



1478th Permanent Council of the OSCE, 13 June 2024

Presentation of the 2025 Programme Outline

Statement by Switzerland

Madam Chairperson,

I am making this statement in my national capacity and also on behalf of Canada, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

We would like to thank the Secretary-General for her presentation of the 2025 Programme Outline.

Let me start by expressing our support to the organization's activities across the three dimensions, the autonomous institutions and the field missions. We take this opportunity to thank all the staff in Vienna and in all OSCE field locations for their dedicated work to further the implementation of our mandate.

We remain steadfast in our firm support of the principles enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act, including the inviolability of borders and territorial integrity. Thus, we condemn in the strongest terms Russia's military aggression against Ukraine and welcome the CiO's and the incoming Chair's commitment to focus on supporting Ukraine across all dimensions.

As you have pointed out, Madam Secretary General, our organization's work is being carried out under increasingly difficult financial circumstances, whereby insufficient resources are causing delays or cancellation of activities, inefficiencies, higher costs and administrative burden. Furthermore, you mention the reputational damage to the Organization as a Partner and employer. With regards to this last point, we note with great concern that attracting and retaining talent is becoming ever more difficult in an



environment with high inflationary pressures and the inability to align salaries in the field with those of the UN.

Madam Chairperson,

We have received enough evidence on the detrimental effects the absence of a Unified Budget has had on the organization since 2021. It is deeply regrettable that we have still not reached consensus on this year's UB. Just like last year, we will start discussing next year's programmatic and financial planning, whilst not having secured the financial means for the current year. This situation appears to become the new normal, and I would like to stress that this is an unacceptable situation for our delegations.

In order for consensus to emerge, all of us need to demonstrate a willingness to compromise. We once again call on all participating States to engage constructively and show flexibility, so that we can finally adopt this year's budget without any further delay, recognizing that in its current form it still falls short of meeting the organization's financial needs for this year.

While many of us were quick to provide additional funding through the Repository Programme "Core Support Mechanism" so that an unprecedented year-end deficit could be avoided, we fully agree with you, Madame Secretary General, that this is unsustainable and cannot become the new norm. It is our collective responsibility to provide adequate funding for this organization and we should not wait any longer to live up to it!

We look forward to the detailed discussions on this Programme Outline in the Preparatory Committee over the coming weeks.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.