



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**Statement in response to the address by H.E Mr. Gent Cakaj,
Acting Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania**

As delivered by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1235th meeting of the Permanent Council,
11 July 2019

Mr. Chairperson,

We join other delegations in warmly welcoming the Acting Foreign Minister of Albania, H.E. Gent Cakaj to the Permanent Council. We are grateful for the presentation of the priorities of the incoming Albanian OSCE Chairmanship in 2020. Your personal presence here today, Mr. Cakaj, underlines the role, which the OSCE continues to play in ensuring security and stability in the wider European region, especially in this extremely complex period, when the OSCE principles and fundamental norms of international law are flagrantly violated.

During your Chairmanship, you will face serious challenges stemming from the uncorrected act of aggression committed by one OSCE participating State against another participating State. The ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict continues to shatter rules-based security order and destabilize the entire OSCE area. The decision-taking process, already complicated by the consensus-based character of the OSCE, has been further aggravated by Russia's persistent denial of its responsibility for violating the core OSCE principles and commitments and Kremlin's attempts to reshape them and the OSCE as a whole to its needs.

We believe that the incoming Albanian Chairmanship will lead by example and serve as a dedicated guardian of the OSCE principles, promoting their full implementation. Achieving that objective would require resolution of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict based on the OSCE principles and international law, through restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

While we understand that cessation of fire in Donbas and withdrawal of the Russian occupation forces from the temporarily occupied parts of Ukraine, including Crimea, remain entirely dependent on Kremlin's will, we should focus on the OSCE important role in facilitating this process. Such OSCE mechanisms and structures, as Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, Trilateral Contact Group, and Border Observer Mission at two Russian border checkpoints have brought a real added value in countering the severe security and humanitarian consequences of Russia's actions.

The OSCE has its functions assigned by the Minsk agreements, which must be implemented in full, if we wish to maintain this Organization as a success story. A special place in this process lays with the SMM, deployed with a view to reducing tensions, fostering peace, stability and security, and monitoring and supporting the implementation of all OSCE principles and commitments. The mission must be able to fulfil its mandate without any restrictions and impediments, which it systematically faces from the Russian side. The OSCE toolbox should be used to the maximum extent possible on ensuring transparency at the Ukrainian-Russian state border, monitoring situation with the human rights and fundamental freedoms in Russia-occupied parts of Donbas and Crimea, and facilitating release of Ukrainian citizens illegally detained by the Russian side. We expect the incoming Chairmanship to continue providing support and coordination for the OSCE Institutions, mechanisms and field presences in this regard. We believe it should be the utmost priority.

Your Excellency,

We support your dedication to the conflict resolution and conflict prevention efforts on top of the OSCE agenda. Russia's occupation of parts of Georgia's territory, and protracted conflicts in the Republic of Moldova and the Republic of Azerbaijan remain a source of instability and serious concern for participating States. We reiterate our firm position that all these conflicts must be resolved with full respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity within the internationally recognized borders and based upon the OSCE principles and norms of international law. We stand ready to support the incoming Albanian Chairmanship in achieving this goal, especially in the Transdniestrian settlement process, in which Ukraine will continue to act and seek progress as a mediator and guarantor in the "5+2" format.

In the politico-military dimension, the issue of strengthening border security, in particular counteracting cross-border support to the illegal armed formations, needs to be translated into full access of the SMM to Russia-occupied border areas of Ukraine and expansion of the Border Observer Mission to other border checkpoints located along the uncontrolled segment of the Ukrainian-Russian state border. On cyber security, we should further develop confidence- and security-building measures and strengthen their implementation. Ukraine will continue to support the work of the respective Informal Working Group, with a special focus on protection of critical infrastructure from emanating attacks in cyberspace.

In the second dimension, our top priority is the issue of addressing the grave environmental consequences of the ongoing Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and reconstruction of critical civilian infrastructure damaged in hostilities. The OSCE proactive approach in this regard could include, for instance, setting up a comprehensive and effective system of ecological monitoring in Russia-occupied parts of Donbas. We also remain devoted to promoting such important topics as good governance, energy security, combating corruption and money laundering.

In the human dimension, we expect the incoming Chairmanship to pay close attention to such critical issues as protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms in the situations of occupation, ensuring the rights of prisoners of war, supporting the internally displaced persons, combating torture and enforced disappearances, and

eradicating the phenomenon of political prisoners. Without these topics, the human dimension agenda of the OSCE cannot be characterized as a comprehensive one.

Finally, as the incoming Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Cooperation in the second trimester of 2020, Ukraine will keep primary attention to the relevant issues. They include grave security challenges, in particular hybrid warfare tools, in the OSCE area. We will also focus on updating our common politico-military toolbox, including modernization of Vienna Document 2011, with a view to strengthen our capacities to prevent and promptly address the emerging conflicts in the OSCE area. We look forward to fruitful cooperation with the Albanian OSCE Chairmanship on these issues.

In conclusion, I wish to state that we fully share Albania's position on the vision of implementing OSCE commitments as inspiration for our common work in 2020. Restoring respect for them remains critical for the future of this Organization.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.