



**Statement by Ambassador Kristín A. Árnadóttir, Permanent Representative of Iceland. 1387th Permanent Council Meeting, 1 September 2022. The Presentation of priorities of the Incoming Chairmanship 2023 – North Macedonia**

While my delegation aligns itself with the EU statement, I would like to add a few remarks in my national capacity.

Your Excellency Foreign Minister Bujar Osmani, I thank you for sharing the vision of the incoming Chair of 2023. North Macedonia takes over the Chairpersonship during the most challenging and severe security crisis that our region has faced in decades.

This security crisis, caused by Russia's illegal and unjustified war against Ukraine, violates our organizations most fundamental commitments and goals. It undermines security in all three dimensions. We greatly appreciate the North Macedonian readiness to take on this great responsibility, for the sake of security and cooperation in our region. It is a great challenge, and we will do our utmost to support and promote the cause.

Restoration of the international rule of law, the peaceful resolution of the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine and all protracted conflicts, as well as upholding the OSCE principles and commitments must be at the top of our organizations Agenda.

Iceland is committed to the advancement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as the elimination of all forms of discrimination. This includes the elimination of all forms of Gender-Based and Sexual Violence, including within and related to conflict.

We appreciate and share the Northern Macedonia's Chairmanship's strong focus on promoting gender equality and non-discrimination. It is, and must be, an integral part of the work in all the three dimensions of OSCE and need to be

mainstreamed and recognized as such. Meaningful participation of women in all phases of peace processes are necessary for sustainable peace. The full realization of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda is a necessary step to that end and the OSCE and its participating States, we all have an important role to play in that regard.

Gender must also be mainstreamed in all matters of economy and environment. Gender equality has proven to support and sustain social and economic growth in societies and countries with high levels of gender equality tend to be happier, healthier, and more trusting.

Allow me to reiterate our gratitude for the Incoming Chair's priorities presented here today and express our sincere support and good wishes.

Thank you Mr. Chair.