



**Permanent Mission of Ukraine**  
to the International  
Organizations in Vienna

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## **Statement on “Non-recognition of illegal Russian elections in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)”**

As delivered by Ambassador Ihor Prokopchuk,  
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,  
to the 1180<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Permanent Council,  
22 March 2018

**Mr. Chairperson,**

Ukraine strongly condemns the illegal conduct of Russian presidential elections on 18 March 2018 in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol that was organized by the Russian occupation administration.

Under international law the Crimean peninsula is a sovereign territory of Ukraine. The results of illegal voting in the Russian presidential elections there are null and void and have no legal consequences.

The so-called elections in Crimea are yet another demonstration of the Kremlin’s contempt for the fundamental norms and principles of international law, enshrined, in particular, in the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act.

We are grateful to the OSCE participating States for their principled statements of condemnation and non-recognition of Russian elections in Ukraine’s Crimea. We also expect the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights to provide in its assessment of the election process in connection with 18 March Russian presidential elections a clear reference to the illegality of holding Russian elections in the temporarily occupied Crimea.

Any attempts to legitimize the results of the Russian aggression against Ukraine must be strongly denounced, including by strengthened international sanctions. As statements are not enough to contain the aggressor, Ukraine has shared with its partners a list of individuals involved in the organization and holding of illegal Russian presidential elections in the temporarily occupied Crimea.

We urge the Russian occupation authorities to refrain from repressive and punitive measures against the residents of Crimea who refused to take part in the so-called “elections”.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

Russia's illegal actions constitute a flagrant breach of Ukraine's national legislation and bilateral agreements between Ukraine and the Russian Federation. Well before the elections, the Ukrainian Government repeatedly communicated to Moscow the protests against the illegal holding of Russian presidential elections in the temporarily occupied Crimea and Donbas. The Ukrainian side made it very clear that organization of voting in the Russian presidential elections in the diplomatic representations of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine would be accepted by the Government of Ukraine only in case Russia fully respects Ukraine's legitimate claims. This position was reaffirmed by the delegation of Ukraine in the OSCE Permanent Council a week ago, on 15 March. However, this position has been consistently and utterly ignored by the Russian Federation.

In violation of Ukraine's national legislation, bilateral agreements and Russia's international obligations, including as an occupying Power, Russia opened without Ukraine's consent 1388 so-called "polling stations" in the temporarily occupied Crimea and Sevastopol.

Ukraine is convinced that Russia through its own illegal actions deprived the Russian citizens de jure and de facto of the possibility to vote in the elections in the Russian diplomatic premises on the territory of Ukraine.

Taking into account the heightened security risks, posed by Russia's deliberate actions in violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, the competent authorities of Ukraine took the necessary precautionary measures, aimed at increasing protection and security of the Russian diplomatic missions in accordance with the Vienna Convention. Under the circumstances, access to these missions was allowed only to the holders of diplomatic passports. The citizens of the Russian Federation, including Russian diplomats, were called upon to comply with the legitimate demands of Ukraine, to refrain from provocations and to observe public order and the Ukrainian law.

These measures have succeeded in preventing possible provocations, including on the part of active Russian security service agents, who are known to be operating on the territory of Ukraine with the mission of destabilizing the situation. The effectiveness of these security measures by the Ukrainian side was confirmed by the SMM reports, which noted the absence of incidents and calm situation around the Russian diplomatic missions on Ukraine's territory.

We therefore call upon the Russian Federation to put an end to the ungrounded speculations on the topic of elections in the Russian diplomatic missions on the territory of Ukraine, the modalities of which have been known to and intentionally disregarded by Moscow.

We once again urge the Russian Federation to return to the tenets of international law and reverse its illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, which are part of Ukraine's sovereign territory within internationally recognized borders. As stressed by Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko on 19 March 2018, "the only legitimate presidential elections in Crimea may only be the elections of the President of Ukraine".

**Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.**