



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations
in Vienna

Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine in response to the Special Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on Combating Corruption

As delivered by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna, to the 1455th meeting of the Permanent Council,
7 December 2023

Mr Chairperson,

The Delegation of Ukraine warmly welcomes Professor Anita Ramasastry and thanks her for sharing thoughts and recommendations today.

We are convinced that the OSCE with its comprehensive approach to security is directly authorized to support its participating States in their anti-corruption efforts for the common stability and security of our region.

As Professor Ramasastry rightly mentioned in her report, the role of the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) in supporting transparency and accountability in good governance through concrete projects is commendable. We value our cooperation with the OCEEA in this regard.

The issue of fighting corruption has always been a part of Ukraine's national agenda. Getting rid of this phenomenon once and for all has never been an easy task for any of us.

Since the Revolution of Dignity, the Government received a significant impetus for concrete anti-graft reforms, which was coming from the people. Generally, the active and conscious Ukrainian people have always been the main driver of all democratic changes that happen in our country, while the tolerance for corruption significantly decreases every year.

Despite the ongoing Russia's large-scale war, we have not only slowed down our struggle with corruption, but have stepped up our reforms to this end. These Ukraine's efforts have already been estimated highly by many of our partners. In particular, I would like to refer to the recent visit of the Vice President of the European Commission, Ms Vera Jourova to Kyiv on 27 November and her assessment of Ukraine's fight against corruption as a successful and, I quote, "impressive" one.

These words of the Vice-President are particularly important as they reflect the fact that the Ukrainian Government takes every case of corruption very seriously. We do not pretend that corruption does not exist in our country as, unfortunately, there is still no country that has completely eradicated this phenomenon. However, we believe that by taking every case of corruption seriously and publicly we make very feasible steps to prevent this crime in the future.

We highly value such recognition of our anti-corruption measures by the partners, especially against the backdrop of the intensified anti-Ukrainian campaign that the Kremlin regime is wide-spreading in its countless attempts to discredit our Government.

During the almost two years of russia's large-scale war, the Government of Ukraine has made several important improvements in order to reinforce its anti-corruption policy.

The new Heads of the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office (SAPO) and the National Anti-Corruption Bureau were appointed in July 2022 and March 2023 respectively. The selection process was conducted in a transparent manner with the involvement of the independent experts. Currently, both structures have increased their cooperation in order to step up investigations of high-level corruption cases.

Furthermore, on 21 November 2023 the Parliament of Ukraine supported in the first reading amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code and other legislative acts in order to strengthen the independence of the SAPO in line with international standards.

Additionally, a new State Anti-Corruption Program for 2023 – 2025 was approved in March 2023 as a key tool for the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy. This document provides a framework for the elimination of corruption in all areas of the state functioning, notably, by introducing 1,700 measures in 15 policy areas to reduce the level of corruption and ensure integrity. According to the Head of the National Agency on Corruption Prevention, Oleksandr Novikov, the effective implementation of the Program will create the best conditions for citizens and businesses in Ukraine, and will also help Ukraine's association with the EU and NATO.

Dear Professor Ramasastry,

This year you have participated in many OSCE events, including in the second dimension. In your interventions you have emphasized the importance of transparency and accountability.

I would like to stress that without transparency there is no accountability.

That is what we are observing in russia, where no independent media or civil society left, and journalists and activists have either been imprisoned for their opinions or forced to leave the country. And I am wondering what kind of dialogue one can have with russia, if this country does not have a dialogue with its own people?

If the kremlin regime had invested the money it received from selling the country's natural resources in developing its economy, we would probably not be facing russia's aggression.

The most dangerous thing is that the highly-corrupted kremlin's regime tries to corrupt other countries, and, thus, to poison them with its models of statehood, and this is a fundamental threat to our common security.

Dear colleagues,

Ukraine is at war with the biggest country in the world, and our partners' unwavering strong support is very much appreciated and needed for our victory. It has already been done a lot: in terms of military, economic and humanitarian assistance that the international community provides Ukraine with. But still, more has to be done. Combating corruption as well as different illegal schemes that help russia to bypass the international sanctions should be prioritized by our partners in order Ukraine can end this war sooner rather than later.

In conclusion, dear Professor Ramasastry, I would like to thank you for all your work and wish you every success in your future endeavours.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.