



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement on the 51st round of the Geneva International Discussions

As delivered by the delegation of Ukraine
to the 1296th meeting of the Permanent Council
17 December 2020

Mr. Chairperson,

The delegation of Ukraine aligned itself with the statement delivered by the delegation of the European Union. At the same time, we would also like to add some remarks in the national capacity.

After having been postponed several times this year, the 51st round of the Geneva International Discussions was finally held on 10–11 December, providing the sides to the Russian-Georgian conflict with a long-awaited opportunity to address quite a wide, unfortunately, range of security and humanitarian conflict-related challenges.

Assessing the overall situation, we have to regretfully recognize that the Russian Federation continues taking focused actions aimed at undermining Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We condemn Russia's ongoing steps directed at de-facto annexation of Georgia's regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali. We consider the so-called "programme" on creation of common socio-economic space between the Russian Federation and the Abkhazia region of Georgia to be a part of Russia's aggressive policy towards Georgia. By triggering instability in the region, Russia continues the illegal militarization of these Georgian regions and regularly stages its own military drills, often in the occupied territories of Georgia, including the "Kavkaz 2020" military exercises this year.

The so called "new geopolitical reality", on which Russia speaks so much in this hall, referring, inter alia, to its recognition of Georgia's Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions as so called "independent states", exists only for Russia and has nothing to do with the norms and principles of the international law. As the occupying Power, the Russian Federation bears full responsibility for gross human rights violations in these occupied Georgia's territories, as well as for discrimination of ethnic Georgians living there. Russia must face strict international response until it abandons its aggressive policy towards Georgia and restores its sovereignty and territorial integrity by withdrawing Russian armed formations and occupation administrations from the temporarily occupied territories of Georgia.

Ukraine strongly condemns the ongoing so-called "borderization" activities carried out by the Russian occupation administrations, which lead to further deterioration of both security and humanitarian situation on the ground. Numerous cases of illegal detentions of Georgian citizens by the Russian occupation forces and their proxies must not be left without proper reaction of the OSCE and international community in whole.

We call on the Russian Federation to immediately fulfil its obligations under the 2008 EU-mediated ceasefire agreement, thus creating necessary conditions for establishment of international security mechanisms in the occupied territories of Georgia.

The international humanitarian organizations must have an unhindered access to the conflict-affected areas, and the EU Monitoring Mission must be provided with the possibility to implement its functions, envisaged by the relevant mandate.

Ukraine welcomes the constructive approach of Georgia aimed at practical cooperation in the framework of Geneva International Discussions. Such an approach would benefit everyone in the region, if the Russian Federation reciprocated. We call on Russia to deliver on this as soon as possible.

In conclusion, I again would like to reiterate Ukraine's unwavering support to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.