

ENGLISH only

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Pavlo Klimkin,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine
at the 24th Meeting of the Ministerial Council of the OSCE**
(Vienna, 7 December 2017)

**Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

At the outset, I wish to thank the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, my friend Sebastian Kurz, for the warm hospitality in Vienna. I am also grateful for his special attention to my country from the very first days of Austria's OSCE Chairmanship. Having visited Ukraine three times this year, he had an opportunity to see with his own eyes the suffering and devastation as a result of the Russian armed aggression against Ukraine.

Russia's actions have violated all ten principles of the Helsinki Final Act, which chartered the foundation of the rules-based order in Europe.

Back in 1999 at the Istanbul Summit the participating States undertook to explore ways to increase the OSCE's effectiveness in dealing with cases of clear, gross and continuing violations of OSCE principles and commitments. This commitment is most relevant today in order to bring security and cooperation back on track. We request the incoming Italian Chairmanship to launch these discussions.

Mr. Chairman,

Russian aggression in Donbas has already killed over ten thousand people and forced nearly two million to flee their homes. Almost 25,000 have been injured and the death toll keeps rising. This cannot be 'a new normality' for Europe. And when Ukrainian citizens in the occupied Crimea continue to be severely repressed and Russia defies the measures ordered by the International Court of Justice – this also can never be accepted as 'a new normality' for Europe.

Crimea is bleeding. This morning in Vienna two courageous Crimean Tatars Mr. Ilmi Umerov and Mr. Akhtem Chiygoz, deputy

chairmen of the Mejlis, representative institution of Crimean Tatars banned by the Russian authorities, shared the shocking stories of persecution and impunity for crimes against Crimean Tatars and others who oppose Russia's occupation. Just days ago, an 82-year-old woman who survived Stalin's repressions, a legend of Crimean Tatar movement and resistance since 1944, died in the hands of the Russian occupants. as they tried to arrest her.

Significant deterioration of the human rights situation in Crimea under Russian occupation is well documented in the latest report of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights. As we raise this issue in the United Nations, we highly appreciate the support by OSCE participating States for the UN General Assembly resolution on human rights in the occupied Crimea. It is important now to enforce its implementation.

It is clear that the de-occupation of Crimea would be the only way to ultimately resolve the human rights and security problems on the peninsula. We call for a peaceful coordinated effort within the framework of a special international platform, initiated by Ukraine. Your countries' support and active engagement in this endeavour is very important.

Excellencies,

The road to peace in Donbas is clearly outlined in the Minsk agreements. Ukraine has shown its commitment to reached agreements by practical steps. So far there is no sign that Russia ever intended to abide by its commitments. Russia's Minsk commitments include the cease-fire, withdrawal of its troops and weapons from Ukraine's territory and return of the control of the state border to the Ukrainian Government. It must leave the temporarily occupied Crimea and compensate the damage it dealt to the Ukrainian people, Ukrainian soil and infrastructure.

We fully support the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) in Ukraine and we are grateful for its dedicated work. To implement the mandate, the SMM must have full and unhindered access and freedom of movement in the areas of Donbas, which are under Russia's effective control. Permanent OSCE monitoring at the Ukrainian-Russian border has not been allowed in three years since signing of the Minsk Protocol in 2014. This year Russia was again the

only country that blocked the adoption of a respective decision by this Ministerial Council.

Peaceful resolution of the conflict will be served by the deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission throughout the conflict-affected area and along the whole segment of the Ukrainian-Russian border. This would complement the work of SMM in establishing security for all. The deployment of the mission cannot be subject to negotiations with illegal Russian proxies in Donbas.

Besides the hot conflict, protracted conflicts in the OSCE area continue to pose serious risks to security. We need to increase our efforts for peaceful resolution of these conflicts on the territories of Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Republic of Azerbaijan with full respect for their sovereignty and territorial integrity. As a mediator and guarantor in the Transdniestrian settlement process, Ukraine stands ready to further contribute to achieving a sustainable solution in line with norms and principles of international law.

Mr. Chairman,

Some have talked about a return to the *cold war*. This is in fact not accurate. Russia now wages a *real war* against Europe and its values. This war is fought by Russian troops without insignia but *with* tanks and guns on Ukrainian soil.

It is also fought with a sophisticated state-sponsored campaign of disinformation towards, and destabilisation of free and democratic societies. There is an urgent need to address these challenges. Hybrid warfare aims to exploit the vulnerabilities of democracy. It probes for weakness and seeks out pretexts for hostile intrusions. We must see this topic among key areas of OSCE deliberations next year.

There are three broad areas we must now focus on:

1. We must get more effective at combatting Russia sponsored *terrorism* and *cyber-attacks*.
2. And we must do more to help our citizens resist Russian propaganda and disinformation – our citizens must now realise that *Russia is a State that lies on an industrial scale*.

3. In addition we must continue to promote good governance, defend *human rights and fundamental freedoms* while giving full support to the OSCE institutions.

These are the tasks critical to the security and stability of our societies.

Mr. Chairman,

Concerted efforts and strengthened solidarity are indispensable for the return to the rules-based security order, without which our values and cooperation remain at risk.

I would like to wish the incoming Italian OSCE Chairmanship, my dear friend Foreign Minister Alfano, every success in guiding our efforts towards this goal. You can count on Ukraine's support for this endeavour.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.