

STATEMENT

by H. E. Mr. Volodymyr Yel'chenko, Head of the Delegation of Ukraine to the 14th Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council

(Brussels, 5 December 2006)

Mr. Chairman,

Having delivered the statement on behalf of the GUAM Member States, and after aligning itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union yesterday, the delegation of Ukraine would like to add a few points in the national capacity.

Over the past year, the OSCE has embarked upon an ambitious reform process. We are about to adopt a number of important decisions on procedural, administrative and structural reform, which should make our organization more focused, coordinated and better equipped to fulfil its tasks as a comprehensive security organization.

We firmly believe that the time has come to finalize our deliberations into implementation, to turn words into deeds. With all necessary instruments in place, we should now focus on practical actions in response to the common security challenges.

Mr. Chairman,

Global energy security is a long-lasting process with many challenges. For a number of reasons this Organization cannot afford standing aside and should move effectively on this track. Ukraine highly appreciates the Belgian Chairmanship's active stance on that issue and we strongly encourage the incoming Chairmanship to continue with the process of further engagement of the OSCE in the international co-operation on the energy security.

Mr. Chairman,

Over the years the OSCE has gained an international credibility as a valued contributor to security and stability, a promoter of human rights, the rule of law, democratic institutions, free media, free and fair elections and good governance.

We note with satisfaction that this year Ukraine succeeded in consolidating substantial progress in conducting free and fair elections. The conclusions of the International Election Observation Mission explicitly indicated that the parliamentary electoral campaign of 2006 in Ukraine was held generally in line with the OSCE commitments.

Being a multiethnic society, Ukraine is highly sensitive to the issues of promoting understanding, interethnic and intercultural dialogue, non-discrimination and tolerance.

We have been taught by the history that the absence of the relevant prevention mechanisms alongside with the lack of due diligence and political will led to many humanitarian catastrophes. One of those appalling examples was the Great Famine

(Holodomor) in Ukraine of 1932-1933, which was orchestrated by the totalitarian Stalin regime and took lives of millions of Ukrainians.

Just few days ago the Ukrainian Parliament passed the law recognizing the Holodomor as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people. We believe that the world should know the truth about this heinous crime and that is why Ukraine is striving for the international recognition and condemnation of the Holodomor. We are convinced that wider knowledge about this tragedy will contribute to promoting the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the world community at large.

With the same purpose, a number of commemorative events and the international forum “Let my People Live” were held in Kyiv in October 2006 upon the initiative of the President of Ukraine on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the Babyn Yar tragedy. These events served as important reminders of the lessons of history and of the need to prevent any manifestations of anti-Semitism, xenophobia and intolerance.

Ukraine welcomes the OSCE’s practical contribution to the efforts of participating States in promoting interethnic dialogue and confidence-building in the OSCE area. We particularly appreciate the support of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities to the joint Ukrainian-Romanian monitoring in the sphere of minority protection. We look forward to the High Commissioner’s continued assistance to the forthcoming monitoring missions.

Mr. Chairman,

In our view, the *raison d’être* of our Organization calls for increased efforts of OSCE participating States in the settlement of conflicts, which still exist in the areas of responsibility of the OSCE.

With this in mind, we are suggesting for your consideration the idea of establishing in Ukraine an informal forum on the issues of conflict prevention and settlement. This event could bring together the governments, NGOs, academic circles and the parties to the conflicts to discuss the issues of conflict prevention and resolution as well as emerging security challenges in the areas of the OSCE and its Mediterranean partners.

Mr. Chairman,

We can only succeed in addressing multiple security threats and challenges if we take resolute steps towards strengthening shared responsibility for the promotion of common values in the OSCE area. Ukraine stands ready to work closely with the Spanish Presidency and all partners in order to achieve these goals.

Thank you.