



**Delegation of Ukraine
to the OSCE**

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Statement
in response to the statements on current political situation in Ukraine

As for delivery by Ambassador Ihor Prokopchuk
to the 985th meeting of the Permanent Council,
27 February 2014

The Delegation of Ukraine takes the floor to inform the Permanent Council on the most recent developments and the current situation in Ukraine.

At the outset, I would like to express high appreciation to the participating States for their interest and readiness to support a smooth transition of Ukraine to resumption of a solid political and economic development, with full respect to democracy, rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Ukrainian nation is still under the lasting impact of the tremendous shock of the last week, the most tragic days in Ukraine's modern history which had been marked by brutal killing of civilians who wanted the authorities to hear and respond to their legitimate demands. Nearly a hundred human lives lost, hundreds of injured – these are the tragic losses of the Ukrainian people for realizing their continuous strive for building a strong, sovereign, independent and democratic state.

In the dire circumstances of acute socio-political crisis, swift and effective measures were required to address it. That was also the aim of the Agreement on the Settlement of Crisis in Ukraine signed on 21 February 2014. However, effective withdrawal of the former leader of the state from performing his constitutional duties created obstacles for proper implementation of reached agreements.

Against this backdrop, the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine, as the sole legislative body and legitimate institution of power, assumed full responsibility for normalizing the situation in the country and took decisions consistent with most of the provisions of the abovementioned agreement. In particular, the Parliament, by the constitutional majority of votes, restored the 2004 Constitution of Ukraine, set early presidential elections for 25 May 2014, launched the process of forming the government of national unity. Key decisions of the Parliament aimed at normalizing the situation in the country were adopted by the constitutional majority of the people's deputies of Ukraine, representing all political factions, including the Party of Regions.

Restoration of the 2004 Constitution means that Ukraine returned to being a parliamentary-presidential republic. This Constitution, in particular, stipulates that in the absence of the President his/her duties shall be performed by the Chair of the Ukrainian Parliament. Therefore, the Ukrainian Parliament vested its Chairman with the functions of the Acting President of Ukraine until the results of the early presidential elections are established.

In order to maintain law and order, the Parliament has appointed the acting Minister for Interior, new Head of Security Service and Prosecutor General.

The law-enforcement agencies, in order to strengthen public confidence in their work, have joined efforts with representatives of civil society to provide for community policing and security of each and every individual. There are no grounds for allegations on the presence of threats to civil rights of national minorities and religious communities.

The Ukrainian Parliament also adopted a number of legislative acts aimed at freeing political prisoners in Ukraine which is seen as a significant step forward in reinforcing the democratic credentials of the state and its authorities.

I would like to emphasize that, despite the most complex and unprecedented situation in the country, all decisions by the Ukrainian Parliament have been taken within its legitimate authority, in compliance with the Constitution and legislation of Ukraine. Notably, most of the decisions were adopted by the constitutional majority of votes, reflecting their strong multi-partisan support.

The new Government of Ukraine was confirmed today. Appointment of the new Government will allow to stabilize the situation, prevent any further escalation, including in relation to emerging manifestations of separatism, and set the country on the path of economic recovery and reform.

We call on all our partners, the OSCE participating States, to unequivocally demonstrate full respect to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine in accordance with the international norms and principles, enshrined in particular in the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and other OSCE documents. A special responsibility in that respect lies with the states-guarantors of Ukraine's security, in particular the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, as stipulated by the 1994 Budapest Memorandum.

Today, in connection with the developments in the Crimea, the Acting President of Ukraine, Chairman of the Ukrainian Parliament Oleksandr Turchynov appealed to the Russian Federation to abide by the basic agreements regarding the Russian military presence in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of

Sevastopol, and stressed upon inadmissibility of violation of the Laws of Ukraine by the military of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine.

The seriousness of concern of the Ukrainian authorities is reflected in the call of the Acting President of Ukraine, and I quote, “I call upon military commanders of the Russian Black Sea Fleet stationed on the territory of Ukraine: all the military have to stay within the limits of the territories, stipulated by the signed agreements. Any movement of the military personnel, moreover with fire weapons, will be regarded by us a military aggression”.

Today the Ukrainian side proposed to the Russian Federation to hold immediate bilateral consultations under Article 7 of the Treaty on Friendship, Co-operation and Partnership between Ukraine and the Russian Federation of 31 May 1997.

Distinguished colleagues,

At this stage Ukraine is particularly interested in support by the international community of its efforts aimed at economic stabilization and averting any threats to its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We welcomed the appointment of Amb. Tim Guldemann as the Personal Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Ukraine. This week he had a number of meetings in Kyiv, including with the Acting President of Ukraine and Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada. We hope that as a result of these consultations possible areas of OSCE’s assistance to Ukraine under the current circumstances will be more clearly identified.

The Ukrainian side continues to prepare a visit to Ukraine by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media Dunja Mijatovic which is due to take place next week. We believe her visit will further strengthen our cooperation on issues pertaining to promoting media freedom in Ukraine

Ukraine is also ready to explore areas for enhancing co-operation with the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. Given expressed concerns in connection with repeal of the 2012 Law of Ukraine on the Principles of the State Language Policy, I would like to assure that Ukraine will act in full compliance with its international obligations and OSCE commitments relating to protection of the rights of national minorities and will pursue policies conducive to harmonious development of the Ukrainian multi-ethnic society. I will also add in that respect that a number of provisions of the repealed law had been a subject of serious concern of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities who advised on refraining from the adoption of that text.

In connection with the early presidential election in Ukraine on 25 May 2014, the current Ukrainian leadership is committed to hold them in a free, fair and transparent manner. We believe that the OSCE, in particular the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights can play an important role both in the process of organizing the elections and in monitoring the election campaign.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman!