



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
in response to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe,
H.E. Marija Pejčinović Burić**

As for delivery by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1295th meeting of the Permanent Council,
10 December 2020

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of Ukraine welcomes Secretary General of the Council of Europe Marija Pejčinović Burić at today's meeting of the Permanent Council and thanks her for the presentation.

The Council of Europe is an important partner of the OSCE.

This year, when we commemorate the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, it is necessary to remember, that the Council of Europe has been established after the Second World War with the ultimate goal to prevent the repetition of such a tragedy in the future.

Unfortunately, nowadays this goal is much more pertinent than before.

The territorial ambitions of one State, which is a member of both organizations – the Council of Europe and the OSCE – have led to the overt armed aggression against other member States and to military occupation of their territories accompanied with gross and flagrant human rights violations.

As today we are marking the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, let me quote this landmark document: “disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind”. End of quote.

As we see it throughout the history, exactly the lack of respect for human rights and democracy allowed certain regimes, with a wide support of the population, to pursue expansionist wars, military intervention and occupation.

On the other hand, the human rights are always the first victims of aggression and occupation.

In this light, I wish to draw your attention that the situation with human rights in the temporarily occupied Crimea remains to be a grave one, as abductions, disappearances, intimidations of the local population as well as torture and restrictions on freedom of the media, demographic change and militarization of the peninsula present only part of the overall devastating consequences of the attempted annexation of Crimea. Just to name a few. The same severe violations of the rule of law and human rights happen every day in the temporarily occupied regions of Donbas. Continued cross-border inflow of sophisticated weaponry and personnel from Russia have a direct impact on all human rights of individuals living in Donbas.

Madam Secretary General,

This proves that the human rights cannot be dealt in isolation with the concept of democratic security on the continent.

The very existence of the OSCE testifies that security and human rights are interlinked and respect of human rights remains at the core of the common security.

The Council of Europe as a pan-European organization, which promotes legal standards in such areas as human rights, the rule of law and democracy, also cannot stand aside from effectively addressing threats to these areas stemming from, inter alia, armed aggression and occupation.

It is also true to say that lasting peace and democratic security is hardly achievable in Europe unless Russia abides by norms and principles of international law, including as enshrined in the Council of Europe Statute.

As since the OSCE and the Council of Europe share common values that are based on democracy, human rights and the rule of law, our common ground and, hence, the area, where we can achieve synergy is to promote the democratic security on the European continent.

In this context, we do believe that both organizations have a broad range of capacities as well as due credibility obtained from their members and participating States in order to act properly in preventing and resolving the current crisis in our region.

Our delegation believes, that such an active position of the Council of Europe in close co-operation with the OSCE could bring real difference to the people in Crimea and in Donbas, who desperately need international solidarity and support.

A proper response to the ongoing Russian aggression would also allow strengthen the standing and reputation of the Council of Europe as a defender of human rights, democracy and the rule of law on the continent. Let me assure of Ukraine's resolve to support the Secretary General's every effort, which will be aimed at achieving these goals.

In conclusion, let me once again thank H.E. Marija Pejčinović Burić for her statement and wish her every success in her important endeavors.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.