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**Chairmanship: Ukraine**

**Opening Statement by  
H.E. Mr. Dmytro Kuleba, Minister for Foreign Affairs of  
Ukraine, at the First Session of the OSCE Forum for  
Security Co-operation under the Chairmanship of Ukraine**

*944<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation,  
29 April 2020*

**Mr. Chairperson,**

**Secretary General,**

**Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I welcome you to the opening session of Ukrainian FSC Chairmanship. I am happy to be back to the OSCE, now in my new capacity.

Allow me to start by commending Turkey for its able chairmanship during the previous trimester. I also welcome Germany to the FSC Troika!

Ukraine will lead FSC in the turbulent times of the ongoing Russian aggression against my country and global coronavirus pandemic. This is a time of grave challenges. Nevertheless, we will continue looking for opportunities and constructive responses.

Amidst of all chaos we have nowadays, the OSCE remains an essential platform of cooperation and dialogue (I have said these words so many times during my almost 5 years in Vienna, I must confess). The unique concept of OSCE comprehensive approach to security is relevant as never before. Especially now, when our societies

face unprecedented hybrid threats, restrictions, economic crisis and profound changes to everyday life.

The Forum, with its focus on the politico-military dimension of security, is a key pillar of the OSCE. Today, we witness an unprecedented scale of volatility, mistrust and unpredictability in the OSCE region.

This situation is marked by deliberate and flagrant disregard of our shared principles and commitments, from Helsinki and Paris and onwards. And we know those whom we should blame for this.

We cannot sit and simply watch. We need to restore full and *bona fide* implementation of our principles and commitments. Steps need to be taken to rebuild trust and stability in our region.

The Forum is a relevant platform to do that. We need genuine and practical dialogue. As our past shows, when political will is in place, such dialogue can bring tangible results.

The first thing, which comes to my mind when I speak about this, is of course the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. Six years ago, the OSCE participating States found the courage to send hundreds of their citizens as international civilian observers to the conflict zone to work in a very dangerous and unpredictable security environment.

Here I would like to pay tribute to the memory of the US paramedic Joseph Stone, who lost his life in the line of duty in 2017. I avail myself of this opportunity to express my sincere condolences to his family, colleagues and friends. And I will ask United States Ambassador to convey my words. We continue to value the contribution of all civilian monitors working in a conflict-affected area.

Ukraine is convinced that the politico-military aspects of this conflict should remain in a spotlight of the Forum.

### **Distinguished colleagues,**

Let me briefly outline the Ukrainian Chairmanship priorities throughout its tenure during this spring and summer. We've tried to draft a well-balanced and forward-looking agenda.

I should start with the **dire security situation in the Black Sea and the Azov Sea region**, which is marked by ongoing militarization and impediment of the freedom of international navigation.

We need to start a thorough discussion on this matter in the FSC. High-level officials and academia speakers should present their views, examining the implications of these developments on a broader region and possible steps we could take to reverse them.

Next comes a very topical issue of the **global coronavirus pandemic**, its impact on the Armed Forces and the role of the latter in assisting governments in fighting this threat. We need to consider possible implications of these steps for implementation of CSBMs.

Ukraine plans to pay close attention to the topic of **hybrid threats** and their possible interconnection with modern warfare. These threats affect the majority of participating States.

Following the steps of the Swiss Chairmanship undertaken last year, another security dialogue will be dedicated to the **activities and regulation of private war companies**.

The **Vienna Document** remains one of the pillars of the European security architecture. Its modernization has been long overdue, given the rapid technological developments in the military domain and the lack of effective, and up-to-date risk reduction and incident prevention mechanisms.

The number of participating States that share this view is growing, which eventually brought about a joint proposal supported by the overwhelming majority of them. Meanwhile, military snap exercises, especially those taking place near the borders require our particular attention. They should be considered by participating States in terms of the increased additional transparency measures.

Last year, the Ministerial Council in Bratislava commemorated the anniversary of the **UN Security Council Resolution 1540** and reaffirmed the readiness of the participating States and of the OSCE to take an active part in the respective **Comprehensive Review**.

Our security dialogue will consider possible input of the OSCE to the review process. We will invite participating States to share their national views on the non-proliferation agenda, inter alia, by assessing compliance to the disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements.

Our priorities also include an emphasis on the issue of **small arms and light weapons, and stockpiles of conventional ammunition**.

We need to continue updating the respective OSCE Best Practice Guides. This could facilitate combating illicit trafficking of small arms through national controls, effective export control, and border and customs mechanisms.

Additionally, we would like to bring to the attention of participating States the topic of **mine action** and the OSCE's role in assisting participating States in this field.

This topic is particularly relevant due to the dire humanitarian situation in and around certain areas of the occupied Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine. It also maintains a particular importance for participating States facing negative humanitarian and socio-economic impacts of landmines and explosive remnants of war.

Together with the OSCE Albanian Chairmanship, we plan to commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the UNSC Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

Since 2014, the Ukrainian women have been playing the unprecedented role in defending Ukraine's freedom and territorial integrity in an international armed conflict taking place on the territory of my country.

We attach great importance to the full implementation of the Resolution 1325 to protect women's rights in times of conflict and support women's contribution to the whole peace process in Ukraine. We have achieved substantial progress in this regard.

The ninth Annual Discussion on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security and the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference are also planned to be held during the Ukrainian Chairmanship. We stand ready to make our contribution to the conduct of these important events.

Finally, let me thank the Albanian Chairmanship for its leadership and the OSCE Secretariat for its valuable support in planning and carrying the work of the Forum.

I was delighted to have this opportunity to address you today. I will ask for a detailed briefing on your interventions, which will follow my opening remarks, and I once again apologize for my early departure, but I also have bosses and I have to follow their instructions. Have a fruitful conversation and I look forward to working with you during Ukrainian Chairmanship

**Thank you.**