

**STATEMENT OF THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE**  
**at the opening of the annual OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting**  
*(22 September 2014, Warsaw, Poland)*

**Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Delegation of Ukraine would like to join previous speakers in expressing gratitude to the Swiss OSCE Chairmanship and ODIHR for organizing this year's Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. Also, we would like to thank the Polish government for its generous hospitality.

While aligning with the EU statement, the Delegation of Ukraine would also like to make a statement in its national capacity.

Regretfully, this year's Human Dimension Implementation Meeting takes place against the backdrop of **serious challenges to human dignity and security in broader terms** in the OSCE area posed by **Russia's aggression against Ukraine**.

The very foundation of the OSCE, namely the Helsinki Final Act has been challenged. Basically, **we have witnessed one state to undertake a comprehensive attack on the OSCE acquis in all three dimensions**.

In February-March this year, Russia occupied the Autonomous Republic of the Crimea, which is an integral part of Ukraine, and illegally annexed it through an unlawful referendum. Later, it moved on to instigate separatist and terrorist groups in the east of Ukraine and provide them with continuous wide-ranging support. When the separatist project was about to fade away, Russia resorted to a direct military incursion into Ukrainian mainland.

As we meet today, **sovereignty and territorial integrity of my country continue being violated by the Russian Federation** in defiance of international law and fundamental OSCE principles and commitments and in spite of a ceasefire that was established on September 5.

Since the aggression started, over 900 Ukrainian military have been killed and about 3400 were wounded. Only after the ceasefire was announced, 36 military lost their lives. Hundreds remain in captivity, and dozens are missing. Security and living conditions of millions of people are shattered. The number of internally displaced persons amounts to 270,000. Infrastructure of large and powerful industrial regions is devastated.

**Dear colleagues,**

**Russia's military aggression against Ukraine has entailed numerous human rights violations** committed by occupation authorities in the Crimea and by illegal armed groups in the east of Ukraine.

Here, I would like to express high appreciation that from the very beginning of the aggression the OSCE and its autonomous institutions have been active in ensuring independent monitoring of the developments in Ukraine and facilitating solutions to emerging problems.

In particular, we highly value contribution of the **OSCE Special Monitoring Mission**, which was set up upon request of the Ukrainian Government. We also lay special hopes upon this Mission with regard to ongoing efforts to ensure implementation of the ceasefire and to seal the Ukrainian-Russian border to halt flows of Russian armed forces, mercenaries and military equipment into Ukraine.

Independent findings of the **Human Rights Assessment Mission**, undertaken by the ODIHR and the HCNM, as well as reports of the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in

Ukraine have clearly demonstrated that **numerous violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms have not preceded but are a result of Russia's aggression** and subversion against Ukraine.

In Crimea, **Russian occupant authorities clearly pursue a campaign of intimidation and expulsion** against those who disagree with Russia's annexation of the peninsula and oppose Russian policies. This campaign involves *killings, torture, kidnappings, arbitrary detentions, violence, and manifestations of xenophobia, chauvinism and discrimination*. Local residents are obliged to change their citizenship to avoid complications in their lives.

Crimean Tatars' leaders were banned from entering Crimea. Only a few days ago, new pseudo-authorities committed an unlawful and ungrounded assault on the national assembly of the Crimean Tatars.

As a result of this campaign, thousands have been forced out of their motherland.

In the eastern regions of Ukraine, terrorists supported by Russia have reduced the human rights situation to an imminent humanitarian catastrophe. Terrorists daily endanger lives of the local residents by shelling residential areas. At the same time, they often prevent population of these regions from leaving the place. Locals lack first-need good while terrorists continue hindering delivery of humanitarian aid. Also, terrorists force people to labor. Kidnapping, ransoming, seizures of property and the like have become routine there.

According to the observations of the **OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media**, the Russian aggression against Ukraine has led to **erosion of media freedoms and pressure on journalists** in the occupied Crimea as well as the eastern regions of Ukraine.

At the same time, **Russian state-controlled media wage a full-scale information war** against Ukraine, its sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as against unity and solidarity of all Europe. Yet, **this war also targets Russian media and human rights activists**: as they try to disseminate truth about participation of the Russian armed forces in the aggression against Ukraine and numerous casualties of this military campaign, they get beaten, threatened and persecuted on false accusations. A September 17 assault on a BBC crew which came to Astrakhan to report a story on death of Russian military in Ukraine speaks for itself.

We reiterate our strong protest against ongoing violations of rights of the Ukrainian citizens **illegally brought to and detained in Russia in contravention of international legal norms and principles**. Their names stand for a synonym of contemporary political prisoners in Russia: I talk about Nadiya Savchenko, Oleg Sentsov and many others. Their detention is a part of the intimidation campaign against opponents of Russia's policies.

Russia's flagrant breach of the OSCE founding principles, which have been a basis for dialogue and cooperation for decades, **imperils European and international peace and security and inflicts serious damage to OSCE** and its comprehensive security concept.

This is not tolerable for this Organization. In terms of Security. In terms of Cooperation. This is not tolerable in Europe of 21st century.

And this definitely requires a resolute response of the entire international community.

**Distinguished participants,**

**Ukraine is fully committed to respect, protect and promote democratic values and principles and strengthen implementation of OSCE commitments in the human dimension.**

In this vein, among **our primary objectives** are ensuring freedom of the media, freedom of assembly and association, free and fair elections, fighting corruption, independence of the

judiciary, fair trial, reforming law enforcement and penitentiary agencies, pursuit of a balanced humanitarian policy, which takes into consideration ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural diversity of the Ukrainian society and provides for equal rights for everyone.

The ratification of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU gives a significant boost to **comprehensive domestic reforms** and consolidation of democratic norms and practices in Ukraine.

Ukraine seeks to duly apply the OSCE expertise in this transformation process and encourages practical support of ODIHR, RFoM and HCNM in this regard in the areas of human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law.

We appreciate an important role that the largest ever OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission played in monitoring **early presidential elections in Ukraine** on May 25, 2014 and welcome a similar Mission which commenced its activities in Kyiv on September 18 to monitor upcoming **early parliamentary elections** due on October 26, 2014.

**Dear participants,**

Russia's aggression against Ukraine has seriously affected human dignity and security in the OSCE area. Thus, we believe that the Organization should **respond more decisively and effectively to these challenges**.

Only **willingness** of every single participating State **to fully and in good faith abide by OSCE principles and commitments** as well as **readiness to take meaningful and reliable steps** to this end can bring security back to the vast space from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

**Thank you for your attention.**