

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

PC.DEL/12/20
10 January 2020

ENGLISH only



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**Statement in response to the address by the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office,
Prime Minister and Minister for Europe and Foreign
Affairs of the Republic of Albania, H.E. Mr. Edi Rama**

As delivered by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1254th special meeting of the Permanent Council,
9 January 2020

Mr. Chairperson,

At the very outset let me once again express my gratitude to the Chairmanship for the sincere words of condolences and sympathy.

The circumstances and causes of the catastrophe of the passenger aircraft of Ukraine International Airlines near Tehran International Airport should be established through an impartial investigation with participation of all grieving nations and best experts, to be conducted in line with the norms of international law, in particular pursuant to 1944 Chicago Convention.

Mr. Chairperson,

The delegation of Ukraine warmly welcomes to the Permanent Council the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Prime Minister and Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania, H.E. Mr. Edi Rama. We thank the Head of the Albanian Government for his presentation of Albania's Chairmanship priorities for 2020 and wish him every success in steering the work of the OSCE in the course of the year.

Ukraine fully shares your view, that implementation of all the Helsinki Principles, including respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, remains a simple yet effective recipe for peace in Europe. Their implementation is indeed the only way to rebuild trust within the OSCE. This has been a consistent p

osition of my country and many participating States, that only restoration of full respect for the OSCE core principles can serve as a sustainable and solid ground for peace and security on the European continent. The OSCE potential as the largest regional security organization must be used to rectify the ongoing clear, gross and uncorrected violations of its principles. This is the core of the OSCE. We will provide all possible support to the Albanian Chairmanship in pursuing this goal.

You are right, Prime Minister, when you say that the so-called “crisis in and around Ukraine” remains the most pressing security challenge in Europe. Let me recall that this outdated term emerged in the OSCE six years ago in 2014, when the Russian Federation launched its armed aggression against Ukraine in Crimea and Donbas, sending Russian militaries without insignia to violate Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and refusing, at that time, to recognize that fact. Now, as Russia’s military presence in the occupied Crimea and parts of Donbas leaves no room for doubt, in particular based on the facts established by the OSCE assets, the time has come to call it what it is in reality, that is the Russian-Ukrainian conflict.

Ukraine appreciates the OSCE role in facilitating resolution of this conflict in a peaceful politico-diplomatic way. It has indeed proven to be an organization able to deploy quickly its field presence in the conflict area and to deliver what no one else was able to. The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, which became the most substantial, visible and practical response of the international community to Russian aggression against Ukraine, deserves our strong support.

Following the recent Normandy Four Summit in Paris last month, we call on the Albanian Chairmanship to guide participating States towards essential strengthening of the SMM capacities on the ground to monitor, 24/7, the state of implementation of the ceasefire in Donbas, in accordance with its agreed mandate. Adoption of SMM’s budget, which would enable the Mission to effectively implement its mandate, must become one of the primary tasks for the Chairmanship in the next two and a half months. Special attention should be paid to prolongation of the use of long-range UAVs and procurement of other technical assets able to provide night-time monitoring without unduly endangering the lives of civilian monitors in the ground patrols. Support of the OSCE participating States remains vital and widely appreciated by Ukraine.

Another critical asset established by the OSCE in response to Russia’s attack on Ukraine, that is the Trilateral Contact Group, has once again proven its efficiency by facilitating the implementation of N4 agreement on furthering the process of mutual release. As a result, on 29 December 2019, 76 Ukrainian citizens were released from Russian captivity in the occupied part of Donbas. We expect the CiO Special Representative in Ukraine and the TCG, Ambassador Heidi Grau, to duly represent the Albanian Chairmanship as a mediator in the TCG between Ukraine and Russia as parties to the conflict. We have got a lot of work to do ahead, including on demining, additional disengagement areas, and new crossing points along the line of contact. Moreover, the recent release of detainees was far from a comprehensive one: the Russian side continues keeping behind bars dozens and hundreds of Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars, captured under far-fetched pretext. The work on their release must go on.

As Ukraine and predominant majority of the participating States will never tire of repeating, the illegal occupation of Crimea remains a part of the conflict initiated and fueled by Russia. Unless the Russian Federation withdraws its occupation forces from the Crimean peninsula, Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders will continue to be violated and the worst security crisis in Europe will stay on our agenda. Until that happens, the OSCE assets, including the SMM and autonomous institutions, must be fully used to monitor observance of the human rights and fundamental freedoms in Crimea. We would also welcome specific proposals by those assets how the international community could respond to the numerous violations by the occupation authorities.

The issue of conflicts and their impact on the lives of people will remain a focus of our attention in all three OSCE dimensions of the comprehensive security. Ukraine will support any initiatives by the Albanian Chairmanship to provide collective responses to the security, socio-economic and humanitarian challenges stemming from the conflicts, situations of occupation and violation of sovereign borders. We welcome, in particular, Albania's emphasis on combating violence against women suffering most from instability and conflicts and on promoting their role in peace and security. As a country with one and a half million of IDPs we understand and support the importance of the topic within the human dimension of the OSCE. We remain convinced that more efforts must be undertaken within the OSCE to improve cooperation on tackling severe environmental problems inherent for any conflict undermining the legitimate government's control of the industrial facilities located in the conflict area. Multilateral cooperation also remains critical in such fields as countering financing of terrorism, cyber-crimes, money laundering or environmental challenges, which cannot be limited and solved within the national boundaries.

Last, but not the least, we reaffirm Ukraine's confidence that the conflicts in the OSCE area must be resolved with full respect to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the respective states – Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova within their internationally recognized borders and in line with norms and principles of international law. This remains the only basis for sustainable resolution, and any deviation from the OSCE core principles will only further undermine regional security and stability. In particular, the Albanian Chairmanship can count on Ukraine's dedicated efforts as a mediator and guarantor to seek progress in the Transdnestrrian settlement process in the "5+2" format.

I wish to conclude by reiterating our gratitude to Prime Minister Rama for being with us today and by wishing him and the entire Chairmanship team every success in their activities throughout the year.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.