



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**Statement in response to the Address by the Chairperson-in-Office
of the OSCE, Minister for Foreign Affairs of North Macedonia Bujar OSMANI**

As delivered by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1404th special meeting of the Permanent Council
12 January 2023

Mr Chairperson,

The delegation of Ukraine warmly welcomes to the Permanent Council the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Minister for Foreign Affairs of North Macedonia, H.E. Mr. Bujar Osmani.

We thank you, Your Excellency, for comprehensive presentation of priorities in the OSCE for 2023 and wish you every success in steering the work of the OSCE in the course of the year.

Your rightful intention to focus on defending principles of the Helsinki Final Act is the best guess for the successful Chairpersonship.

As you mentioned, Your Excellency, the cost of the Russian war against Ukraine is deplorable and unbearable for the OSCE and beyond. No doubts, the use of force and its possible proliferation matter for each and every country.

However, the last year has clearly demonstrated that the availability of political will to go beyond established OSCE frameworks is the only ingredient we need to unleash the potential of OSCE existing toolbox to overcome consequences of the Russian aggression.

As you said, Minister Osmani, our central priority is to focus on the people. And you have Ukraine's full support in this regard. Human rights, democracy and the rule of law matter. The disrespect of them has plunged Europe once again into the darkness of war.

Every day of the Russian occupation of Ukraine's soil means new deaths, inflicts wounds, brings suffering and destruction, breaks dreams and destroys human lives.

Only three days ago, on the 9th of January, a former staff member of the OSCE SMM and currently OSCE Secretariat's official Mr. Maksym Petrov was marking his 43-rd birthday. In the illegal captivity by the Russian regime.

Together with two other OSCE officials, Vadym Golda and Dmytro Shabanov, Maksym Petrov is in the illegal detention for more than 10 months after having been taken hostage by the Russian Federation, which is still sitting at the one table with us.

The release of these people is about the credibility of OSCE, where Russia still unjustifiably keeps its seat.

In addition to this, the rejection of Renewed OSCE European Security Dialogue, closure of OSCE missions in Ukraine, blocking Organization's annual budget and the next CIO for 2024, unjustified reduction of the mandate of the OSCE mission in

Moldova is the best illustration of russia's true hidden intentions with regard to our Organization.

Under the guise of a dialogue and demands to take into account its interests, moscow will blackmail and destroy the OSCE from inside if the participating States do not accept its "alternative" vision of this Organization. What russia wants is to shrink the OSCE to its "cold war" origins with zones of influences and great powers' balance.

So, should we give any chance to russia to ruin the OSCE's future?

Moreover, kidnapping and repressive campaigns have become a landmark of the russian aggression since the very first day of the temporary occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

Journalists, human rights defenders, activists and others have been detained on political, religious, and ethnic grounds.

Moreover, in the newly occupied areas, russia reproduces the same patterns it has been using in Crimea since 2014. The only difference is that this is being done in much faster mode and in much larger scale.

Therefore, we look forward to working with the Chairpersonship, national delegations and OSCE Secretary General to translate the adopted Crimea Platform declaration into our common actions.

Russia's war can end only with the liberation of Crimea.

Mr Chairperson,

As russia continues its missile terror and the war against civilian population, it is extremely important to maintain a focus on critical infrastructure protection.

As well, an existing risk of cyberattacks by russia in this area also matters for all participating States.

The russian war is also an attack against the border security, which brings in the spotlight such cross-dimensional issues as trafficking in human beings.

As for a sustainable economic growth and environmental cooperation, we have to assess a devastating impact of russia's war on everyone's aspiration for a peaceful, sustainable and prosperous world.

The dire consequences of russia's endless and brutal attacks for air, water and soil will affect the entire region for years to come.

Meanwhile, the occupation of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant will remain a permanent threat to the whole OSCE region until the russian invaders leave the plant and Ukraine retakes it back under its control.

This should be a starting point for any our enterprise in this dimension, be it combating climate changes or environment protection.

Moreover, weaponization by russia of food and energy security has made these issues as acute on our agenda as never before.

In the human dimension, as a matter of priority, we view the promotion of the OSCE activities which will contribute to prevent impunity, ensure justice and hold to account all masterminds and perpetrators of russia's crimes in Ukraine.

The terror against the civilian population, summary executions, mass atrocities, torture and ill-treatment, sexual violence, abductions, enforced disappearances, filtration camps, forcible deportation of Ukrainian citizens, including children, russification and assimilation of invaded territories and attempts to erase Ukrainian culture and identity - all these crimes testify to the premeditated actions of the aggressor State aimed at the genocidal extermination of Ukrainians.

We underline the need to prioritize the monitoring and documentation of russia's gross violations of international humanitarian and human rights law on all temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

And we believe that the Chairpersonship, as a guardian of the OSCE principles and commitments, will provide all necessary assistance to the OSCE institutions in order to ensure that Russia's gross violations are duly addressed by this Organization.

Mr Chairperson,

The establishment of a just and lasting peace for Ukraine and beyond is impossible without a complete withdrawal of the Russian occupying forces from the territory of Ukraine and bringing the Russian regime to account including through the establishment of a Special Tribunal for the crime of aggression.

No doubts, accountability matters not for us but for generations to come.

And Ukraine has a clear vision in this regard. On the 15th of November, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy presented the Peace Formula of ten steps.

These points include radiation and nuclear safety; food security; energy security; the release of all prisoners and deported persons; the implementation of the UN Charter and restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity and the world order; withdrawal of Russian troops and cessation of hostilities; restoration of justice; countering ecocide; preventing escalation; and the confirmation to the end of the war.

This path to peace is solely based on the principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

And we strongly believe that the OSCE can and must find its own proactive role in implementing items of the Peace Formula.

This is a way to restore peace and security for Ukraine, the whole of Europe, and the world.

That said, we welcome the fact that this Organization has already started working on such issues as environmental monitoring, humanitarian demining and other relevant aspects of Ukraine's post-war recovery. This is illustrative enough how the OSCE can practically contribute to the implementation of the Peace Formula.

We are looking for North Macedonia Chairpersonship's leadership in this regard.

Dear Chairperson,

Concluding my statement, I wish the OSCE Chairpersonship of North Macedonia every success in implementing its Program.

You may count on Ukraine's full support for your initiatives across all OSCE three dimensions.

Minister Osmani, we are looking forward to welcoming you in Ukraine in your new capacity as the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office.

Today Ukraine is a place where one may see what a price is paid for a mere fact that we can proudly say in this hall that the Helsinki Final Act and the OSCE as an organization are still relevant for the people on the ground.

I thank you.