



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**Statement in response to the address
by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland, H.E. Mr. Zbigniew Rau**

As delivered by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1324th meeting of the Permanent Council
15 July 2021

Madam Chairperson,

We join other delegations in warmly welcoming Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland, H.E. Mr. Zbigniew Rau to the Permanent Council. We are grateful for personal presentation of the future priorities of the incoming Polish Chairpersonship in 2022. We are glad to have Poland, our close neighbour, strategic partner, and a big friend of Ukraine, as an incoming Chair in the OSCE.

We fully share Poland's intention to assist participating States in fostering dialogue while guarding the OSCE principles and commitments. Occasionally, we hear the calls to hold dialogue at any cost, based on the so-called "unifying agenda", even if it means stepping back from our shared principles and commitments. Thus, we are glad to see that guarding the OSCE basics will be a key element of the Chairpersonship's efforts to promote dialogue in this Organization.

As a country, which suffered significantly from the external armed aggression, occupation and attempted annexation of part of its territory, Ukraine welcomes Poland's focus on supporting the OSCE conflict resolution formats and promoting comprehensive assistance for the conflict-affected population. The OSCE tools, the Special Monitoring Mission and the Trilateral Contact Group, have been useful in facilitating resolution of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and mitigating its impact on the local population.

Security and stability of the entire OSCE region depends on the Organization's ability to end conflicts peacefully and in line with the OSCE principles and commitments. We support Poland's objective to hold this topic at the top of our agenda.

Restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, including the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, the city of Sevastopol and territorial waters, remains critical in this regard, and not only for Ukraine. For instance, the continuation of the current security situation in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, marked by Russia's intensive militarization and impediments to the freedom of navigation, poses severe security threats to all littoral states.

The same goes true for other conflicts in the OSCE area. Russia's ongoing occupation of parts of Georgia's territory is unacceptable. The territorial integrity of Georgia and the Republic of Moldova must be restored within the internationally recognized borders. As a member of "5+2" format for Transnistrian settlement, Ukraine will continue to support result-oriented negotiations aimed at achieving a comprehensive political solution to this conflict.

The OSCE has a unique toolbox for responding to a wide variety of conflict-related challenges in all three dimensions. Fully utilizing the OSCE's potential is indeed an admirable goal, which deserves our support.

We concur with the priorities set out by Poland in the first dimension, aimed at increasing military transparency and risk reduction. No-notice large-scale military build-up held by Russia near the border with Ukraine and in the temporarily occupied Crimea in April this year demonstrated the urgency to advance on this path. We believe our efforts need to be streamlined towards ensuring full implementation and modernization of the Vienna Document 2011.

We are also ready to work with Poland on the non-military security challenges, such as cybersecurity or combating transnational threats. Protection of critical infrastructure from attacks in cyberspace, as well as combating disinformation and propaganda remain serious challenges to our societies and democracy, especially in the context of hybrid wars and increasing value of ICT in our daily life against the backdrop of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. We would welcome consideration of transnational threats in the context of the armed conflicts, which significantly simplify activities of the international organized criminal groups.

Last, but not least, we stress the importance of border security for the agenda of the Security Committee. One of the critical outcomes of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict was the loss of control of 409 km of Ukrainian-Russian border by the Ukrainian government. We need to do our best to ensure full implementation of the OSCE Border Security and Management Concept and other OSCE border-related commitments, including prevention of cross-border movement of persons, weapons and funds connected with supporting illegal armed formations.

In the second dimension, we share your focus on achieving post-pandemic recovery of our economies and increasing their resilience. Still, we should also remember that economic challenges were present in the OSCE area yet before the pandemic, not least due to the ongoing armed conflicts and situations of occupation.

We support Poland's intention to focus on fighting corruption, promoting energy security, digital innovations and new technologies. We believe special attention should be paid to the environmental issues as an unalienable part of the OSCE second dimension. Environment has a significant influence on health, economy and security, and we encourage the incoming Chairpersonship to continue dialogue regarding the effective environmental protection in the OSCE region.

In the context of the third dimension, we welcome the CiO's intention to support the population affected by conflicts in the OSCE region. Ukraine, as the country facing the ongoing external hybrid aggression, encounters complex humanitarian challenges, including serious violations of human rights, fundamental freedoms and cases of persecution and discrimination in the temporarily occupied territories.

It is of critical importance to address in a timely and adequate manner systematic human rights violations in the OSCE area. We count on the incoming Polish Chairpersonship's leading role, as a guardian of the OSCE principles and commitments, in ensuring OSCE institutions' active engagement in this regard. As host country of the ODIHR, Poland is more than aware of their potential.

In conclusion, I want to wish Poland good luck in Chairing our Organization next year. You may count, Minister, on our full support.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.