



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

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Statement in response to the Chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Croatia, H.E. Marija Pejčinović Burić

As delivered by Ambassador Ihor Prokopchuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1189th meeting of the Permanent Council,
14 June 2018

Mr. Chairperson,

The delegation of Ukraine warmly welcomes Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Croatia, H.E. Marija Pejčinović Burić to the Permanent Council and thanks her for the comprehensive presentation as the Chair of the Committee of Ministers on the planned activities of the Council of Europe.

Maintaining security and stability throughout Europe and beyond requires common stands and actions in addressing serious challenges facing our societies. The OSCE and Council of Europe, which enjoy close and long-lasting partnership, are to play a mutually reinforcing role in defending the fundamental values and principles shared by the Council of Europe and OSCE.

A solid framework of cooperation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe provides for an active involvement of participating and member States to generate synergies, avoid duplication, and make best use of the two organizations' comparative advantages. Ukraine stands for the enhancement and deepening of cooperation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

We are pleased to note that the Croatian Chairmanship's priorities in the Council of Europe to a great extent correlate with the priorities of the Italian OSCE Chairmanship.

Let me mention among them the fight against corruption, a phenomenon that threatens democratic societies as well as the values and standards that the OSCE and Council of Europe promote and stand for.

Combating corruption is one of the priority objectives of the comprehensive reform process in my country. Ukraine has established an unprecedented anti-corruption law-enforcement system, which was finalized with the latest adoption on 7 June 2018 by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the Law on the High Anti-corruption Court. These steps have been objectively and positively evaluated by the relevant Council of Europe bodies. Ukraine will continue vigorous pursuit of its

reform agenda in line with our international commitments regarding respect for human rights, consolidation of democratic institutions and the rule of law.

Mr. Chairperson,

In the context of shared values and cooperation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe I would like to note that since the start of the Russian armed aggression against Ukraine in 2014 the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has adopted a number of decisions in relation to the conflict started by Russia. In those decisions the Committee of Ministers reiterated full respect of Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, condemned the illegal annexation by the Russian Federation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, underlined that those responsible for the downing of flight MH17 be brought to justice, recognized the responsibility of the Russian Federation under the international humanitarian law and international human rights law and called on the Russian Federation to uphold all of its international obligations.

In relation to the situation of human rights in the occupied Crimea, the Committee of Ministers condemned the deterioration of the human rights situation in the peninsula under Russian occupation and called for full and unrestricted access to the Crimea for all human rights bodies of the Council of Europe, including the Commissioner for Human Rights, to ensure that they can carry their monitoring activities unimpeded to urgently address deteriorations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Today as we speak, Ukrainian filmmaker Oleg Sentsov, who was unlawfully detained in 2014 and sentenced by the Russian occupation authorities on trumped-up charges of terrorism, is on the 32nd day of an indefinite hunger strike. He demands the release of all Ukrainian political prisoners illegally held in Russian prisons. These are at least 64 Ukrainian citizens. Ukraine consistently urges Russia to immediately release them.

We take this opportunity to reiterate our appeal to the Chairmanships of the OSCE and the Council of Europe to use all instruments at the disposal of the two organizations to achieve release of all Ukrainian political prisoners, currently held behind bars on the territory of the Russian Federation and in the temporarily occupied Crimea and parts of Donbas.

This would become a very important accomplishment of the two regional organizations, which are committed to democracy and human rights.

In conclusion, I would like to wish Minister Pejčinović Burić every success in Croatia's activities at the helm of the Council of Europe.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.