



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations in Vienna

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Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the opening session of the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference
(Vienna, 28 June 2016)

Dear Mr.Chairman,
Distinguished participants,

Ukraine attaches particular significance to the discussions at the Annual Security Review Conference as a platform to comprehensively address the security threats and challenges in the OSCE region.

The crisis in and around Ukraine, stemming from the Russian aggression against my country, has shaped the security agenda in our Organization since 2014. Substantial efforts have been invested by the international community to resolve the conflict, including through the OSCE crisis response toolbox.

However, we note with regret that Russia's unchanged position aiming to consolidate the gains of its aggression has made these efforts of limited effect so far. Neither initial cause of current security degradation – violation of the fundamental principles and commitments by Russia, nor its outcomes – illegal occupation of Crimea and conflict in Donbas, have yet been removed or placed on a sustainable path of resolution.

Therefore, resolution of the crisis in and around Ukraine, which was triggered by external military intervention, by restoring respect to the violated norms and principles must remain at the top of our agenda. Let us recall that the term “crisis in and around Ukraine” was coined in the OSCE when the Russian forces of special operations seized main administrative buildings in Crimea, the Russian troops lined up the streets on the peninsula and blocked Ukrainian military facilities. Military occupation was followed by attempted annexation – the first such instance in the European history since the end of the World War II. Resolution of the current crisis requires peaceful settlement in Donbas in accordance with the Minsk agreements and restoration of Ukrainian sovereignty over now illegally occupied Crimea.

We do not see the OSCE as a mere platform for dialogue, but a platform that rests on specific principles and commitments, voluntarily assumed by all participating States to promote common security and co-operation. When the OSCE founding principles yet flagrantly violated, when military force is used to change borders between countries, when European peace and order are placed at risk by revanchist ambitions of one

country – this security environment must remain the subject of immediate and ongoing concern to all together with stimulating the return of this country to compliance. It is part of translation into practice of the principle of sovereign equality of states, so often invoked by the Russian Federation. The very essence of dialogue is undermined when the country denies documented and irrefutable facts.

For now, the significant discrepancy between Russia's political declarations and real actions, which are masked by these declarations, casts serious doubts on credibility of Moscow in terms of contributing to resolving other topical problems, affecting the international security, in particular in combating terrorism.

As a result, advancement of the vision of the European and Euro-Atlantic security community has been effectively devaluated by Russia's actions. Instead, the new security reality has emerged, marked with growing conflict potential across the region. State of confrontation as a "new normal" appears to be a desired development for Russia and its self-assertiveness. Armed aggression against Ukraine, military build-up along the borders, regular provocation of security incidents, aggressive propaganda among own citizens and generous support of marginal forces in Europe are the most conspicuous components of Russian strategy.

We must draw lessons from the fact that Russia started two military conflicts against neighbours in the last less than 10 years. Having to deal with many serious threats and challenges, including terrorism and migration crisis, cannot serve as an excuse for easing the efforts in countering the Russian aggression which imperils the vision of Europe whole, free and at peace.

The response of the OSCE community to this persistent threat should be based on firmly maintaining the unity of purpose and seeking ways to improve the international toolbox to make it efficient enough for safeguarding the core international norms and principles, seeking their full implementation together with the measures of increasing military transparency and predictability.

We hope that the discussion at the ASRC will contribute to fulfilling this task, which we consider critically important for re-establishing the climate of security in the OSCE region.

Thank you for your attention.