



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
in response to Henrik Villadsen,
the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine**

As delivered by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna, to the 1321st meeting of the Permanent Council, 24 June 2021

Madam Chairperson,

We are grateful to the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine Ambassador Henrik Villadsen for being with us today and for presenting this comprehensive report.

The Activity Report of the Project Coordinator presents a clear picture of the implemented activities in a transparent way, and we welcome this approach. Taking into account that most of the reporting period was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, we also welcome the chosen Covid-19 response that helped not only to protect the PCU's staff but also to achieve a high budget implementation rate of over 95 per cent.

We hope this year's still unapproved budget will not affect the planned activities.

With regard to the activities reflected in the report, many positive outcomes are worth mentioning as the PCU's mandate covers a broad range of the Government's ongoing reform process. Just to name a few.

We support the PCU's general approach to promoting dialogue by including different groups of the Ukrainian society, notably youth and the targeted groups (like journalists) into the PCU's project activities.

In this regard, I would like to emphasize the importance of the PCU's expert support to the development of the draft Law "On Public Consultations" as well as the assistance in the preparation of a new National Strategy for Supporting Civil Society Development in Ukraine for 2021-2025.

We welcome efforts of the PCU and practical assistance supporting the ongoing decentralization reform.

We also strongly support the PCU's work on enhancing human rights awareness among the Ukrainian youth as well as work regarding strengthening law school education.

We have taken positive note of the PCU's fruitful cooperation with the Law Reform Commission on elaborating the constitutional reform proposals as well as the support rendered in such areas as constitutional law, judicial reform and criminal justice.

Likewise, we welcome the PCU's assistance in engaging former judges of foreign constitutional courts to share their experience and expertise in constitutional complaint proceedings with the Ukrainian colleagues in December 2020. We believe that the further engagement of the high-level

foreign experts, in particular from the EU Member States, in the continuation of reforms across four main directions of the PCU's activities should be continued.

We also note significant role of the PCU's in preventing and combating domestic and children-domestic violence that is implemented by the promotion of deeper understanding of this important topic in the society.

Ambassador Villadsen,

We are fully aware of the existing impediments to your work in the conflict-affected areas. We, nevertheless, encourage you to strengthen activities in the framework of "Human security program" and "Economic, environmental, political military program".

The urgent need to emphasise these particular areas, which our delegation does on a regular basis, stems from a situation that the ongoing Russian armed aggression has led to. This situation has serious impact on the overall Ukrainian society, but particularly on those directly affected by the Russian-Ukrainian conflict.

Accordingly, Ukraine strongly supports the PCU's assistance for conflict-affected people, notably for former combatants, their family members and internally displaced persons.

In this regard, we would welcome the intensive PCU's cooperation with the Ministry of Veterans Affairs aiming at addressing an existing request of the Ukrainian society regarding the post-conflict rehabilitation and adaptation in the effective manner.

Projects, similar to those already implemented, like the creation of an online informational guide on provision of assistance to veterans and their families and the organization of the PCU's round tables on psycho-social assistance to veterans in the different communities, should also continue to be developed.

The PCU's focus on the environmental implications of the armed conflict in non-government-controlled areas is another matter of great significance. We took note of an important work that has already been done in this regard: an analysis of water usage in the Siverskyi Donets River and an environmental threats assessment at the selected industrial waste storage facilities. We also highly appreciate assistance in demining-related activities.

However, as the environmental situation in the non-government-controlled areas is rapidly deteriorating, more actions regarding the environmental protection become necessary.

Madam Chairperson,

Ukraine has been enjoying fruitful cooperation with the PCU since 1999 as the Memorandum on the Understanding between the Government of Ukraine and the OSCE was signed. We commend high level of interaction between the relevant state authorities and the Project Coordinator, which is fostered by shared responsibility for the project implementation. We strongly believe that this cooperation will continue to be successful.

Despite the fact that the PCU's mandate covers the entire Ukraine's territory within its internationally recognized borders, since 2014, the PCU has not been able to implement his mandate in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine where the Coordinator's presence is especially needed. We do regret that now the PCU has no access to the temporarily occupied Autonomous

Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol as well as to the temporarily occupied parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

In conclusion, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to Ambassador Henrik Villadsen and his professional team for their comprehensive assistance in supporting the Government of Ukraine's efforts towards the effective implementation of reforms and to wish them all the success in their continuous work.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.