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Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE
AT THE 997th FSC PLENARY MEETING
(19 January 2022)**

Agenda item 1, Opening session

Mr Chairperson,
Distinguished colleagues,

Ukraine has aligned itself with the EU Statement, which we fully support. In addition, let me also make some remarks in my national capacity.

I would like to begin by conveying our gratitude to the Austrian FSC Chairpersonship for its dedicated work during the third trimester of 2021 and welcoming the Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan as the new Chairpersonship of the Forum for Security Co-operation.

We are grateful to His Excellency Mr Jeyhun Bayramov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, for the opening statement outlining the main priorities and upcoming activities of the Azerbaijan FSC Chairpersonship.

We congratulate His Excellency Ambassador Rovshan Sadigbayli and the entire team of the Delegation of Azerbaijan with assuming an important task of the Chairpersonship in these challenging times for European security. I would like to assure you of our Delegation's full support and cooperation during your Chairpersonship and wish you every success in guiding the work of our Forum.

Ukraine welcomes the strong focus of the Azerbaijan FSC Chairpersonship on the issues of international humanitarian law and protection of civilians, mine action, OSCE commitments in

the area of SALW and SCA as well as arms control. All these topics are of particular importance for Ukraine from the point of peaceful resolution of the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict, as the hostilities in Donbas continue to claim new casualties on a regular basis. Ukraine also welcomes the focus of the Chairpersonship on confidence and security building measures. The full implementation, not only in letter, but also in spirit, of existing commitments in this sphere, in particular the Vienna Document 2011, is crucial for the stability of the OSCE region. Current security situation clearly illustrates the consequences of total disregard of these commitments by one participating State.

Touching upon the Women, peace and security agenda to be discussed jointly by the FSC and the PC, let me express our high interest in this topic. Russian armed aggression against Ukraine has become the boost to acknowledge an important contribution that women make every day in defending our country. Ensuring gender equality and overcoming gender stereotypes in the Armed Forces occupy a significant place in reforming the security and defence sector of Ukraine.

We look forward to frank and constructive discussions on these topics with a view to furthering full and faithful implementation of our politico-military toolbox.

Mr Chairperson,

We are entering a new year against the backdrop of unprecedented military tensions. Since the peak of the Cold War the threat of a large-scale military conflict in Europe has never been so high. The ongoing military aggression against Ukraine in Donbas and Crimea combined with tensions caused by Russian military build-up along the state borders with Ukraine remain the most pressing challenge to the regional security architecture in the OSCE area. The Russian Federation continues to persuade international community that it does not have plans to invade Ukraine. However, the sad experience of the recent 8 years combined with the current tensions along the state borders as well as ongoing hostilities in Donbas evidences to the contrary. The 106,000 strong group of Russian forces armed with 1,500 tanks, 3,600 armoured combat vehicles, 1,900 artillery systems of different calibres is currently deployed near Ukraine and is ready for a possible invasion.

Talking about the indivisibility of security and the need to take into account security interests of other states, the Russian Federation not only refuses to explain its military activities

along the state border with Ukraine, hiding behind its “sovereign right to conduct military exercises on the own territory”, but also continues to deploy new troops and to hold provocative military manoeuvres. Recent snap exercises of the Russian Armed Forces organised in Voronezh, Belgorod, Bryansk and Smolensk regions once again proved Russian selective and fragmentary approach to the OSCE commitments.

It is a matter of particular concern that the Russian Federation pursues a dangerous escalation strategy widely using non-military instruments, such as propaganda and cyber warfare. Seeking to destabilise the internal situation in Ukraine, the Russian Federation continues to conduct massive malign influence and cyber campaigns that constitute a direct interference in internal affairs of an independent state, violate its sovereignty and integrity as well as the rights of its citizens as guaranteed under international law. Recent massive cyber-attack against Ukrainian Government websites on 14 January clearly proves it.

We find it absolutely unacceptable that the Russian side continues to arrange its own security at the expense of the security of other states. In this regard, we would like to recall that Ukraine as a sovereign state has the right freely to choose its own security arrangements and to join defence alliances. This is a fundamental principle of European security. This is the principle that the Russian Federation subscribed to and should respect.

Mr Chairperson,

Today it would be a right moment for the Forum for Security Co-operation to strengthen its role in the international security architecture. The FSC provides us with a unique venue for a dialogue on politico-military issues. It is a common task of all 57 participating States to stabilise the situation in the OSCE area and to reduce the risks of a large-scale military conflict in Europe. We hope that our joint efforts within the FSC will enable us to achieve this goal.

I thank you, Mr Chairperson.