



Rappresentanza Permanente d'Italia
OSCE

AMB. STEFANO BALDI

WELCOME SPEECH, ITALIAN NATIONAL DAY (2nd June 2023)

ENGLISH VERSION

Dear colleagues, dear friends, ladies and gentlemen,

[We mark today 77 years since the Constitutional referendum that laid the foundation of the Italian Republic.]

Today, our first thoughts go to Italy's northern region of Emilia-Romagna, which has been severely hit by unprecedented floods a few weeks ago. Institutions and individuals are working hard to clean up and overcome the current dramatic situation. On this day of national unity, we share their suffering and their determination to rebuild with hope for the future.

On the 2nd June we celebrate the values and principles that bring us together, as a nation, as Italians and as Europeans.

Democracy, peace, human rights and the rule of law are the cornerstone of our nation and of the international rules-based order. They are the fundamental values that the OSCE participating states committed to share, protect and nourish since the Helsinki Final Act in 1975.

For more than 15 months now, Russia's illegal and unprovoked full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine has reminded us of what happens when these commitments are grossly violated. Immense human suffering, endless destruction, war crimes and unspeakable atrocities.

We stand firmly in our support for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. We want to thank them once again for their fight for freedom, justice, and democracy in defense of our common principle and values.

In these difficult times, the OSCE remains an invaluable platform for dialogue, confidence building and mutual support among our countries and our peoples. The OSCE continues to deliver valuable activities, through the appreciated work of the Secretariat, of the field missions and of the Autonomous Institutions like ODIHR – the Office for democratic institutions and human rights.

Italy is one of the first contributors to the OSCE in terms of seconded personnel and among the top five contributors to the budget of the Organization. We are strongly committed to defending the principles and values of the OSCE and to supporting the Organization in all possible ways.

Let me conclude by inviting you to visit on the first floor of the Institute the panel exhibition dedicated to the Italian Renaissance painter “Il Perugino” on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of his death. I have personally made this exhibition as a tribute to Pietro Vannucci known as “Il Perugino”, who was born in Città della Pieve in the Region of Umbria, the same town where I also was born.

I am sure it will be another occasion to celebrate Italian culture and Italian beauty on this national day.

Thank you.