

Secretary General Feridun H. Sinirlioğlu's Remarks to the Press
Vienna, 15 January 2026

Ladies and Gentlemen, members of the press,

Welcome to the Hofburg. I'm delighted to be here alongside the Swiss Foreign Minister today as he takes on the role of OSCE Chairman-in-Office.

I look forward to working closely with him and with Switzerland's dedicated team here in Vienna.

I was particularly pleased to see Switzerland's priorities being centred around their commitment to inclusive dialogue, building trust, and their emphasis on comprehensive security. I am confident that these priorities will serve the Organization well at a moment of profound strain on the European security architecture.

Switzerland chaired its first meeting of the Permanent Council today at a time of intense danger, and growing unpredictability across the OSCE region.

The ongoing war in Ukraine remains an open wound in the heart of our continent.

It continues to have a devastating impact on civilians and key infrastructure, not least during the winter months. This only underscores the urgent need to end the war.

Diplomatic engagement among allies, partners and, yes, adversaries matter today more than ever.

I hope the ongoing diplomatic efforts will lead towards a negotiated settlement to end the war. I encourage the sides to resume talks, and to agree on confidence building measures, including the release of prisoners. In this regard, I want to stress once again, my call that these initiatives should include our three OSCE officials, Vadym Golda, Maxim Petrov and Dmytro Shabanov. I continue working on this personally.

The overall security environment across the whole OSCE region is characterized by growing instability and unpredictability, including the recent use in Ukraine of destabilising weapons systems which represent a major escalation. This reminds us of the OSCE's unique relevance today. At a time of global existential threat, this security Organization was founded to manage tensions, reduce risks, control arms, prevent crisis, develop military transparency and verification mechanisms and foster dialogue. These are important, especially at times of mistrust. Thankfully, despite the growing tensions, the OSCE continues to provide a

forum for all participating States to engage, to exchange views, to hold each other to account and to seek common ground. This is the only way that we can prevent crises from spiralling out of control.

Therefore, it is vital that the Organization continues to function effectively.

This year, I will prioritize reforms (together with the chair), with a focus on efficiency, resilience and our core mandate of comprehensive security, following through to what participating States clearly asked us including at the last Ministerial Council.

I am personally committed to working closely with you, dear Ignazio, dear Minister, and with all participating States to advance this process.

The OSCE's strength lies in its inclusivity, its legitimacy, its experience, transparency and its historical memory.

It stands for the idea that dialogue, engagement, and cooperation are still possible - even, and especially, in the darkest times of growing mistrust as Ignazio just stated.

And that is the only way to ensure comprehensive security for all.

Thank you.