



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

PC.DEL/1242/18
19 October 2018

ENGLISH only

**Statement in response to the reports by
the Personal Representatives of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office
on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination**

As delivered by Ambassador Ihor Prokopchuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1198th meeting of the Permanent Council,
18 October 2018

Mr. Chairman,

Before proceeding to our statement, I wish to thank the Italian Chairmanship for expressing condolences in connection with the horrible attack yesterday in the city of Kerch, Ukraine, and for solidarity with the Ukrainian people at these difficult times. Yesterday the President of Ukraine expressed his sympathy and condolences to all those affected by this heinous attack which left many killed and wounded. Today in the plenary session the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine paid tribute to the victims by observing a minute of silence. The Prosecutor's Office of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea launched a criminal investigation into the attack qualifying it as a terrorist act.

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism Rabbi Andrew Baker back to the Permanent Council, and appreciate the video link with other Personal Representatives, professors Bülent Şenay and Salvatore Martinez. We took note of their reports on the activities over the past year and will analyze them.

I wish to assure the Personal Representatives of Ukraine's support for their respective mandates and the role they play in promoting full compliance with OSCE commitments on combating racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, intolerance and discrimination against Christians, Jews, Muslims, and members of other religions as well as against non-believers.

The OSCE commitments established a comprehensive framework for participating States to address manifestations of intolerance and discrimination as they pose a serious threat to our common security.

Ukraine attaches great importance to the promotion of tolerance, mutual respect and understanding within the Ukrainian society and strongly condemns

manifestations of any kind of intolerance or discrimination. The topic of preventing and combating discrimination is duly addressed by the national legislation, which provides for efficient system of legal protection, awareness raising programmes and statistical data collection. The overwhelming majority of religious communities in Ukraine describe harmonious inter-faith relations and conditions of non-discrimination. My country is fully committed to further strengthening the implementation of relevant OSCE commitments.

However, there are parts of Ukraine, which are temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation, and where non-discrimination is not a valid notion.

In Crimea, we witness ongoing repressions by the occupying authorities, which took the form of attacks on and the expulsion of the priests of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate.

Raids and searches in the Crimean Tatars' mosques and madrasas, restrictions on the distribution of Muslim religious literature under the false pretext of the fight against extremism are accompanied by flagrant and systematic violations of human rights.

Until today, Russia defies the provisional measures ordered by the International Court of Justice in connection with the case against the Russian Federation on violation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. In particular, the ban on activities of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people has not been lifted.

In parts of Donbas under Russian occupation administration, all faith traditions, except for the Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, appear to be targeted through persecution, abductions, unlawful deprivation of liberty, torture and ill-treatment and even killings of clergy members and believers, as well as the seizure of church property.

We strongly condemn these manifestations of religious-bias violence and discrimination. Joined focused efforts of the international community, including the OSCE, are needed to help restore the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in these regions.

Distinguished colleagues,

The growing aggressive nationalistic sentiments within Russia, combined with xenophobic public statements by mainstream politicians, represent a threat that affects Russia and stretches beyond Russia's borders. The climate of hatred, chauvinism, militaristic mobilisation is intensely propagated by the Russian state media.

Reportedly, in 2017, at least 71 people became victims of violence, motivated by racist or neo-Nazi ideology. Six of them were killed.

We are deeply alarmed that the violent manifestations of xenophobia and intolerance increasingly target Ukrainian citizens in the Russian Federation. Anti-Ukrainian sentiments and hateful propaganda, actively fueled by Russian media, are everyday realities in Russia, endangering the safety of Ukrainians. One of the last victims – Dynamo Kyiv trainee who was beaten by neo-Nazis in Chelyabinsk.

The Russian Federation has never provided information on the results of investigations of brutal murder of Ukrainian citizen Roman Muzychenko in Moscow by a group of 21 young nationalists or a 16 year-old Ukrainian citizen Vitaliy Pop who was beaten to death by the personnel of the juvenile correctional facility in Krasnodar region of Russia.

The Russian authorities have incarcerated on fabricated charges over 70 Ukrainian citizens and made them political prisoners.

The Russian so-called “anti-extremist” legislation is used to stifle dissenting voices and different communities, including Jehovah Witnesses, Church of Scientology, Muslim and Christian groups.

The clamp-down targeted civil society, including organizations protecting the rights of ethnic Ukrainians, indigenous peoples of the Russian North and East and those fighting racism and discrimination.

We urge the Personal Representatives to fully use their mandates to assist Russia to comply with the OSCE principles and commitments and international obligations in the area of combatting intolerance and discrimination.

We call upon Russia to use the valuable expertise of the OSCE Institutions in addressing the root causes of the rise of violent radicalism, neo-Nazism, chauvinism and xenophobia in the Russian Federation.

Mr. Chairman,

Looking ahead to the Milan Ministerial Council meeting in December 2018, we stand ready to work towards producing concrete deliverables. In particular, we would welcome the adoption this year of a working definition of anti-Semitism, as well as increased OSCE capabilities to tackle current threats to human dignity and security in the OSCE region, including in the situations of foreign occupation.

In conclusion, let me wish the Personal Representatives success in their important activities promoting tolerance and non-discrimination in the OSCE region.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.