



**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR TACAN İLDEM
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY
(999th Meeting of the Permanent Council, 8 May 2014)**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

Last week the crisis in Ukraine escalated in an alarming manner.

We regret and condemn the violence that occurred in Odessa between opposing groups on May 2nd, as well as the arson attack against the Odessa Trade Union building which caused loss of lives. Our condolences go out to the families of those who tragically lost their lives. We wish a speedy recovery to the injured.

In this context we would like to stress once again that all segments of society should express their views and demands through democratic means and in a peaceful manner, refraining from unlawful actions that are contrary to public order. We invite all to act with restraint and common sense.

Amidst these rising tensions in Ukraine, we believe the importance of constructive engagement and dialogue, as well as the need for effective implementation of the measures set forth in the Geneva Statement to de-escalate the crisis and defuse tension cannot be overstressed.

On a more uplifting note, we welcome the release on May 3rd of the seven international observers and their Ukrainian escorts who had been abducted since April 25th. We commend the crucial role played by the Special Monitoring Mission in securing their release, and take this opportunity to once again reaffirm our strong support to the activities of the Mission.

Mr. Chairperson,

Another disturbing and worrisome development we have recently witnessed was the denial of entry of Mr. Mustafa Abdülcemil Kırımoğlu (Dzhemilev), leader of the Crimean Tatar people, into his homeland of Crimea on May 3rd despite earlier statements and assurances to the contrary. This is an unacceptable action devoid of any legitimate basis or explanation. We condemn it.

A further source for concern is the launch of an investigation against the Crimean Tatars who went to greet Mr. Kırımoğlu. In this context, we have learned that even the Crimean Tatar National Assembly is being threatened with dissolution. While we doubt that will happen, we would like to underline that the National Assembly is the only legitimate representative body of the Crimean Tatars, a people who, despite the numerous extraordinary circumstances and all the difficulties they have faced in their Crimean homeland over the centuries, continue to

voice their rightful concerns and demands in a peaceful and democratic manner. We therefore believe that threats directed at the Crimean Tatar National Assembly constitute a particularly grave development which can only contribute to the escalation of tensions in the region.

In this vein, we wish to remind all parties concerned that the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine recognizes the Crimean Tatar National Assembly as the legitimate representative body of the Crimean Tatar people. We expect this body, as well as the democratic rights and freedoms of the Crimean Tatars, to be accorded the necessary respect.

I would like to express my special thanks to my esteemed Ukrainian and Lithuanian colleagues for the informal briefing that they jointly organized at lunch break on the “Human Rights Situation in Crimea, Ukraine”, where participants had a valuable opportunity to listen to Mr. Kırımoglu in person.

In concluding, as I have been doing on previous occasions, I would like to reiterate once again our strong support for Ukraine’s territorial integrity, sovereignty and political unity, and take this opportunity to call upon all to respect these fundamental principles.

Thank you.