



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**Statement in response to address
by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia,
H.E. Mr. Lasha Darsalia**

As for delivery by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1309-th meeting of the Permanent Council,
15 April 2021

Madame Chairperson,

Ukraine has aligned itself with the statement of the European Union which we fully support. In addition, I would also like to make some remarks in my national capacity.

Ukraine warmly welcomes Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia H.E. Mr. Lasha Darsalia to the Permanent Council. Georgia has always been a good friend of Ukraine. Our countries enjoy strategic partnership and long-established relations based on common aspirations of building democratic, stable and economically prosperous modern European states.

Unfortunately, on our ways to these goals both Ukraine and Georgia have to deal for years already with the same challenge – military aggression of the Russian Federation. In view of this, it is not surprising that one the main goals enshrined in Declaration on establishment of strategic partnership between Ukraine and Georgia, signed in 2017, is de-occupation of territories of Ukraine and Georgia and their restoration within internationally recognized borders.

Instead of restoring its real, not pretended respect to core OSCE principles and commitments, the Russian Federation under the eyes of the entire world again pursues dangerous escalation strategy, builds up its military presence near the state border of Ukraine and on the occupied by Russia territories of Donbas and Crimea.

Ukraine strongly condemns Russia's ongoing occupation of Georgia's regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali as well as intensified steps aimed at their illegal militarization and de-facto annexation. It is unacceptable that Russia keeps using the OSCE to promote its narratives naming occupied by Russian forces Georgian territories as so-called "young republics". This so-called "geopolitical reality", pseudo reality I would say, based on obvious disregard for international law, exists only for Russia, and the international community will never recognize it.

As one of the tragic outcomes of Russia's aggression against Georgia, 15% of Georgian population became internally displaced persons. In this vein, the ongoing restrictions of the freedom of movement across the occupation line severely influence the overall humanitarian situation on the ground. We call on Russia and its occupation administrations to lift these restrictions as soon as possible. The malpractice by the Russian proxies to apprehend illegally the

people, who just try to overcome raising barriers on the occupation line, must not be left without proper reaction of the OSCE.

Ukraine expresses its support to Geneva International Discussions and praises the constructive approach of Georgia aimed at peaceful resolution of the Russian-Georgian conflict. Having unilaterally reaffirmed the non-use of force commitments, Georgia has demonstrated its political will in this regard.

We call upon the Russian Federation to reciprocate and immediately fulfill its obligations under the 2008 EU-mediated ceasefire agreement, withdraw its armed formations and occupation administrations from the temporarily occupied territories of Georgia and provide unhindered access for the delivery of humanitarian assistance to affected areas. At the same time, the EU Monitoring Mission must be provided with possibility to implement functions under its relevant mandate.

We also urge the Russian Federation to comply fully with the Judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in the case concerning the armed conflict between Georgia and the Russian Federation in August 2008 and its consequences.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Ukraine's unwavering support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders.

Thank you, Madame Chairperson.