



Address by the Secretary General of the OSCE

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Check against delivery.

President Kauma, dear Pia,

Secretary General Montella, dear Roberto,

Honorable members of Parliament,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to address you here today at this point of inflection.

We are living through turbulent times—uncertain, unsettling, and deeply concerning. We stand today at a historic crossroads.

A moment that will be remembered by generations to come, studied by historians.

Our collective security architecture, which our founding fathers and mothers built at a high cost over many decades risks crumbling before us.

In recent weeks, we have continued to move closer to the precipice as the selective application of international rules has contributed to a steady erosion of international law and norms.

And the use of force and a new arms race become the default response to complex international problems.

We need to stop now before we reach the edge of the cliff.

We must stop now if we are to begin to rebuild a meaningful security dialogue.

A security dialogue that can, over time, lay the groundwork for a renewed and more durable security architecture.

The breaking of fundamental norms and principles is the biggest challenge in front of us today. This cannot become the new normal.

Once the rules do not matter to some, they will eventually apply to no one. And when that happens, no one is secure.

Let me be clear: principles are not optional.

They should be applied to everyone. Period.

The selective application of rules erodes international law.

And undermines everyone's security in the long run.

Let us be honest and start from there. In a world without rules, no one is safe.

So, how do we step back from the brink?

I believe there are three crucial steps we must take. And I want to underscore that, though fragile, there are signals of progress—signals that we must nurture and support.

First: we need to end the wars.

Foremost among them, in the OSCE region, is Ukraine. We have seen in recent weeks and months the glimmer of diplomatic hope for a ceasefire.

It is our collective duty to support efforts towards a negotiated settlement to end the war, and the Parliamentary Assembly can play a role here. We need to encourage the sides to continue meeting, and agree on further confidence-building measures, including involving prisoners.

In this context, I want to stress once again, publicly and firmly: any such initiatives must include our three OSCE officials, Vadym Golda, Maxim Petrov and Dmytro Shabanov.

After three years, their families continue to endure unspeakable anguish and pain.

They deserve to be reunited with their loved ones—just as so many other families of prisoners.

Second:

We need to recommit to the fundamentals.

The principles enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act, like:

- * sovereign equality;
- * territorial integrity; and,
- * respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

are the bedrock of the international order. In these challenging times, we must reaffirm our unwavering commitment to these shared principles. They are the foundation of lasting peace and security in Europe and beyond.

Upholding the principles of the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act is not merely a matter of principle—it is a necessity.

Now, more than ever, we must ensure these principles continue to guide us. They are our compass amid uncertainty.

Third:

We need an honest discussion on how we got here—what went wrong.

And I repeat, honest discussion.

As I stated at the Annual Security Review Conference in Vienna just last week, when a system begins to crumble—as we are witnessing today—it calls for genuine soul-searching, and a candid, open-minded assessment of the underlying causes of its collapse.

We all bear responsibility for our mistakes, misinterpretations, hubris, and indeed silence.

A meaningful security discussion must include an honest assessment of: what we did wrong; what we condoned which we should not have; and what we underestimated.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have reached a critical juncture.

In these troubled times we must remember: security cannot—and will not—be ensured through military deterrence alone.

Security must also be built on co-operation, and that requires dialogue.

So what we need today is a forum for a serious multilateral diplomatic engagement.

The OSCE has the capacity to be that, if its participating States will utilize it as such.

And here let me underscore that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly can play a critical role, both in promoting our shared principles and commitments, and in ensuring that the OSCE remains an effective platform for dialogue and action.

You, as the elected representatives of your communities, are a vital link between this institution and the people it is meant to serve.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The OSCE is and remains the essential platform of European security. It must be preserved.

Its relevance must be visibly highlighted and actively reinforced.

We are in urgent need of renewed investment,

Not just in financial resources, but in political will, to ensure it can meet today's challenges.

There is no doubt that today's geopolitical situation is challenging.

But geography will not change.

That is why OSCE remains essential.

Essential for dialogue, mutual accountability, and joint solutions.

The OSCE offers a path back from the brink, and a foundation for a safer, more stable future for all.

I thank you.

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