



**Permanent Mission of Ukraine**  
to the International Organizations in Vienna

PC.DEL/1658/17  
1 December 2017

ENGLISH only

## **Statement on commemoration of victims of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine**

As delivered by Ambassador Ihor Prokopchuk,  
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,  
to the 1166<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Permanent Council,  
30 November 2017

**Mr. Chairman,**

In Madrid in 2007 the OSCE participating States, issuing a statement in connection with the 75th anniversary of the Holodomor in Ukraine, reiterated their commitment to clearly and unequivocally condemn totalitarianism and underlined the importance of raising awareness of the tragic events of our common past, promoting tolerance and non-discrimination, strengthening the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for the prevention of human tragedies in the future.

Last Saturday, on 25 November, the people of Ukraine and Ukrainians throughout the world marked 85 years since the Holodomor of 1932-1933 – a man-made famine which was enforced by the deliberate policies of the totalitarian Stalinist regime and took away millions of innocent lives. We are grateful for the solidarity of other nations and paying respect to the victims.

For decades this appalling act of inhumanity and an immense national tragedy have been kept a secret by the Soviet Union, vehemently denied and largely unknown to the world. To date, the research of archives and other documents collected by historians produced the figure of over 6 mln Ukrainian people, mostly the peasants – the backbone of Ukrainian identity, culture and traditions, who within two years were literally starved to death by the policies of Stalin's regime, who sought submission to the Soviet rule and resolution of the "Ukrainian issue".

It was not only an artificial famine, but a thoroughly planned and executed Holodomor, which in Ukrainian means "inflicting death by starvation". Deprivation of food was used as a weapon to ethnically cleanse the Ukrainian territories. Not only grain, but all food was taken away from villages by force, people trying to hide even small amounts of food were deported and shot, those attempting to move to cities and other places in search for food were barred from leaving their villages.

At the height of Holodomor, Ukrainians died at a rate of 25,000 per day, nearly a quarter of rural Ukrainians perished, more than 3 million children born in 1932 and 1933 died of starvation. In the same two years, the Soviet Union sold 1.7 million tons of grain on western markets.

Raphael Lemkin, a renowned expert in international criminal law, who researched and developed a concept of genocide, and whose many ideas were incorporated into the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide in 1948, described the Holodomor as “not simply a case of mass murder but as a case of genocide, of destruction, not of individuals only, but of a culture and a nation”.

The Parliament of Ukraine recognized Holodomor as genocide against the Ukrainian people. Similar recognition was done by parliaments of many other countries.

Mourning millions of innocent victims of Holodomor who were killed by barbaric policy of the Soviet totalitarian regime, we stress the importance of remembrance and maintaining a firm stance in condemning totalitarianism, regardless of the colours it used, and strongly upholding the values of democracy, human rights and freedoms.

**Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.**