



**Permanent Mission of Ukraine**  
to the International  
Organizations in Vienna

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**Statement in response to the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly,  
Mr. George Tsereteli**

As delivered by Ambassador Ihor Prokopchuk,  
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,  
to the 1197<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Permanent Council,  
11 October 2018

**Mr. Chairperson,**

The delegation of Ukraine joins previous speakers in warmly welcoming President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Mr. George Tsereteli back to the Permanent Council. We thank him for his comprehensive address and views on tackling, in a cooperative manner, the most pressing challenges in the OSCE region.

We recognise the value of close interaction between the inter-governmental and inter-parliamentary parts of our Organization and welcome the focus placed by the Parliamentary Assembly on respect for and implementation of the OSCE principles and commitments. The Ukrainian parliamentary delegation to the Assembly actively participates in all its meetings and provides substantive contributions by initiating draft resolutions on key security challenges.

We appreciate, Mr. President, your visits to Ukraine this year to which you referred in your presentation. The trip of the OSCE PA delegation to the contact line in Donbas served to better understand the severe consequences of the Russian hybrid aggression against Ukraine. Since your visit, dozens more Ukrainian soldiers and civilians were killed and wounded in artillery and mortar attacks of the Russian armed formations or fell victim to Russian sniper fire. In the last 24 hours, the Russian armed formations opened fire at the Ukrainian positions 28 times, killing two Ukrainian servicemen and wounding three. The aggression continues every day, at the contact line and beyond, and testifies to Kremlin's contempt for the norms and principles of the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter and its unwillingness to implement the Minsk agreements.

**Mr. President,**

It remains imperative for the interests of peace and security in Europe to show unity and resolve in taking Russia to account for its flagrant breach of its international obligations and commitments. In his statement today, the Russian Ambassador mentioned the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter for European Security as the basis for security in the OSCE space. However, the fundamental provisions of these documents have been brutally violated by the Russian Federation. In this

connection we emphasise the importance of the firm position of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly as reflected in the respective documents adopted in 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and at the last Berlin Annual session of 2018 – that is at each of the Annual sessions since the beginning of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine. The demands of the international community to the Russian Federation have been made very clear: to fully comply with its obligations under the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and other norms and principles of international law; to stop aggression against Ukraine; to reverse the attempted annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol; to halt its destabilization campaign and fueling of the conflict in Donbas and fully implement the undertaken Minsk commitments; to withdraw its troops, mercenaries and weaponry from the Ukrainian territory; to put an end to gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, illegally occupied by Russia. Unfortunately, all of these calls, every single one of them, remain without response from the Russian side. What we witnessed at the OSCE PA Annual session in Berlin and Autumn meeting in Bishkek was the arrogant denial of facts by the Russian delegation.

As Russia consistently attempts to deny its responsibilities as the party to the conflict and, in parallel, takes steps that further aggravate the situation, we encourage the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to explore additional mechanisms for ensuring full implementation of its respective Resolutions. We request the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to send a clear message to Russia that the plans, announced by Moscow and the Russian occupation administration in Donetsk and Luhansk, to hold illegal so called “elections” in the occupied areas of Donbas are contrary to the Minsk agreements, whereas their conduct will constitute a breach by Russia of its commitments and significantly undermine further implementation of the Minsk agreements.

We support your efforts, Mr. President, at promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular during conflict. We have witnessed from the developments in the Crimean peninsula and parts of Donbas under Russia’s occupation that the most glaring violations of human rights take place in situations of foreign occupation. There is a specific area where we believe more could be achieved with greater involvement of the OSCE PA – that is the priority humanitarian issue of release of Ukrainian citizens imprisoned by Russia as political prisoners. Among them the Ukrainian filmmaker Oleg Sentsov, journalist Roman Sushchenko, farmer Volodymyr Balukh and many many others. There are over 70 Ukrainian citizens who have been incarcerated by the Russian authorities on fabricated charges and made hostages. We do encourage a stronger proactive role of the Parliamentary Assembly in seeking release of these innocent people.

**Mr. President,**

Ukraine values the essential role of parliamentary diplomacy on matters of security, democratic institutions, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We stand ready to further support joint efforts with the OSCE PA in promoting peace, security, common values and co-operation, underpinned by respect for the OSCE principles and commitments, starting from the Helsinki Final Act.

**Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.**