

Presentation by the President of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe: UK statement to the OSCE

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Ambassador Holland commends Deputy Prime Minister Mihail Popșoi for Moldova's democratic reforms and resilience in the face of Russian hybrid threats, emphasising the UK's continued support for its European integration. He highlights the complementary roles of the OSCE and Council of Europe and underscores the need for accountability for Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

Thank you, Mr Chair. Deputy Prime Minister Popșoi, welcome to the Permanent Council today, and thank you for your insightful remarks.

The United Kingdom remains a strong and consistent supporter of Moldova's European integration path. We commend the sustained progress your government has made on democratic reform, rule of law, and the protection of fundamental rights. At a time when democratic processes across our region are under unprecedented strain, Moldova's direction of travel is both encouraging and significant.

Over the past two years, Moldova has demonstrated remarkable resilience in the face of sustained and coordinated hybrid threats originating from Russia. These have included disinformation campaigns, energy coercion, and attempts to undermine the integrity of Moldova's electoral processes. Despite these pressures, Moldova has safeguarded its democratic institutions and upheld the will of its citizens. This is not only an achievement for Moldova; it is an example from which all participating States can learn. You have shown that even in today's challenging security context, democratic resilience is both possible and powerful. We congratulate you.

The UK strongly believes that building and sustaining this resilience is a shared endeavour. The tools and institutions of the OSCE – particularly the expertise of ODIHR – remain essential in supporting credible elections, rule-of-law reforms, and the protection of human rights. Equally, the Council of Europe continues to play a vital role in bolstering democratic standards, judicial independence, and human rights protections across the wider region. Together, these organisations form a complementary framework that helps participating States defend and strengthen their democratic institutions.

In this context, we also highlight the vital work underway in Strasbourg on accountability for Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine. Ensuring justice for victims, and upholding the international rules-based system, must continue to be central to our collective efforts.

As well as supporting Ukraine, the Council of Europe can play a vital role in tackling Foreign Interference in Elections, something which Moldova witnessed last year. Separately, Ministers are due to agree a Political Declaration on the contemporary challenges posed by irregular migration and the situation of foreigners convicted of serious offences. It would be interesting to know how Moldova plans to use its Presidency, including the forthcoming Foreign Ministerial, to deal with those issues.

Deputy Prime Minister, the United Kingdom will remain a committed partner to Moldova as you

continue to advance democratic reforms and pursue your European future. We look forward to deepening our cooperation across both the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

Thank you, Mr Chair.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/presentation-by-the-president-of-the-committee-of-ministers-of-the-council-of-europe-uk-statement-to-the-osce>