



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations in Vienna

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Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine

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of the Forum for Security Co-operation and the Permanent Council,
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M-me Chairperson,

At the outset, I would like to thank our today's guest speakers for their thoughtful presentations. The Delegation of Ukraine shares the relevance of today's discussion amidst the on-going developments in the OSCE area, which have led to a dramatic shift in the security perceptions and emergence of direct security threats. For decades we lived with a high degree of confidence that a full-fledged war in Europe is no longer possible. Russian aggression against Ukraine proved the prematurity of this optimistic view.

Illegal occupation of Ukraine's Crimea and part of Donbas, marked with direct military invasion of Russian regular troops into Ukraine and manufactured conflict with more than 9000 victims, showed the readiness of the Russian Federation to resort to the flagrant violation of the OSCE principles and commitments that form the foundation of this Organization. Being uncorrected it incrementally damages their credibility and relevance, erodes the European security architecture and significantly limits our capacity to respond to new challenges.

Notably, Ukraine has been attacked by a state, which provided my country with security assurances under the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, as Ukraine gave up its world's third largest nuclear stockpile. Under these circumstances the detrimental effect of the Russian aggression will also have a strong bearing on the international non-proliferation efforts.

By resorting to military force Russia appears to expect from the OSCE community, accustomed to the cooperation-based relations, to yield to intimidation and blackmail and to effectively accept Moscow's illegitimate geopolitical claims for spheres of influence.

Some may argue that agreeing on a "post-Crimean status quo" and building a "new positive agenda" with countering the threat of terrorism and tackling the refugee crisis as priorities will be the efficient way to de-escalate and move on. We consider such approach to be harmful as it leaves acute problems unresolved and thus would

encourage the aggressor to new violations. It is worth recalling the conclusion, reached by the Panel of Eminent Persons last year, that it is difficult to imagine a return to European security as a common project with the conflict unaddressed.

The Russian “hybrid war” against Ukraine serves a practical purpose of the modern reincarnation of the Soviet doctrine of limited sovereignty of Brezhnev times – to exert influence on Ukraine’s internal and foreign policy to make it impossible for the Ukrainian nation to fulfill its choice and European aspirations. These Russian strategies are very distant from the notion of “Europe whole and free” as outlined and agreed by the OSCE participating States in the Paris Charter for a New Europe. The rule-based security architecture has been placed into serious question with unpredictable consequences for the security environment.

Our common efforts aimed at restoring security and confidence must be guided by the imperative of restoring respect to Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. The OSCE principles must not be sacrificed or compromised as it will generate only more uncertainty and instability for the future. The developments after the Astana OSCE Summit prove this point. We must be firm and clear – the aggression will bear cost. The inherent right of each and every participating State to be free to choose or change its security arrangements, including treaties of alliance, reaffirmed in the Astana Declaration, must be fully respected.

Among the crucial benchmarks for assessing Russia’s readiness to follow the resolution path are full and good-faith implementation of its commitments under the Minsk agreements, in particular their security-, border control- and hostage release-related provisions; improving the security conditions on the ground by qualitative strengthening of international presence in Donbas; constructive engagement in establishing the international negotiation framework on de-occupation of Crimea. Today public actions of support for Nadiya Savchenko take place around the world. She has been kidnapped from Ukraine and is held behind bars in Russia in a politically-motivated trial. We urge Russia to immediately release her according to the Minsk Agreements signed by Russia.

Amidst the critical lack of mutual trust and confidence, we believe it should be in the interests of all parties to see substantive modernization of the Vienna Document, which would adjust the document to the current security realities. The experience and lessons learned from the current conflict are to be duly reflected. We are ready to pursue both a pragmatic and forward looking approach in modernizing the Vienna Document as well as other OSCE instruments such as the Open Skies Treaty and Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. We view this process as such that aims at enhancing military stability, transparency and predictability for all participating States without exception.

The lessons learned from the current conflict also indicated the need for further strengthening of the OSCE early warning and conflict prevention toolbox. There is a need for establishment of the OSCE standing mechanism or procedure which could secure immediate reaction to the emerging conflicts, based on early warning and early action approach.

The OSCE requires a common approach that would generate a strong consolidated response to the terrorist threats. This response should also contain a clear-cut preventive message to those, who support, encourage or condone in any way the terrorist organizations and their activities. Adequate action to suppress activities of terrorist groups and illegal armed formations in Ukraine's Donbas should be part and parcel of a broad OSCE anti-terrorist response.

M-me Chairperson,

The OSCE remains an indispensable security framework in Europe. As we seek compliance with the OSCE norms and engage in multi-dimensional security dialogue, a solid answer on how to stimulate reversal of illegal actions and prevent further violations, thus revamping the European security, has yet to be found. We thank the Chairmanship for placing the focus of today's joint FCS – PC meeting on issues of European security and look forward to continuing our result-oriented efforts.

Thank you, M-me Chairperson