

OSCE Chairman-in-Office and Secretary General announce upcoming closure of Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine

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WARSAW/VIENNA, 28 April 2022 –OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Foreign Minister of Poland Zbigniew Rau and OSCE Secretary General Helga Maria Schmid have today announced that the OSCE would take immediate steps to implement the closure of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine.

This decision follows the lack of consensus at the OSCE Permanent Council on 31 March 2022 [to extend the Mission's mandate](#).

“This is not an easy decision to take. We have explored all possible options through political dialogue with participating States to achieve the renewal of the Special Monitoring Mission’s mandate, but the position of the Russian Federation left us with no choice but to take steps to close down the Mission,” said Chairman-in-Office Rau. “The Mission played a crucial role in providing objective information on the ground, facilitating ceasefires and working to ease the effects of the conflict on the civilian population. The work of the SMM’s members deserves our appreciation and gratitude”.

Minister Rau assured that the Organization will seek to continue its engagement in the country in line with existing OSCE commitments. “The Polish Chairmanship will continue to engage with participating States in order to explore alternatives on the OSCE’s future role in Ukraine,” he stressed.

Secretary General Schmid added that; “The vital role the Mission played for the past eight years by providing invaluable and objective facts on the ground, facilitating dialogue where there was none and enabling the repairs of civilian infrastructure on which millions of people depend, cannot be overestimated”.

"I am extremely proud of our mission members who have been working tirelessly to fulfil their crucial tasks, in good times and bad," she added. "The objectivity, impartiality and professionalism they demonstrated, as well as their personal commitment to the people of Ukraine, deserves our highest recognition."

"The OSCE will initiate immediately operational, administrative and financial steps to close the Mission as responsibly and cost-effectively as possible, with the safety and security of mission members throughout Ukraine remaining a priority," emphasized Schmid. "We continue to do our utmost day and night to support our Ukrainian colleagues, and continue to press through all available channels for an end to the detentions, intimidation, and disinformation that are so dangerous for our national mission members."

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