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**Address by H.E. Mr. Leonid Kozhara,
the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine
to the OSCE Permanent Council
(Vienna, 17 January 2013)**

*Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

I am honoured to address the Permanent Council today as Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. I take it as a great responsibility for me personally and for Ukraine to lead the Organization throughout the year, to guide and inspire our joint efforts towards the establishment of a genuine Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community.

We take on this honourable mission in full confidence of the ongoing relevance of the OSCE for strengthening peace, security and co-operation in the vast space from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

This Organization stands out among other international organizations, as it offers unique advantages and opportunities that stem from its origin, geographic reach and its comprehensive concept of security. The OSCE remains an indispensable platform for an inclusive dialogue among equal partners, bringing together different geographic, political and cultural backgrounds.

Ukraine is strongly committed to the OSCE and to its concept of comprehensive and indivisible security, rooted in agreed principles and commitments.

We will attach particular attention to maintaining a balanced approach across all three OSCE dimensions, to promoting trust, confidence and reconciliation among the participating States and to upholding the principles and goals of this Organization.

Our objectives for 2013 encompass our stated priorities but also continuing work on important issues, where consensus so far proved elusive, despite focused and valuable efforts of the previous Chairmanships. The overarching goal will remain to strengthen the OSCE by promoting dialogue and co-operation as well as full implementation of commitments by each of the 57 participating States.

*Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

The Dublin Ministerial Council decision on the **Helsinki +40 process** registered our determination to work together and in a result-oriented manner on many key issues leading up to the OSCE's anniversary of 2015. This process requires sustained engagement, coordinated efforts and persistence in implementing our commitments.

The Ukrainian Chairmanship will pursue the Helsinki+40 initiative in close cooperation with future Chairmanships, each participating State as well as the Secretary General and his dedicated staff. I am pleased to announce that as one of its first decisions the Ukrainian Chairmanship establishes an open-ended informal Helsinki+40 Working Group. Its first session will take place in early February.

In advancing the Helsinki +40 process we will be guided by the principles of equality, inclusiveness and transparency. Joint ownership and common responsibility as well as constructive engagement of all 57 participating States will be pivotal, as we embark on such an important endeavour.

The work of the Chairs of the **three committees** will also play an important role in bringing the process forward across the wide-ranging agenda of the committees. I use this opportunity to thank the distinguished Permanent Representatives of Turkey, the Slovak Republic and Serbia for accepting the offer to chair the committees.

We also look forward to working closely with the **FSC Chairs for 2013** - Lichtenstein, Lithuania and Luxemburg. The FSC contribution to the Helsinki +40 is of great importance for promoting implementation of the existing commitments in the politico-military area and for improving, where necessary, the OSCE politico-military toolbox.

Arms control mechanisms and Confidence- and Security-Building Measures remain crucial for maintaining peace and security in our region. In the current challenging circumstances, we see merit in launching within the OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation a dialogue aimed at discussing the role conventional arms control can play in today's and future European security architecture. By taking into account current political and military realities, it should aim at enhancing the overall level of security by promoting openness, transparency and co-operation. This could be of particularly relevance for those participating States that do not belong to any politico-military alliances, like my own country Ukraine.

The Chairmanship stresses the importance of completing the update of 1994 OSCE Principles Governing Non-proliferation as a contribution to the global non-proliferation efforts.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Unresolved conflicts in the OSCE area continue to represent a serious threat to our regional stability and remain a major concern to all participating States. Assisting the parties in finding a political solution has to be the highest priority for the OSCE. I am convinced that sustainable and long-term settlement of the protracted conflicts in the OSCE area can only be achieved by peaceful means and on the basis of the principles enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act.

The Ukrainian Chairmanship will focus on re-energizing existing negotiating formats and making use of other possibilities that are agreed by all parties concerned. It will also promote confidence-building measures and address humanitarian needs on the ground.

Ukraine is strongly determined to contribute to the **Transdnestrrian settlement process**. I hope that the positive dynamics of the negotiations will sustain momentum. As a state-guarantor and co-mediator Ukraine believes that the "5+2" format remains the key instrument for achieving a comprehensive settlement. Additional platforms - supported by all parties concerned - may complement these efforts by strengthening mutual confidence.

As Chairman-in-Office I will pay my first visit to Moldova already next week. Our primary goal is to create favourable conditions for achieving progress in the official talks in the "5+2" format and to promote contacts between both banks of the Dniester at all levels.

The Geneva International Discussions remain an important platform for improving the security and humanitarian situation in the conflict areas in **Georgia**. We call upon the participants

to engage actively and constructively in this process, in which the Ukrainian Chairmanship has full confidence.

The situation around **Nagorno-Karabakh** settlement requires continued and close attention on the part of the OSCE. Ukraine will lend its support to the efforts of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs aimed at re-energizing the negotiations over this conflict.

We must continue strengthening OSCE's capacity and effectiveness in all elements of the **conflict cycle**, with a special emphasis on early warning and early action.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The participating States have been called to redouble their common efforts to effectively **counter transnational threats** such as terrorism, organized crime, trafficking in human beings, weapons and drugs. The Ministerial Council decision on *OSCE's efforts to address TNT threats* provides a coherent framework to do so and Ukraine will encourage its sound implementation.

In the first half of 2013 we would propose to conduct thematic OSCE events on countering terrorism and on combating the illicit drugs, as the OSCE can enhance synergies in this area.

In view of the Chairmanship, there is a need for substantial and in-depth analysis of the security implications of the International Security Assistance Forces' withdrawal from Afghanistan and the possible OSCE's response to the new challenges, which may affect security in the OSCE area. A special event will be organized with the support of the OSCE Secretariat to examine these issues.

In the context of countering transnational threats, the Ukrainian Chairmanship will continue to support the important work of the Informal Working Group tasked to elaborate a set of confidence-building measures on cyber security.

It would hardly be possible to promote comprehensive and lasting security in the OSCE region without properly addressing the existing **challenges in the economic and environmental sphere**, including energy security. The topic of this year's Economic Forum "Increasing stability and security: Improving the environmental footprint of energy related activities in the OSCE region" will offer ample opportunities to discuss energy and environmental challenges to security and to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy cooperation in the OSCE area.

The Ukrainian Chairmanship will build upon the ongoing discussions on the prospects of adaptation of 2003 Maastricht Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental dimension to the evolving economic and environmental situation.

We will also propose to explore whether the OSCE could provide an added value and play a role in the development of the new trade and transport corridors, taking into account the importance of economic cooperation for fostering stability and security in the OSCE region.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we reaffirmed at the Astana Summit, our commitment to the **Human Dimension** of security is - and should remain - at the core of the Organization's concept of comprehensive security.

Ukraine will do its utmost to guard and promote Organisation's core principles, as well as strengthen overall implementation of the existing commitments. We do hope that enhancing focused dialogue, also in the framework of the Human Dimension Committee, could allow us to overcome the divergence of views in a number of areas and enhance trust and confidence among each other.

As we have stated on previous occasions, the Ukrainian Chairmanship would prioritize for 2013 the issues of combating trafficking in human beings, media freedom and youth human rights education on the principles of tolerance and non-discrimination.

Free movement of people, freedom of association and assembly, protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, gender equality, inter-religious dialogue in promoting freedom of religion or belief, democratic elections and election observation, will be high on our agenda. We also believe in the importance of constructive engagement of civil society in achieving the OSCE goals.

Ukraine will fully support the work and professional integrity of the OSCE Institutions - **the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Representative on Freedom of the Media**, which are internationally reputable experts in the fields of human rights, national minorities and media freedom.

Ukraine highly values the outstanding work conducted by **OSCE's Field Operations** in providing targeted assistance to participating States, based on their priorities and needs.

The Chairmanship fully acknowledges the importance of parliamentary diplomacy in our region and appreciates the contribution of the **OSCE Parliamentary Assembly** in promoting the OSCE agenda, values and commitments.

*Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

We will support further strengthening of political dialogue and practical co-operation of the OSCE with our **Mediterranean and Asian Partners** across all three dimensions. The Chairmanship will promote open and constructive discussions, including in the course of 2013 OSCE Asian and Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation Conferences. I am also glad to note that based on the requests from the Mediterranean Partners regional initiatives in the fields of combating trafficking in human beings, counter terrorism and sustainable energy will be implemented under the Ukrainian Chairmanship of the OSCE.

As dealing with global security challenges requires coherent and coordinated responses, Ukraine will work to promote more pragmatic and goal-oriented cooperation with other **international organizations**, including regional and sub-regional ones.

*Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Ukraine wishes the OSCE to be a strong and relevant regional security organization, making full use of its unique and comprehensive mandate.

The OSCE should be put on a sound financial footing to enable it to efficiently and effectively fulfill the tasks, placed on the Organization by the participating States. As the OSCE has entered 2013 without an adopted budget for the year, the budgetary issue needs to be addressed as a matter of priority and I call on all participating States to engage in a constructive spirit in order to reach the necessary consensus.

We will also further promote dialogue on strengthening the **OSCE legal framework**.

Attaching great importance to raising awareness of the OSCE among the younger generations, the Chairmanship is preparing to host an international event aimed at engaging youth representatives from all OSCE participating States and partners for co-operation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Chairmanship can and will facilitate dialogue and consensus-building, yet achieving progress requires commitment and constructive engagement of all 57 participating States.

I call upon all of us to work together in a non-confrontational, collaborative and forward-looking manner towards realizing our common vision of a free, democratic, common and indivisible security community. This endeavour should be seen as serving the benefit of each participating State and our societies.

Ukraine as the OSCE Chair stands ready to invest its time, energy and efforts in bringing us closer to this shared goal. At the same time we count on your support in the months ahead.

Thank you for your attention.