



Rappresentanza Permanente d'Italia  
OSCE

**ITALY'S STATEMENT**  
**AT THE OSCE MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERS FOR CO-OPERATION GROUP MEETING**  
**"Promoting participation of Youth in Confidence and Security Building"**

Vienna, 11 December 2023

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 of all, we would like to reiterate our sincere thanks to Finland for acting as ad interim Chairperson of Mediterranean Partners Group this year under the most challenging circumstances. We look forward to continuing working together next year and closely cooperate with the 2024 OSCE Chairpersonship of Malta to strengthen the Mediterranean partnership.

War continues to be a sad reality in the Middle East today. Italy strongly condemns Hamas's brutal and indiscriminate attack against Israel on 7 October. We continue to stand by Israel in its right to defend itself in accordance with international law and international humanitarian law. We are also strongly committed to addressing the urgent humanitarian needs in Gaza and continue working with regional partners, for example to provide medical assistance to children affected by the war. The only way to avoid a regional escalation and ensure a solution to this conflict remains dialogue and diplomacy, in order to fulfil the legitimate aspirations to security and prosperity of the Israeli and Palestinian people.

The war in Gaza and the persistent severe consequences of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine on the security of the whole OSCE region and beyond are a stark reminder of the close links between security in Europe and security in the Mediterranean area – which were clearly acknowledged in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act.

Mr Chair,

At the Mediterranean Conference in Amman last year, during a side event organised by Italy, several concrete proposals were put forward for strengthening cooperation and dialogue between OSCE participating States and Mediterranean partners, including:

- the identification of thematic coordinators among participating States to support the activities of the Chair of the Mediterranean Group;
- mainstreaming of participation of Mediterranean partners in OSCE-wide programmatic activities;
- creating and strengthening participation of Mediterranean partners in existing OSCE informal networks of experts;
- improving the visibility of OSCE activities and tools among partner countries, including through the translation of relevant OSCE documents in Arabic.

In this context, I would also like to recall that Italy, together with Albania and Poland, has financially supported the preparation of an updated booklet on the Mediterranean Partnership. We look forward to its upcoming publication.

As we approach the 50th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, it remains imperative that we act and ensure that the OSCE Mediterranean partnership remains a valuable tool for exchanging experiences, promoting cooperation and identifying common solutions to shared security challenges.

Thank you.