



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

## **STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE on MINE ACTION**

**1036<sup>th</sup> FSC Plenary Meeting**  
(15 February 2023)

Agenda Item 1, Security Dialogue

Mr Chairperson,

Ukraine aligns itself with the statement by the European Union. In addition, I would like to make some points in my national capacity.

First of all, let me express our gratitude to the FSC Chairpersonship of Bosnia and Herzegovina for dedicating this Security Dialogue to the issue of mine action. For Ukraine, this topic is extremely important and we appreciate an opportunity to discuss it in the FSC. We also welcome today's keynote speakers and thank them for their interesting presentations and valuable contributions to our discussion.

Since the very beginning of the Russian aggression against Ukraine in 2014, the mine threat has been among the most important aspects of the war because of its significant impact on the civilian population. The full-scale invasion of Ukraine launched by the Kremlin almost a year ago has not only increased this threat but also spread it to the entire territory of Ukraine.

In Ukraine, the Russian Federation widely uses antipersonnel landmines, including different modifications of PMN, PFM, MON, POM and PZM antipersonnel landmines. Fully ignoring norms and principles of International Humanitarian Law aimed at the protection of the civilian population, the Russian forces plant mines on civilian roads, pathways and residential areas. Proving their terrorist nature, Russian troops plant mines even in the children's toys.

Remote mining and indiscriminate use of unguided weaponry such as air bombs and cluster munitions have resulted in the contamination of a vast area. In total, according

to the State Emergency Service of Ukraine, the territory of Ukraine, that is now considered contaminated, is about 174,000 square km which constitutes 30% of the entire territory of our country. The war unleashed by Russia has already made Ukraine one of the most mine-affected countries in the world.

Unexploded mines and shells, booby traps and improvised explosive devices pose the greatest danger. This threat is particularly acute in the liberated territories where mines pose a significant danger to the local population and prevents the restoration of everyday life.

Comprehensive demining of the entire territory of Ukraine would be possible only after the end of this war. The sad experience of other countries, in particular in the Balkans, multiplied by the large areas of conflict-affected territories in Ukraine tells us that this will be a long process.

Nevertheless, already today there is a lot of work to be done. The mine action remains among the top priorities of the Government of Ukraine and it continues to take all possible steps in order to reduce existing threats. It would not be an understatement to say that every mine that is timely discovered means that at least one human life is saved.

The State Emergency Service, Special Transportation Service, National Police and Armed Forces of Ukraine in close cooperation with their international partners address the issue through practical measures for decontamination and destruction of mines and explosive devices.

Ukrainian demining groups continue to make every effort to clear the territory of Ukraine from explosive hazards and landmines to save human lives. In total, since the beginning of the large-scale invasion, Ukrainian agencies involved in humanitarian demining activities have already examined more than 790 square km of territory and destroyed more than 321,000 explosive hazards.

It should be mentioned that the special attention of Ukrainian authorities is paid to the promotion of awareness of risks faced by local communities. To this end, local media and the Internet are extensively used to inform people, in particular children, about mine-related threats. The Government and local authorities regularly conduct outreach seminars and distribute thematic posters and leaflets during risk-reduction activities in local communities. People also can use the interactive map available on the official website of the mine action service of the State Emergency Service so that residents of Ukraine could increase their mine-risk awareness or report about the detected explosives.

Mr Chairperson,

International assistance remains crucial to ensure a proper and efficient response to the current challenges caused by Russia's war of aggression. In this regard, let me express our gratitude to all our international partners for their practical assistance provided to Ukraine in the sphere of demining both bilaterally as well as within multilateral projects.

Ukraine is grateful to the respective non-governmental organisations, in particular the Halo Trust, Danish Refugee Council and Swiss Foundation for Mine Action, for their efforts aimed at proper mine clearance in conflict-affected areas as well as contribution to the resilience of relevant Ukrainian authorities.

I would like to commend the OSCE activities in Ukraine in this domain. We are grateful to all participating States who have provided their assistance to Ukraine, including by funding the OSCE assistance projects aimed at strengthening the capacity of Ukrainian agencies in the sphere of mine action and humanitarian demining and will welcome the continuation of the support.

Ukraine is looking forward to further fruitful cooperation with the OSCE, in particular within the recently updated framework of the project activities, as well as with our international partners for the sake of the safety and security of people.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.