognize that the Swedish Chairpersonship-in-Office of the organization has articulated the OSCE's priorities for this year around values we fully share, such as the peaceful resolution of conflicts in the region, making progress on the women and peace and security agenda and supporting the link among security, respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

We also recognize the mediation and good-offices work of the OSCE through the deployment of peace missions, field offices and special representatives. The OSCE's mediation work is instrumental in resolving disputes and building confidence between States through cooperation in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. We also note the work of the OSCE missions, which seek to promote the rule of law in the region by strengthening local and institutional capacities.

We express our support for the role of the OSCE and the Trilateral Contact Group in the implementation of the Minsk agreements. We encourage the parties to continue to support these efforts and comply with the provisions of resolution 2202 (2015), as this package remains the only agreed framework for a comprehensive, negotiated and peaceful solution to the situation in Ukraine. It is essential that the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission be granted full and secure access in order to fulfil its mandate.

We also recognize the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group aimed at seeking a peaceful and negotiated solution to the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. Mexico deplores the harm caused to the civilian population, in particular to children, as well as the regrettable use of cluster munitions. We call once again on all countries producing and using these weapons to implement a moratorium and join the Oslo Convention.

Mexico commends the work of both Russia and the OSCE Minsk Group in facilitating the ceasefire agreement signed on 9 November. We call on the parties to engage in dialogue without preconditions, reach an agreement on the future status of the region and facilitate unrestricted access for humanitarian aid workers, the exchange of prisoners of war and the return of internally displaced persons, in accordance with that agreement.

As we commemorate International Women's Day this week, we applaud Sweden's initiative to strengthen gender equality in all aspects of the organization's work. The full, equal and effective participation of women in all decision-making processes is essential.

Finally, we draw the attention of the Security Council to explore new avenues of joint collaboration with the OSCE focused on conflict prevention, taking into account the major challenge posed by the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. This is undoubtedly one of the causes fuelling conflicts and crises in the region.

Annex VIII**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations, Abdou Abarry**

[Original: French]

I thank Ms. Ann Linde, Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, for her excellent briefing.

The Niger welcomes the priorities of the Swedish OSCE chairpersonship, which include upholding the OSCE's common principles and commitments, respect for Europe's concept of comprehensive security, support for and contribution to conflict resolution, and the strengthening of gender equality in all aspects of the organization's work. My delegation particularly welcomes the OSCE's efforts aimed at resolving conflicts in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, at facilitating the settlement of disputes and at promoting peacebuilding and post-conflict rehabilitation.

Within its area of operation, whether it is the Minsk process, the Trilateral Contact Group, the Transnistrian settlement process or the Geneva international talks, to name but a few, the OSCE plays an important role in facilitating dialogue and in supporting mediation, conflict-prevention and resolution initiatives. That is why my delegation supports the Minsk Group co-Chairs in their firm commitment to the non-use of force or threat of force to settle disputes, reiterated in its statement of 3 December 2020, as well as its stance in favour of a negotiated, comprehensive and lasting settlement of all core issues with regard to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

In this month of March, strengthening gender equality is a vision that is in line with resolution 1325 (2000), which calls for greater representation of women in decision-making in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of disputes.

Respect for international humanitarian law is important, including the return of all prisoners of war, civilians and other detained persons, and safe and unhindered United Nations humanitarian access to Nagorno-Karabakh, in accordance with the principles of humanity and neutrality. In this respect, any conflict-resolution process will also have to take into account the preservation of cultural and religious heritage.

Beyond the aspects I mentioned, my delegation welcomes the partnership between the OSCE and the United Nations, which also covers the fight against terrorism, combating human trafficking and addressing the environmental and economic aspects of security, cybersecurity and new information and communications technologies.

Terrorism is one of the most important threats to peace, security and stability, and to the enjoyment of human rights and to social and economic development. Accordingly, the organization's commitment to preventing and combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, whatever its motivation or origin, remains essential. In this regard, the OSCE makes a broad contribution to international efforts under the auspices of the United Nations to combating terrorism and addressing its manifestations and the various social, economic and political factors underpinning it.

The Niger supports the cooperative and coordinated approach to the fight against terrorism at all levels and all efforts guided by the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant Security Council resolutions, in line with the OSCE's consolidated framework for combating terrorism, which remains an important asset that benefits all countries. The Niger therefore calls for an expansion of OSCE cooperation with African regional and subregional organizations.

Annex IX**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations, Trine Heimerback**

I join others in warmly welcoming Her Excellency Ms. Ann Linde, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, and thank her for briefing the Security Council in her capacity as Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The OSCE supports the work of the United Nations by promoting and maintaining peace and security at the regional level. We value the fact that the OSCE serves as a forum for cooperation with regional and subregional organizations and other initiatives in the region. Norway will continue to support the Swedish Chairperson's emphasis on the OSCE's comprehensive security concept. We also share the focus on conflict resolution, especially in relation to ongoing conflicts and crises.

Let me highlight three situations we believe need particular attention.

First, there is Ukraine. The conflict in that country undermines European security. Norway welcomes the engagement of the OSCE in addressing this conflict. We commend the Chairperson-in-Office for her trip to both Kyiv and the contact line in Donbas in January. Let me also thank the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine for the tremendous job it is doing under very difficult circumstances. This Mission also continues to provide us with timely and impartial information on the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

Secondly, there is Nagorno-Karabakh. The statement on the conflict signed by Armenia, Russia and Azerbaijan last year ended the fighting. A lasting solution will best be reached through the involvement of the international community. The OSCE is well-placed to play such a role, building on the long experience of the OSCE Minsk Group and the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office.

Finally, there is Georgia. Norway is deeply concerned about the situation in the occupied regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and believes the OSCE can play a greater role in assisting efforts aimed at achieving peace and reconciliation in these regions of Georgia.

Two days ago, we, the States Members of the United Nations, called for the Organization to lead by example in ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in United Nations-led peace processes. As the world's largest regional security organization, the OSCE also find this to be of the utmost importance. The inclusion and empowerment of women is a prerequisite to achieving comprehensive security throughout the OSCE area.

I therefore commend the Chairperson-in-Office for placing gender equality high on the OSCE's agenda. She can count on Norway's full support in her efforts to make women and peace and security a priority in the OSCE's engagement on peace and security, including building on the work done by the Security Council. Let me also express our strong support for the Chairperson-in-Office's initiative to invite civil society to contribute its unique competence wherever possible and relevant.

Looking ahead, continued focus by the OSCE on the Balkans is necessary for the stability of the region, as well as the consolidation of democracy there. We appreciate the important role that OSCE missions play in assisting the participating States in achieving greater security and economic and democratic development. The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media also give valuable support and advice to States in the areas of their expertise. All of these efforts contribute to a more peaceful and prosperous region,

and therefore also to our own work towards international peace and security in the Security Council.

I would conclude by reiterating the shared visions and agendas of the United Nations and the OSCE. Our common duty is to continue to strengthen security at the regional level so as to end violent conflict and to ensure that human rights, democracy, the rule of law and gender equality can be enjoyed by all. We welcome the opportunity offered today to reinforce these ties.

Annex X**Statement by the First Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Dmitry Polyanskiy**

[Original: Russian]

We thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Ann Linde, for briefing us on the activities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), issues on its agenda and the priorities of the Chairperson-in-Office.

Russia consistently stands for enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations and the 2019 framework agreement on cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the OSCE, as well as 2006 declaration of the OSCE Permanent Council. It is our understanding that the OSCE should supplement the efforts of the United Nations throughout its area of responsibility.

Sweden took over the Chair of OSCE amid complicated geopolitical and epidemiological circumstances. The volatile situation that has evolved around the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic overlaps with the growing crisis of confidence in the OSCE space. At the same time, its broad geographical coverage and its consensus rule turn the organization into a unique instrument for maintaining peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic space.

We note the active stance that the Chairperson-in-Office assumed at the initial stage of their mandate and their eagerness to receive first-hand information about the situation on the ground. Minister Linde has already visited Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. We hope that the Chairperson-in-Office will firmly adhere to consensual approaches, work within the scope of decisions made by the OSCE Council of Foreign Ministers and the Permanent Council in 2002 and avoid making biased and imbalanced assessments and promoting concepts that do not enjoy broad support.

At a time of widespread loss of mutual trust, regional organizations, including the OSCE, have a very special mission, namely, to revive the feeling of mutual understanding to help resolve crises in their respective regions. By all means, the main criterion for effectiveness in that matter is assistance in conflict settlement.

The OSCE is expected to take an objective approach to the settlement of the internal Ukrainian conflict, foster direct dialogue among the sides — Kyiv, Donetsk and Luhansk — and help implement the Minsk package of measures, which the Security Council endorsed in resolution 2202 (2015).

We expect that Sweden, as Chairperson-in-Office, will ensure impartial work by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) in Ukraine and that the Mission itself will carry out well-balanced monitoring, inter alia with regard to human rights, on both sides of the contact line. The SMM mandate directly prescribes this. Also, there is a need to keep track of, analyse and report on discriminatory initiatives by the Ukrainian leadership with regard to the Russian language, national minorities and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, as well as control the situation with regard to ensuring the freedom of speech and the activities of mass media.

Infringement of the freedom of the media and oppression of national minorities, inter alia in terms of their civil and linguistic rights, have recently become a scourge in a number of OSCE member States. Since the regional mechanisms do not condemn this, the situation keeps worsening. We call on the Chairperson-in-Office and the specialized OSCE bodies to pay special attention to the deterioration in the area of human rights that is observed within the OSCE space and throughout its area of responsibility.

I would like to make a point regarding statements that some of our Western colleagues made today that included a false interpretation of the situation concerning an internal Ukrainian settlement. Let me stress that it is their actions that pose the key security threat to the entire OSCE space, because such action supports Kyiv's destructive steps that seek to undermine the Minsk agreements. We call on Western sponsors to address this matter and have those they sponsor stop distorting reality and engaging in acts of political provocation, and instead get down to restoring dialogue with the people of eastern Ukraine, as envisaged by the Minsk agreements. Before blaming us, please look in the mirror and stop turning a blind eye to blatant violations of human rights, the freedom of speech and the media and cases of glorification of Nazi criminals and their henchmen, which have become a sad reality not only in post-Maidan Ukraine but also in the Baltic States, in particular in Estonia. This would both do some good to your tarnished reputation and help restore an environment of trust and cooperation in the OSCE area of responsibility.

Hopefully, under the leadership of Minister Linde, the OSCE will be able to make a meaningful contribution to a settlement on Nagorno Karabakh and give new impetus to the 5+2 negotiations on Transnistria. We positively assess the work of the United Nations and the OSCE as co-Chairs of the Geneva international discussions on the South Caucasus. We expect the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for the South Caucasus, Annika Söder, to facilitate constructive contacts among Georgia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

We call on you, Minister Linde, to launch consultations to enhance the effectiveness of the OSCE, which Russia proposed last year. The envisaged goal is to increase the returns of the work of the OSCE Secretariat, its institutions and field missions, optimize the OSCE event programme and the preparations for the Foreign Ministers Councils, ensure a balance between the three OSCE "baskets" and improve the budgetary process.

Overcoming the socioeconomic effects of COVID-19 is another vital track where assistance should be given to the affected branches of the economy, tourism included, as they recover from the coronavirus pandemic.

We support the plans of the Chairperson-in-Office to promote the participation of women in economic activity — however, without a linkage to resolution 1325 (2000) that addresses women's involvement in peace processes.

Also, thematic and geographical imbalances in the humanitarian dimension need to be corrected. Countering racism, neo-Nazism, falsifications of history and incitement to interreligious enmity should rank among the priorities. The issue of collectively elaborating a unified methodology for observing elections retains high relevance.

In conclusion, I would like to call the OSCE to engage in closer cooperation with the United Nations and its specialized agencies and various regional organizations — such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Eurasian Economic Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, among others — on the basis of the Platform for Cooperative Security, adopted at the OSCE summit in Istanbul in 1999.

We wish the Chairperson-in-Office effective work and hope that they will stick to the position of being an honest broker. Sweden can count on Russia's support for the initiatives aimed at sustaining stability, restoring trust and galvanizing cooperation among OSCE member States.

Annex X1**Statement by Halimah DeShong, Second Deputy Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations**

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines warmly welcomes the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Ms. Ann Linde, as Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and we wish her a successful tenure.

Multilateralism is not only a matter of confronting shared threats but also of seizing opportunities. Our efforts to address the long-standing and incipient challenges posed by climate change, gender inequality and the ever-present threat of military confrontation must be approached with a united front. We therefore underline the importance of multilateralism in strengthening coordination among all international and regional organizations, with vital contributions from civil society, women and youth.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines therefore welcomes Sweden's decision to put women's economic empowerment at the forefront of its priorities. The importance of the equitable treatment of women can never be overstated. Indeed, our participation is crucial in conflict prevention and resolution and for securing better prospects for sustainable development. We therefore wholeheartedly support its intention to fully implement the women and peace and security agenda in the European region.

We underline the importance of addressing the nexus between climate change and security, and welcome the initiative taken by the OSCE and Berlin-based think tank Adelphi to launch the regional consultation on climate change and security in South-Eastern Europe and for completing the first phase of the regional consultation workshop in February.

Lasting peace cannot be sustained without respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law. In that regard, we welcome Sweden's focus on these issues, in particular on the right to freedom of expression and media freedom.

The ongoing conflicts in the OSCE region remain the most obvious challenge to European security. Our delegation welcomes the continued focus on finding a sustainable political resolution to the challenges in eastern Ukraine and Crimea. We recognize the vital importance of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine and the efforts of the Normandy group and the Trilateral Contact Group for their efforts in finding a peaceful solution in line with the OSCE's principles. We continue to support the full implementation of the Minsk agreements, as that remains the basis for a political solution to the conflicts.

We take this opportunity to reiterate our support for the mediation efforts of the Minsk Group co-Chairs to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We encourage the parties to continue implementing their obligations under the trilateral ceasefire agreement of 9 November 2020 and to comply with the requirements of international humanitarian law.

To conclude, we reiterate our full support to the OSCE as it continues to promote peace, security and development in the region. It is only by working together, in full support of multilateral institutions, that such threats can be managed and overcome.

Annex XII**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations, Tarek Ladeb**

I should like to thank Ms. Ann Linde, Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, for her valuable briefing on the programmes planned in the context of the Swedish chairpersonship of OSCE for 2021. I wish her every success, particularly with regard to promoting international peace and security.

Given the important role of OSCE, we support its priority areas of work and stress the need to strengthen partnership and coordination between OSCE and the United Nations on the basis of shared values and goals, in order to consolidate preventive diplomacy mechanisms, regional peace and the peaceful settlement of conflicts.

We believe that, in order to achieve these shared objectives, it is necessary to strengthen the capacities of regional and subregional organizations. Such organizations have a detailed knowledge of the situation in their regions and can establish direct channels of communication between parties to a conflict.

Accordingly, we reiterate our support for OSCE efforts to resolve the crisis in eastern Ukraine and to reach a comprehensive and balanced settlement based on the Minsk agreements endorsed by the Security Council in resolution 2202 (2015), in line with the framework of the Normandy format and the Trilateral Contact Group.

With regard to the situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh region, the outbreak of armed conflict in late 2020, which resulted in hundreds of casualties and compounded the suffering of the population, clearly highlights the threats inherent to frozen conflicts and underscores the urgent need to resolve them through mechanisms for multilateral action.

In that connection, my delegation welcomes the efforts of OSCE and the Minsk Group and the virtual talks with the foreign ministers of the two countries held in February 2021 with the aim of achieving a comprehensive, lasting resolution of the conflict. It is vital to build relations between the two countries that are based on peaceful coexistence and mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity. In addition, the international community should support post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts.

We also hope that international and regional efforts to achieve comprehensive solutions to the other protracted conflicts in the Euro-Mediterranean region will continue.

Because the concept of comprehensive security includes political, security and economic dimensions, and because Tunisia belongs to the Mediterranean and African region, my delegation wishes to highlight the joint security challenges, both traditional and emerging, on either side of the Mediterranean. It is important to promote strategic cooperation between OSCE and regional partners, such as the African Union and the League of Arab States, in such areas of shared concern as combating terrorism and violent extremism and addressing the root causes of conflicts.

Owing to the particular challenges posed by the coronavirus disease coronavirus disease pandemic in conflict zones, we reaffirm the importance of implementing resolutions 2532 (2020) and 2565 (2021) concerning a global ceasefire and equitable access to vaccines, respectively, so as to ensure that the principles of international cooperation and solidarity will take root.

Lastly, women have an important role to play in building peace and security and must be integrated into conflict resolution efforts. We therefore welcome the initiative by the Swedish chairpersonship in February 2021 to appoint an advisory group to promote the organization's work on the women and peace and security agenda.

Annex XIII**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, Linda Thomas-Greenfield**

I thank Foreign Minister Linde for her clear and comprehensive statement on the priorities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for 2021. The United States looks forward to working together with her on these important issues in her capacity as Chairperson-in-Office.

As President Biden has made clear, the United States is renewing its commitment to multilateralism and trans-Atlantic cooperation. We welcome and celebrate Sweden's prioritization of strengthening the OSCE's activities on the women and peace and security agenda. And as I said earlier this week, it is time for all of us to turn our commitments on the agenda into action. We need to do more to protect women, especially women leaders, from threats of silence and violence.

As Foreign Minister Linde and others have noted today, the OSCE and the United Nations face shared challenges, ones that we must address this year together.

We just passed the seventh anniversary of Russia's invasion and occupation of Crimea and the launch of its aggression in eastern Ukraine. The conflict in eastern Ukraine has killed more than 13,000 people and wounded tens of thousands more. It has displaced more than 1.4 million people.

The aggression is far from over. In Crimea, the Russian authorities continue to harass and imprison those who oppose its occupation, notably Crimean Tatars, ethnic Ukrainians and members of other religious and ethnic minority groups. The United States will never recognize Russia's annexation of Crimea, and we will continue to hold Russia accountable for its aggression in eastern Ukraine.

We welcome Sweden's reappointment of Ambassador Heidi Grau as Special Representative for Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact Group. The Special Monitoring Mission's presence and reporting on daily activities of violence has improved the situation on the ground. As Council members, we owe it to the Special Monitoring Mission's leadership and all of the brave monitors to do our utmost to ensure the Mission can operate freely and without hindrance.

In addition to its aggression against Ukraine, Russia continues to occupy nearly 20 per cent of Georgia's territory while supporting or systematically ignoring abuses of Georgian citizens living in or near Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Russia has not yet fully implemented the 2008 ceasefire, including its obligation to withdraw its forces to pre-conflict positions, or its commitment to allow unfettered access for humanitarian organizations. The United States firmly supports Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We urge the OSCE to push for Russia to end its occupation and implement the 2008 ceasefire agreement in full.

In Belarus, we urge the United Nations and the OSCE to press for progress on the recommendations of the Moscow Mechanism report. The United States will continue to support efforts to facilitate a genuine national dialogue between the Belarusian authorities and the opposition, which would include representatives of the Coordination Council. The OSCE is well positioned to support the democratic aspirations of the Belarusian people, and we urge Minsk to engage with the OSCE.

In Moldova, the United States supports the results-oriented 5+2 settlement process of the Transnistrian conflict. That settlement process should be based on Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity within the internationally recognized borders, with a special status for Transnistria. We will continue to support a sovereign, democratic Moldova that is firmly anchored in Europe and secure within its internationally recognized borders. We also welcome Sweden's support for

the Minsk Group co-Chairs in negotiating a long-term political settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Both sides should investigate all allegations of human rights and international humanitarian law violations. It is time to bring justice to those responsible. Both sides must engage with humanitarian actors to complete the exchange process for all prisoners, detainees and remains.

The United States will work closely with the OSCE to defend OSCE mission mandates, implement our collective decisions, and ensure that all participating States live up to our shared principles and commitments. We are in this together, and we wish Sweden every success in 2021.

Annex XIV**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations, Pham Hai Anh**

At the outset, Viet Nam would like to extend a warm welcome to Her Excellency Ms. Ann Linde, Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, and to thank her for her insightful briefing.

We also take this opportunity to congratulate Sweden on assuming the chairmanship of the OSCE for the year 2021. We welcome Sweden's commitment to the promotion of multilateralism, the Charter of the United Nations and international law, confidence-building measures and the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations has been one of the key priorities for Viet Nam's tenure on the Security Council and beyond. An in-depth and unique understanding of regional organizations remains critical to addressing international peace and security challenges. That fact cannot be overemphasized.

The work of regional and subregional organizations is not only complementary but also necessary to the work of the United Nations as a whole and particularly to the Security Council. We continue to encourage the strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations as a whole, the Security Council and regional and subregional organizations in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. Such cooperation has become even more essential in the face of emerging complex challenges, especially the global health crisis, which no single country or region can effectively address alone.

Viet Nam welcomes the ongoing cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations and the efforts to strengthen it. We encourage the two organizations to deepen synergies in various aspects, for instance in the implementation of the women and peace and security and combating trafficking in persons, and further explore new areas of cooperation.

With regard to the maintenance of international peace and security, my delegation takes note of the key role played by the OSCE in promoting dialogue, building confidence, resolving conflict and enhancing development in Europe.

In that respect, we would like to reiterate our principled position that all disputes must be settled by peaceful means in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations. We urge all sides to uphold their commitments, address the root causes of conflicts and facilitate humanitarian access for people in need.

The OSCE is the largest regional security organization, with a membership larger than any regional group in the United Nations and coming from three continents. It can draw additional strength from its members as well as from their diversity and wisdom.

We encourage the OSCE to continue supporting all sides to engage in dialogue and reach an agreement or implement existing agreements for peace, stability and development for all countries and peoples of Europe.