

STATEMENT
by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine
H.E. Mr. Kostyantyn Gryshchenko
at the Special Permanent Council Meeting of the OSCE
(Vienna, 22 June 2010)

Mr. Chairperson,
Mr. Secretary General,
Excellencies,

It is my great pleasure to address the Permanent Council for the first time in my capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. I wish to sincerely thank the OSCE Kazakhstan Chairmanship for this opportunity. As a representative of the OSCE participating State, I would also like to commend Kazakhstan's dedicated work at the helm of this Organization. Ukraine will continue to support our Kazakh friends in the implementation of the Chairmanship's constructive priorities and initiatives.

Excellencies,

It is widely accepted that domestic stability as well as the ability to implement international commitments are among the most important preconditions for proactive and responsible participation of any country in international cooperation, including security efforts. After years of domestic turbulence and discord these preconditions have been established with the election of Viktor Yanukovich as President of Ukraine.

Ukraine is a country that seeks national and international balance, based on shared values and principles of democracy. Hence, the underlying principle of our foreign policy is the following: Ukraine is a European non-bloc State that implements transparent foreign policy and strives for cooperating with all interested partners, avoiding dependence on any State, groups of States or international structures.

I wish to emphasize that the foreign policy of the new Government of Ukraine is result-oriented and inseparable from the real needs of the people of Ukraine. Therefore, European integration remains the primary track of our internal and foreign policy. Integration to the European Union is an important driving force for Ukraine's ambitious domestic reforms.

Our strategic partnership with Russia is gaining momentum in all spheres of mutual interest. We proceed from the understanding that constructive cooperation between our countries will contribute to security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.

Ukraine also looks forward to further expanding its strategic cooperation with the United States. Overall, the time has come for Ukraine to achieve a new quality of relations with our traditional, as well as new, partners.

Let me underline, Ukraine is a European non-bloc State. This only means that we refrain from seeking membership in any military alliance. However, under no circumstances does this status prejudice our active role in the discussions on European security architecture.

In particular, we will be further actively engaged in the OSCE Corfu process, which we highly value, and consider all constructive proposals aimed at strengthening security, including the idea of a comprehensive European Security Treaty and possible strategies of collective response to evolving threats and challenges of the XXI century.

Excellencies,

Ukraine sincerely believes in the historic mission and potential of the OSCE. This is why we have always actively contributed to its activities. Precisely this has inspired my country to offer its candidacy for the OSCE Chairmanship in 2013.

As a chair of this Organization, Ukraine would be guided by the principles of mutual respect, equality, responsibility and transparency. We will act independently and impartially in promoting common interests of all 56 participating States in all three OSCE dimensions. We will listen carefully to all partners and will do our utmost to achieve consensus on key issues of the OSCE agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

Unresolved and potential conflicts remain the greatest threat to security and a serious long-lasting challenge for the OSCE. We are convinced that sustainable and long-term settlement of the protracted conflicts should be achieved by peaceful means with full respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of States within their internationally recognized borders. Ukraine supports the strengthening of the role of the OSCE in conflict settlement, in particular, by ensuring the Organisation's presence in the conflict areas.

As a co-mediator and guarantor in the Transnistrian settlement process, Ukraine will continue efforts aimed at resolving the Transnistrian conflict by peaceful means. We firmly stand for prompt resumption of the negotiations in the "5+2" format.

Eventually, we need to determine a reliably guaranteed status of Transnistria based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova. Here I would like to recall that such an approach was reaffirmed in the Joint Statement by the Presidents of Ukraine and the Russian Federation on the Transnistrian problem settlement of 17 May 2010.

Ukraine has consistently insisted on the need to pay special attention not only to conflict settlement but also to conflict prevention. Regrettably, recent deplorable events in Kyrgyzstan are yet another lesson we have to learn. Obviously, we should act now to strengthen the OSCE conflict prevention function, and to ensure that early warning and early action mechanisms work more efficiently.

Mr. Chairman,

Tensions involving national minorities in the OSCE area remain a source of concern for all of us. In light of this, Ukraine highly values the OSCE High Commissioner's Bolzano/Bozen Recommendations on National Minorities in Interstate Relations as a potentially effective conflict prevention tool.

We believe that these guidelines should receive political endorsement of the OSCE participating States and, more importantly, should be put into practice throughout our region. We also encourage the OSCE participating States to provide the High Commissioner with all necessary support to allow him to fully and effectively implement his important mandate.

Mr. Chairman,

Ukraine attaches particular importance to the OSCE human dimension. Human rights and fundamental freedoms, rule of law, free elections and active engagement of civil society are a distinctive part of the OSCE philosophy. Ukraine promotes these principles not only within the framework of this Organization, but also seeks universal adherence to them. I am pleased to say that just a few days ago the UN Human Rights Council adopted by consensus a resolution on the role of prevention in the promotion and protection of human rights, initially put forward by Ukraine.

My country has always highly appreciated the valuable assistance of the OSCE in ensuring free and fair conduct of elections. Taking this opportunity, I would like to express our gratitude to the ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly for their involvement in the observation

process of the 2010 Presidential elections in Ukraine. With their support, we have set a standard of elections in Ukraine.

I should also like to reiterate Ukraine's full confidence in ODIHR's internationally recognized expertise in election observation. We will remain a strong supporter of the Office's neutrality and autonomy.

Indeed, the third dimension is not limited to elections. We should prioritize the issues of fighting trafficking of human beings, promoting tolerance and non-discrimination, combating hate crimes and upholding media freedom. Regarding the latter, let me note that the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media Ms. Dunja Mijatovic has accepted my invitation to visit Ukraine. We look forward to discussing a wide range of issues with her.

In the second dimension of the OSCE, Ukraine will continue to support further development of the political dialogue on energy security, migration, transport and other issues of importance to all participating States.

Mr. Chairman,

It is vital to rebuild mutual trust and confidence between States in the politico-military dimension. Driven by this aim, Ukraine strives to re-launch discussions on the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. Strengthening and proper implementation of the OSCE arms control, confidence- and security-building instruments should also be further promoted.

We continue to support the OSCE work on countering terrorism, drugs trafficking as well as other existing and emerging transnational threats.

In light of the successful conduct of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, adoption of its Final Document and the OSCE 2009 Ministerial Declaration on Non-Proliferation, Ukraine will pursue the non-proliferation dialogue in the OSCE as one of its Chairmanship's priorities.

Mr. Chairman,

It is our pleasure to contribute to the efforts aimed at strengthening the effectiveness of the OSCE, among other things, by providing services of the Accounting Chamber of Ukraine as the OSCE External Auditor. Ukraine will continue looking into new opportunities for strengthening the efficiency of the OSCE's executive structures.

On a different note, I would like to thank the OSCE participating States for their generous support in the implementation of the "mélange" project, which, I am confident, will be a success story of our Organization.

Excellencies,

Although much needs to be done in order to achieve undivided security in Europe, I have no doubt that we are on the right track. I look forward to having a frank and open exchange of views on these and other issues with my colleagues at the forthcoming informal Ministerial meeting. Hopefully, the discussions in Almaty will launch preparations for a future OSCE summit.

Allow me to conclude by expressing gratitude to the participating States that have already voiced their support for Ukraine's candidacy for the OSCE Chairmanship in 2013, thus paving the way for reaching consensus on the issue this year.

Thank you for your attention.