



**DELEGATION OF CANADA TO THE OSCE
STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR NATASHA CAYER
IN RESPONSE TO THE REPORT BY THE NEW
OSCE SECRETARY GENERAL, MR. THOMAS GREMINGER
1156th MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
31 AUGUST 2017**

Mr. Chairperson,

I am pleased to offer the following remarks on behalf of the delegations of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Canada.

We wish to join previous speakers in warmly welcoming Secretary General Greminger and congratulating him on his appointment.

We look forward to seeing the new Secretary General apply his deep understanding of the OSCE, reinforced by his experience as Swiss Chairperson of the Permanent Council during the 2014 OSCE Chairmanship, to guide this organization through the many challenges we currently face.

Of critical importance amongst these challenges is the situation in Ukraine, including the very difficult conditions the SMM continues to deal with on a daily basis in the Donbas. We have every confidence that Secretary General Greminger, under whose 2014 Permanent Council Chairmanship the SMM was created, will see “enhancing the effectiveness of the SMM and the security of its monitors” as a priority issue. Indeed, we are very much looking forward to receiving his briefing on the recommendations of the internal investigation next Monday, as well as his update on the planned follow-up to the report's conclusions. Given the pressing difficulties created by access restrictions, harassment and security hazards, we expect that every effort will be made to further enhance the safety and security of the monitors as they carry out their full mandate.

Mr. Chairperson,

Also amongst the serious challenges the new Secretary General faces are attempts by some individuals and governments in the OSCE area to erode or reverse hard-won commitments in the Human Dimension. We firmly believe that the OSCE should continue to find ways to encourage and assist participating States to uphold their commitments to human rights, gender equality and fundamental freedoms, and see this as central priority for the Secretary General in his capacity as the individual responsible both for the Secretariat in Vienna and the OSCE's network of field missions. As such, we hope that Secretary General Greminger's experience as head of the

Competence Centre for Peace, Human Rights, Humanitarian and Migration Policy will help strengthen the Organization's comprehensive approach to security, and look forward to seeing increased attention to ensuring that the migration issue is addressed with due care to upholding OSCE principles.

With regard to the administrative role of the Secretary General, we take this opportunity to note that the OSCE Secretariat faces the same challenges as participating States: finding ways, through adjustments in personnel administration and work practices, to make the most of finite budgetary resources. It is with great interest that we look forward to further discussing the possible improvements he will bring to the functions of the Secretariat and the Organization, particularly with regard to gender equality initiatives that have to be mainstreamed in all aspects of the OSCE's work.

Mr. Chairperson,

We are very pleased to see the smooth transition that Secretary General Greminger and the heads of the OSCE's autonomous institutions have made into their new roles. With this transition now complete, we hope our Organization will focus on the important work before us, not least among which preparations for the upcoming Ministerial Council in December. We look forward to working in close cooperation with the Secretary General and we wish him every success in his new role.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.