



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

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Statement in response to the address by the State Secretary and Special Representative of the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic for the Slovak 2019 OSCE Chairmanship, Mr. Lukáš Parížek

As delivered by Ambassador Ihor Prokopchuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1193rd meeting of the Permanent Council,
19 July 2018

Mr. Chairperson,

We join other delegations in warmly welcoming the State Secretary and Special Representative of the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic for the Slovak 2019 OSCE Chairmanship, Mr. Lukáš Parížek to the Permanent Council. We are grateful for the presentation of the priorities of the incoming Slovak OSCE Chairmanship for 2019.

We highly appreciate the readiness of Slovakia, Ukraine's good neighbour and partner, to assume the responsibility for leading the OSCE at this extremely complex juncture for Europe and European security.

The unprecedented violation of international law and order, including the flagrant breach of the basic norms and principles of the OSCE by the Russian Federation since 2014 has given rise to the worst security crisis in Europe and to the degradation of trust and confidence in the OSCE area. It is notable that the goals selected for the Slovak Chairmanship – effective multilateralism, conflict prevention and people – remain most affected by this crisis.

Ukraine takes a firm view that restoration of security and cooperation must take place on the basis of fundamental the OSCE principles. As we hear from some quarters the calls for building a positive and unifying agenda for this Organisation, we will continue to strongly insist that respect for the core principles and norms of the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter forms a prerequisite for peace, security and cooperation in Europe. We look forward that in the course of 2019 the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship will act as a dedicated guardian of the OSCE principles and commitments and promote their full implementation.

As we continue to face clear, gross and continuing violations of OSCE principles and commitments, we encourage the Slovak Chairmanship to launch the discussions on how to increase the OSCE's effectiveness in dealing with such violations, in line with relevant commitments taken in 1999 at the Istanbul Summit.

Mr. Chairperson,

The ongoing Russia's aggression against Ukraine remains the most pressing security threat that has a broad-ranging destabilizing impact on the entire OSCE area. This must not be underestimated. We welcome the intention of the incoming Slovak OSCE Chairmanship to place the highest priority on this challenge.

The OSCE has an important role to play in facilitating the process of resolution of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, in particular through activities of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, Trilateral Contact Group, Border Observer Mission at two Russian border check-points and the OSCE institutions. The Minsk agreements assign specific roles to the OSCE, but they are fulfilled only partially or not at all because of impediments and restrictions set by the Russian side, including with regards to ensuring permanent monitoring and verification at the Ukrainian-Russian state border. We encourage the incoming Slovak Chairmanship to use fully the toolbox of this Organization to enable implementation of the prescribed functions. The OSCE must have full, secure and unhindered access to the entire occupied territories, including along parts of the Ukrainian-Russian state border not controlled by Ukraine, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

We would recall that the term "crisis in and around Ukraine" emerged in the OSCE when the Russian military invaded Ukraine in the Crimean peninsula in February 2014. The resolution of the crisis requires de-occupation by Russia of both Donbas and Crimea and restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

The human rights situation in Crimea requires constant international attention and response. Russia continues to ignore the demands of the international community, contained, inter alia, in three UN General Assembly resolutions and in numerous decisions of parliamentary bodies of the OSCE, the Council of Europe and other international organizations, and in the order of the International Court of Justice of April 2017. We encourage the incoming Slovak OSCE Chairmanship to provide every support to the OSCE Institutions and mechanisms in monitoring and reporting on the human rights situation in the occupied territories and in responding to gross violations of human rights.

Over one hundred Ukrainian citizens remain captive in parts of Donbas, which are effectively controlled by Russia, while over 60 Ukrainian political prisoners remain in detention under fabricated charges on the territory of the Russian Federation and in the temporarily occupied Crimea. We look forward to an active and dedicated role of the OSCE Chairmanship and participating States in seeking their release from Russia's captivity.

The issues of utmost relevance remain the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the situations of occupation, the challenges of the internally displaced persons, combating torture and enforced disappearances, eradication of the phenomenon of political prisoners.

Mr. Chairperson,

Ukraine welcomes the incoming Chairmanship's emphasis on resolution of protracted conflicts, with full respect for the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We are confident that the experience of this year's Slovak chairmanship in the Forum for Security Cooperation will contribute to the ongoing discussions in the framework of the Structured Dialogue, which should be based on the comprehensive concept of security as well as common understanding of the inviolability of the norms of international law and the basic principles of the OSCE.

In the first dimension, we welcome the continued efforts in the fight against terrorism, which should also be focused on the issues of financing of terrorism and preventing cross-border movement of persons, weapons and funds connected to the terrorist and illegal armed groups' activities. Strengthening border security, cyber security, countering the phenomena of foreign terrorist fighters and other non-state actors should feature prominently in our work in the first dimension.

In the second dimension, we take note of the intention of the Slovak incoming Chairmanship to promote the good governance agenda with a focus on water management and energy network protection. We should also explore ways of enhancing response to environmental challenges to security arising from armed conflicts and their implications for the local civilian population.

In the third dimension, we support the Chairmanship's determination to devote additional effort to strengthening implementation of human dimension commitments, in particular in promoting tolerance and non-discrimination, including through prevention, education, media and civil society.

We should also aim at seriously addressing the challenges brought about by sophisticated state-sponsored propaganda campaigns of disinformation and destabilization of free and democratic societies in Europe. The Ukrainian people continue to suffer from the real information war conducted by the Russian state-controlled media and aimed at destroying peace and stability in my country.

We hope that the Slovak incoming Chairmanship will see the topic of hybrid warfare among the key areas to be explored by OSCE in 2019 with a view to developing common responses.

In conclusion we wish to reiterate our commitment to work closely with the current and future OSCE Chairmanships on restoring respect for the OSCE principles and commitments, which is critical for safeguarding this Organization's relevance and credibility.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.