



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations in Vienna

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**Statement in response to
Amb. Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, Director of the OSCE Office
for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights**

As delivered by Yevheniia Filipenko,
Deputy Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1159th meeting of the Permanent Council,
5 October 2017

Mr. Chairman,

We join previous speakers in warmly welcoming at the Permanent Council the Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights H.E. Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir. We thank you, Madame, for your comprehensive report on the 2017 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw, which was the first one organized under your leadership as ODIHR's Director.

The delegation of Ukraine expresses its gratitude to the ODIHR for excellent organization of the Meeting. We also thank the Polish authorities for their hospitality.

Dear colleagues,

Ukraine continues to view the HDIM as the main instrument for the effective monitoring of compliance by all participating States with their human dimension commitments, including through the unique involvement of civil society, which we fully support.

The fortnight discussions in Warsaw clearly reaffirmed that the most blatant violations of human rights take place in the situations of occupation, resulting from Russia's ongoing military aggression against Ukraine and from violation of the OSCE fundamental principles and commitments.

At the working sessions and side events numerous eye-witness accounts and NGO presentations testified that the residents of Crimea under the Russian occupation experience sharp deterioration of the human rights situation, including abductions, torture and enforced disappearances, the silencing of dissenting voices through the initiation of repressive measures, targeting mainly Crimean Tatar community and pro-Ukrainian activists. The recent UN OHCHR thematic report "Situation of human rights in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)" concludes that the human rights

situation in Crimea has significantly deteriorated since the beginning of its occupation by the Russian Federation.

There is a total breakdown in the rule of law in the certain areas of Donbas controlled by the combined Russia-separatist forces, where people are denied basic protection and are deprived of basic human rights and freedoms.

We once again emphasize that all responsibility for human rights violations in the temporary occupied regions of Ukraine and the failure to stop them rests with Russia.

OSCE Institutions should continue to attach importance to the issues of protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the occupied territories and seek by all available instruments the permanent monitoring and presence in Crimea in compliance with the UN GA Resolutions 68/262 “Territorial Integrity of Ukraine” and 71/205 “Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)”.

Looking ahead to the Vienna Ministerial Council meeting in December 2017, Ukraine stands ready to work for deliverables in the human dimension, which can make a real improvement, including in the situations of occupation.

We expect that the OSCE Chairmanship and the OSCE participating States will positively consider the idea of starting work in 2018 on strengthening the existing national minorities’ commitments, taking into account the set of recommendations of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in order to build a common framework of minority protection across the OSCE space.

Mr. Chairman,

The debates in Warsaw have again highlighted the increasingly deteriorating human rights situation in Russia.

Along with restrictive legislation on “foreign agents”, “undesirable organizations” and “Yarovaya package”, censorship in the media and internet, restrictions on freedom of assembly, association and expression, violation of rights of national and sexual minorities and religious communities, we witness Russia’s further departure from its obligations in the area of protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We regret that the Russian Federation once again failed to seize the opportunities offered by HDIM to commit to correcting the violations of fundamental OSCE principles and commitments. Instead, Russia resorted to the rhetoric of propaganda and hatred, aiming at shifting its responsibility on others.

We believe that close monitoring and reporting on the human rights’ situation in Russia must be one of the important tasks for the OSCE Institutions. Such activities should include the reports of torture against the Ukrainian citizens – political prisoners in Russia and of violation of their right to a fair trial, as well as deteriorating conditions for the Ukrainian national minority and the cases of ungrounded detention on fabricated charges of Ukrainian citizens in Russia.

Dear colleagues,

We regret that this important OSCE event was overshadowed by the misuse by the Russian delegation of the most important annual OSCE human dimension event to advance its policies of undermining the OSCE commitments and to create a parallel reality by using GoNGOs and puppet representatives.

We also wish to underline our rejection of any attempts by Russia to use the OSCE events for legitimizing illegal occupation of parts of Ukraine's territory. We deeply regret the fact that this year an individual, who supported actions and policies, which undermine the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine and was placed on the "List of persons and entities under EU restrictive measures over the territorial integrity of Ukraine", was registered for the HDIM under the disguise of an NGO.

For us it is obvious that it is only through cheating that such individuals can materialize at the OSCE meetings, further eroding the foundation of this organization based on principles and commitments.

We do expect that the incoming Italian Chairmanship and the ODIHR will strictly adhere to the OSCE principles and commitments, and take effective measures to counter Russian deceptions and prevent the recurrence of such manipulations.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by reiterating Ukraine's resolve to adhere to undertaken OSCE human dimension commitments, as well as our support for ODIHR's mandate. We highly appreciate our close cooperation with the ODIHR to enhance implementation of relevant commitments and we are confident that this cooperation will continue to be result-oriented and productive.

We once again thank you, Director Gísladóttir, for your report and wish every success to you and your great team.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.