



Permanent Mission of Italy
OSCE

AMB. STEFANO BALDI

STATEMENT ON THE OCCASION OF THE ITALIAN NATIONAL DAY 2022

Vienna, 2 June 2022

Dear colleagues, dear friends, ladies and gentlemen,

I am very glad that we can gather in person to celebrate the Italian National Day, for the first time since I took office as Permanent Representative of Italy to the OSCE here in Vienna last year. It is a great pleasure and relief to be together after two years of restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

We celebrate today the founding day of the Italian Republic 76 years since the referendum that changed the Italian constitutional framework and renewed our democratic institutions after the Second World War. On 2 June 1946, Italian citizens – both women and men – chose the republican form of government, and freedom and equality as the founding principles of our democracy. Many had fought on the frontlines during the war to liberate Italy and to ensure a prosperous, democratic and peaceful future for our country, firmly anchored in the Euro-Atlantic community.

As we recall the historical events commemorated today, we cannot but draw a parallel with current international developments. For the first time in 70 years, a war of aggression is back on European soil, with its unspeakable suffering and destruction. On the battlefronts of Ukraine, a renewed fight for democracy and freedom has been unfolding every day for more than three months now.

Italy stands with Ukraine and its people. Many Ukrainian refugees have found shelter in Italy, experimenting the solidarity and generosity of the Italian people. We continue to provide Ukraine with the necessary humanitarian, political and military support to put an end to this senseless war.

Dear friends,

Russia's unprovoked, unjustified and unjustifiable war of aggression against Ukraine – which we condemn in the strongest possible terms - has shaken the pillars of the European security architecture. An OSCE participating State has chosen to attack and invade another OSCE participating State, in violation of all international laws and our commitments and values.

Many may wonder where this leaves us, as we approach the 50th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act in 2025.

There is no doubt that when war rages on the battlefields, when evidence of new atrocities reaches us every day, and when deliberate lies and disinformation continue to be regularly used to justify an unjustifiable war, the spirit of dialogue and cooperation - that inspired our founding fathers in Helsinki and represents the very essence of this Organisation – seem to in great danger.

And yet, in these darkest times, the OSCE remains as relevant and necessary as ever.

Allow me to mention only one specific example: today, 45 participating States have invoked for the second time the Moscow human dimension mechanism – in recognition of the invaluable contribution of this Organisation to international efforts to ensure accountability for atrocities committed by Russia in Ukraine.

Across the OSCE area, OSCE executive structures and field missions help improve every day the lives of millions of individuals, strengthening security across all OSCE three dimensions. This is why Italy strongly supports the work of the OSCE, both in terms of political support, financial contribution and personnel.

And to the dedicated Italian staff working in the Organisation, allow me to say a special thanks: *il mio grazie più sincero a tutti voi per il prezioso contributo che date ogni giorno a servizio del vostro Paese per il successo di questa Organizzazione.*

Viva la Repubblica, viva l'Italia, viva il costante impegno per la pace e la sicurezza in Europa e nel mondo!