



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine at the
2021 Annual Security Review Conference

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(Working session III: Conventional arms control and CSBMs challenges and opportunities)

Mr. Moderator,

The Delegation of Ukraine warmly welcomes today's speakers and expresses its gratitude for their valuable contribution and insightful presentations during this working session.

When fully implemented Conventional Arms Control and Confidence- and Security Building Measures play an important role in ensuring military stability, transparency and predictability in the OSCE region.

However, the current regional security landscape has undergone dramatic transformations, as the OSCE fundamental principles and commitments and imperative norms of international law have been severely undermined.

The founding principles laid upon participating States to refrain in their relations from the use of force and threat of the use of force, which forms the bedrock of our politico military instruments, are unabated.

The Russian Federation remains the biggest source of these negative developments. By waging armed aggression against Ukraine and Georgia and by occupying parts of their sovereign territory, Russia has turned these areas into grey zones inaccessible for

verification activities and excluded them from military information exchange under arms control and CSBMs regime.

This area reaches 57.5 thousand square kilometers exceeding the territory of some participating States.

Both the Treaty on Open Skies and the Vienna Document have been misused by Russia in an attempt to legitimize the consequences of its illegal acts of occupation of Ukraine's sovereign territory – the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol.

Russia's decision to withdraw from the Treaty on Open Skies did not come to us as a surprise. This step would accomplish the course undertaken by this country to dismantle all regimes which ensured military restraint, limited the deployment of offensive weapons, and prevented snap large-scale military activities in the Euro Atlantic. By means of dismantling the arms control regime, Russia was preparing the ground for covert sudden armed aggression against Ukraine and Georgia.

Having chosen such pattern of behavior, Russia alone bears the responsibility for the continuing erosion of the conventional arms control and CSBMs regime.

This year's provocative and destabilizing no-notice large scale military build-up by Russia near the border with Ukraine, and illegal concentration of additional troops and military equipment in the temporarily occupied Crimea and its territorial waters constituted yet another challenge to established arms control and CSBMs regime.

Instead of seeking avenues to dispel concerns, de-escalate tensions and undertake necessary measures of transparency, the Russian Federation decided to selectively approach the implementation of the Vienna Document. Despite numerous calls of the participating States and guidance embedded in the urgent resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly adopted this July, Russia remained reluctant to uphold its commitments under this politico-military instrument, in particular its risk reduction mechanism.

We strongly appeal to the need of full restoration of the zone of application of all arms control and CSBMs instruments over the entirety of the territories of Ukraine and Georgia within their internationally recognized borders. The only way to achieve this goal is full, unconditional and immediate de-occupation and demilitarization by Russia of these territories.

At the same, there are certain other steps that might prevent further aggravation of the security situation. The modernization of the Vienna Document 2011 is one of them. This task is long overdue. It is necessitated by technological developments in the military sphere, including changes in force structures, and by current and emerging security threats.

It is time to fulfil these endeavors, which were endorsed by 45 participating States in the joint statement at the Tirana Ministerial Council meeting in December 2020. The joint proposal which garnered the support of 34 participating States is the right basis to advance on this path.

It envisages some of the most important elements to contribute to transparency and predictability in the OSCE region by, inter alia, lowering the notification and observation thresholds; improving the risk reduction mechanism under Chapter III; enhancing the transparency of large-scale “snap” (“no-notice”) exercises; and improving inspection and evaluation. The need to advance in these areas became even more clear in light of the no-notice military activity held near Ukraine’s border this year.

Ukraine reaffirms its commitments to the conventional arms control, including the Treaty on Open Skies as its integral component, as a prerequisite to upholding regional and international peace and security.

In conclusion, let me stress that it is essential to restore full compliance with the core principles and commitments of our Organization, that stipulate norms of behavior in relations between States enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act, notably, the sovereign equality and respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty, refraining from the threat or use of force, inviolability of frontiers, territorial integrity of states, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-intervention into internal affairs, fulfilment in good faith of obligations under international law.

Solely by doing so, we would be able to fulfil our endeavors in rebuilding transparency, predictability and trust in the OSCE region, including through the comprehensive use of our politico-military toolbox.

I thank you for your attention.