



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

**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 972nd FSC Plenary Meeting under the Chairpersonship of Armenia**

(21 April 2021 at 10.00, via video teleconferencing)
(Agenda item 1, Opening Session)

Mr. Chairperson,

Ukraine has aligned itself with the European's Union statement, which we fully support. In addition, allow me to make some remarks in my national capacity.

We welcome Armenia as the new Chairpersonship of the Forum for Security Co-operation and wish it every success in guiding our work in the second trimester of 2021.

We took with interest the broad range of topics allocated for the security dialogues and stand ready to engage constructively in their respective considerations.

Taking this opportunity, we once again sincerely thank the outgoing Chairpersonship of the United States of America for its determination, professionalism and dedication in advancing the Forum's work during the first trimester of 2021.

We also wish Austria every success as a new member of the FSC Troika and thank Germany, which is leaving the Troika, for its efforts and commitment.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Armenian FSC Chairpersonship is taking place against the background of ongoing gross violations of the core OSCE principles and commitments, and international law by the Russian Federation.

Instead of seeking peaceful resolution to the conflict with Ukraine and abiding by its commitments under the Minsk agreements, this participating State resorts to the use of force and the threat of use of force. It continues to conduct

disinformation campaigns and aggressive rhetoric to put pressure on Ukraine and its partners while using its soft power to prepare a ground for further military provocations.

Since January this year, Russia has significantly reinforced combat capabilities of its occupation forces in Donbas, which continue severely violating the ceasefire regime, introduced in July 2020 within the TCG, thus jeopardizing the whole peace process.

The danger emanating from hostile activities of the Russian occupation forces in Donbas is amplified by the increasing concentration by Russia of its troops and military equipment along the state border with Ukraine and in the temporarily occupied Crimea. We have extensively briefed the delegations on this military build-up in the course of the last two weeks.

We have also witnessed an alarming expansion of escalatory actions on the sea. Without any legal grounds, Russia decided to close for 6 months part of the Black Sea in violation of the freedom of navigation, guaranteed by the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. It has been actively transferring warships from the Caspian Sea and reinforcing its military capabilities in the Azov Sea and the Black Sea region.

We are extremely concerned over the current security trends and consider recent actions of the Russian Federation as a substantial threat to national and regional security.

In the meantime, Ukraine makes every effort to seek peaceful settlement of the conflict and de-escalate tensions by political and diplomatic means, including those provided by the OSCE politico-military instruments.

In addition to our efforts within the negotiating formats under the Minsk agreements, on 7 April, Ukraine activated Chapter III of the Vienna Document 2011 in an attempt to reduce tensions and dispel concerns over the unusual large-scale military build-up of the Russian Federation taking place near Ukraine's border and in the temporarily occupied Crimea.

Regretfully, the Russian side refused to engage in a meaningful dialogue within the procedures outlined by Chapter III and provide any substantial information that may defuse security concerns of Ukraine and other participating States. Such behaviour fuels the apprehension with regard to further intentions of Russia.

Nevertheless, the consultations and the joint PC-FSC meeting held under para 16 of the Vienna Document 2011 yielded important recommendations of the participating States addressed to the Russian Federation. We urge the Russian side to swiftly and unconditionally fulfil them and reverse its dangerous military activities that affect the security and stability of the OSCE region.

Collective stance of the participating States in upholding OSCE principles and commitments is of paramount importance at this critical juncture. We are

grateful to our partners who stand by Ukraine as it defends its sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence, being under constant threat by the Russian Federation.

In this connection, it is crucial for all participating States to be guided by the Code of Conduct provisions stipulating determination to act in solidarity if OSCE norms and commitments are violated and to facilitate concerted responses to security challenges that they may face as a result.

Mitigation of the aforementioned negative developments that jeopardize peace and security in the OSCE region necessitate further thorough consideration by the FSC of the politico-military aspects of the international conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Progress in the peaceful settlement of the conflict based on full respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine will significantly enhance transparency, predictability and confidence in the OSCE region.

I thank you.