



Rappresentanza Permanente d'Italia
OSCE

AMB. STEFANO BALDI

**ITALY'S STATEMENT
AT THE OSCE MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERS FOR CO-OPERATION GROUP MEETING
"Strengthening Cooperation to address the challenges caused by climate"**

Vienna, 30 May 2022

Mr Chair,

Italy aligns with the statement delivered by the European Union and would like to add some additional remarks in a national capacity.

First, I would like to thank the North Macedonian Chair for organising this first meeting of the Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation Group and for your commitment to drive the Partnership forward, despite current international circumstances.

Indeed these are extraordinary times because of the Russia Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine, which Italy strongly condemns.

The ongoing Russia's aggression against Ukraine is a stark reminder of the close interlinks between security and cooperation across the two shores of the Mediterranean. There is no doubt that the war is having far-reaching negative consequences on all our countries in the OSCE area and the Mediterranean region. It has brought new challenges in many areas: from energy supply to food security, from sustainable economic development to common efforts in tackling climate change and other transnational threats.

The OSCE Mediterranean Partnership remains an invaluable framework for action-oriented dialogue between OSCE participating States and our Mediterranean partners. We look forward to exploring new ways to further enhance the Partnership and to intensify practical co-operation, in line with the Milan 2018 Declaration on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean – which remain as relevant today as ever.

Mr Chair - Our discussion today on how to address the challenges caused by climate change confirms the importance of the OSCE Mediterranean Partnership. I would like to sincerely thank all the speakers for their interesting presentations. Allow me to give a particular warm welcome to my friend and colleague, Amb. Grammenos Mastrojeni.

At the Permanent Council meeting in July last year on cooperation with Mediterranean partners, we acknowledged that the Mediterranean region is a climate change hotspot, with significant challenges in terms of adaptation and mitigation needs, but also enormous potential for renewable energy production and green transition opportunities.

Building on its wealth of expertise developed over the years and guided by the solid mandate enshrined in the landmark Ministerial Decision adopted in Stockholm last December, the OSCE can play a significant role in supporting participating States and Mediterranean partners in tackling climate change challenges, through increased cooperation in risk analysis, early warning and joint action. Collaboration with and within other international organisations, like the Union for the Mediterranean, is also particularly important.

One such concrete example, which has been already mentioned, is the international conference “Climate change and Security in the Mediterranean” organised last December by the Italian think tank Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the Secretariat - in the framework of the New-Med Research Network, supported by Italy.

Over the last few years, the New-Med Research Network has done tremendous work in fostering academic dialogue and research on shared security challenges across the Mediterranean region, while highlighting the specific role that the OSCE can play in this regard. Last December the Network published a comprehensive analysis of the OSCE Mediterranean Partnership in a comparative perspective, including concrete policy recommendations. A new publication on climate change and security in the Mediterranean will be released in the coming days and will contribute further ideas to our debate.

The programmatic work undertaken by the OSCE to implement the Stockholm Ministerial Decision, as highlighted in the thematic report presented by the Secretary General last February, is also extremely relevant for our Mediterranean partners. To the extent possible, they should always be fully included in current and future OSCE activities in this area. For example, new ideas should be explored with the aim to share with our Mediterranean partners the innovative collaborative methodology and the many lessons learnt within OCEEA’s flagship project on “strengthening responses to security risks from climate change” – which has enjoyed Italy’s continuous financial support over the years. This would be a first concrete example of how we can tackle the risks stemming from climate change together. You can count on Italy’s support.