



Statement by H.E. Mr. Martin Eyjólfsson, Permanent Secretary of State of Iceland, at the High-level Inauguration Meeting of the Renewed European Security Dialogue, Vienna, 8 February 2022.

Your Excellency Minister Rau, Mr Chair, Colleagues,

Thank you, Minister Rau, for your leadership on this matter and for your dedication to our peace and security agenda.

Iceland wishes to declare support to this important initiative and thank Poland for seeking ways to address swiftly the current and imminent challenges Europe is facing.

The situation in and around Ukraine poses a real threat to our security. We reiterate our full support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and territorial waters. We also reiterate our call on Russia to de-escalate the situation and withdraw its troops and equipment from Ukraine's border. A diplomatic path of resolving the situation must be pursued.

We do agree that the OSCE is a very important platform for a dialogue that enables us to prevent the upscaling of the serious situation in and around Ukraine and address the growing polarization we are experiencing in the region.

We must come to an agreement based on our joint values and commitments, reaffirm our unwavering respect and adherence to international law, which is the prerequisite for peace and stability in our region.

Today we take an important step in that direction.

Mr Chair

Iceland, like other small states, relies on international law and peaceful solutions to disagreements as a means of ending conflicts in our region. That is our utmost priority, for the sake of all our people in all our 57 participating states.

We sincerely believe diplomacy is the tool to be deployed for the benefit of all, for the greater good, and urge our participating states to follow the lead of our Chair in Office this year, Poland, and comply with a joint effort that today is being inaugurated.

Iceland expresses support for an open and transparent approach and supports that the OSCE instruments we have at our disposal be put into practice.

Finally, we want to emphasize that the Women, Peace and Security agenda is critical for success and needs to be reflected in this work and across all OSCE's dimensions.

Mr. Chair

Despite differing opinions voiced around this table today, Iceland believes that this initiative can provide an important pathway towards a political solution to the current situation.

It is critical that we all work together to help unleash further the full potential of this unique organization, where all states concerned have a seat at the table, to jointly advance our common goal of a safe and secure future.

I thank you.