
Council of Europe: Turin, end of Italian Presidency. Di Maio, “new page for the organization”. Five priorities

In today's “serious political context” provoked by the Russian Federation's “blatant violation”, there is a need to “launch a debate on the priorities and the necessary strategic directions that the new scenario requires” in order for the Council to live up to its objective of guaranteeing “peace and prosperity in a common European home”. This was stated by Italian Foreign Affairs Minister Luigi di Maio in his opening address to the Foreign Affairs Ministers of the Council of Europe's 46 Member States who are having their annual session at the Palace of Venaria in Turin (Italy) today. The Russian Federation's termination of member status was a “painful but necessary step”, Di Maio went on to say, and this situation opens a “new page for the organization”, a page which, according to the Minister, is characterised by five priorities: supporting Ukraine; establishing an expert group to reflect on the challenges arising in the coming months; preparing a 4th summit of Heads of State and Government; and working to “ensure the necessary financial resources” while also filling the gap brought about by Russia's withdrawal so that “there is no loss of functions in the organizations”. The fifth point stressed by Di Maio concerned a possible “new iron curtain” that might prevent communication with the Russian and Belarusian civil society. It is therefore necessary to work to ensure “the door stays open to those who reject aggression and share European values” by identifying “ways to keep dialogue and cooperation open”. The session in Turin is the last event of the Italian presidency that will pass on the baton to Ireland today.

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