



Delegation of Ukraine to
the OSCE

PC.DEL/589/10
18 June 2010

ENGLISH only

**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine in response to the statement
of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities**

As for delivery by Ambassador Volodymyr Yelchenko
to the Permanent Council, 17 June 2010

Mr. Chairman,

Dear Ambassador Vollebaek,

The Delegation of Ukraine would like to join the others in welcoming you to the Permanent Council again and thanking you for your report.

Ukraine continues to strongly support the mandate and activities of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. We particularly welcome a prompt action by the HCNM with regard to the recent escalation in Kyrgyzstan. By invoking article 13 of his mandate and issuing an early warning and recommendations the High Commissioner has demonstrated how all OSCE valuable early warning and conflict prevention instruments should work effectively.

The report of the HCNM is the best illustration of how wide and multifaceted is the range of his activities. We can only sympathize with the High Commissioner and his skilful team, knowing the magnitude of tasks, their sensitivity and, in some cases, the tragic consequences of conflict situations involving national minority issues. As a strong supporter of the conflict prevention mandate of the HCNM and his two-fold mission - containment and alert - Ukraine believes that there should be a wise balance between the HCNM's engagement in the currently evolving conflict situations and with the cases that have a potential for tensions. We also call upon participating States to look into the possibilities of providing the HCNM with all necessary support to allow him to implement fully and effectively his important mandate.

Now let me touch upon the issues, which are raised in the report.

First, my delegation read with interest the High Commissioner's analysis of the language legislation in various OSCE participating States. We are looking forward to the discussion of relevant issues at the upcoming second Supplementary Human Dimension Implementation meeting devoted to the education of persons belonging to national minorities: integration and equal opportunities.

Since the High Commissioner refers in his report to the Bolzano/Bozen Recommendations on National Minorities in Inter-State Relations, in particular, in connection with the issue of conferral of citizenship, I would like to underline that Ukraine fully agrees with the provisions of the Bolzano Recommendations that such a

step on the part of kin-states should be made in conformity with the principles of good neighbourly relations and of territorial sovereignty of the state where minority resides. Granting citizenship *en masse* can become a cause of tension or even a conflict and therefore contravenes the OSCE commitments.

I would also like to reiterate that Ukraine attaches great importance to the Bolzano/Bozen Recommendations. We believe that these guidelines should receive political endorsement of the OSCE participating states and should be put into practice in the OSCE region. We will support the High Commissioner's efforts in this direction aimed at reaching consensus among the participating States over this issue. In this regard, we would like to draw the delegations' attention to the food-for-thought paper "Treatment of national minorities in inter-state relations", which was initiated by Norway and presented in the "Corfu Process" by a number of delegations, including Ukraine. The document contains a proposal for adoption of a political declaration endorsing the Bolzano Recommendations and reaffirming adherence to their principles.

Mr. Chairman,

Finally, a couple of points on the High Commissioner's comments with regard to my country.

We appreciate ongoing activities of the High Commissioner in assisting Ukraine to address the issues concerning the reintegration of formerly deported persons and his project activities in our country. Ukraine stands ready to continue our constructive dialogue with the High Commissioner and our OSCE partners on national minority-related issues in my country and in other states, especially in those where the Ukrainian minority resides.

I would like to assure you, Ambassador Vollebaek, of Ukraine's continued support of your impartial efforts aimed at preserving peace and stability in the OSCE area.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.