



**Permanent Mission of Ukraine**  
to the International Organizations in Vienna

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**Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine**  
**Pavlo Klimkin**

As delivered  
to the 1085<sup>th</sup> special meeting of the Permanent Council,  
14 January 2016

Mr. Chairman,

It gives me great pleasure to take part in today's meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council, inaugurating the German OSCE Chairmanship with my dear colleague Minister Steinmeier as the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for 2016. I share his view expressed at the Belgrade Ministerial about turbulent waters through which Europe is now navigating.

Germany has assumed the Chairmanship at a critical juncture for the OSCE. Threats and challenges, that we had considered rested in the past, again emerged to haunt us 25 years after the Cold War ended. Flagrantly violating the basics – the Helsinki Decalogue of principles – the Russian Federation has shattered the very foundation underpinning the European peace and security.

As we meet today Russia's illegal occupation and annexation of Ukraine's Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol continues and the Russian military presence in Donbas, as well as its support to the illegal armed groups persists. By resorting to an unprovoked armed aggression against Ukraine the Russian Federation committed a grave crime as defined by the norms of international law.

Crimea and Donbas should remain a constant reminder for the Chairmanship and the participating States that restoring respect to the OSCE principles and commitments is critical for safeguarding the OSCE's relevance and credibility. We therefore highly appreciate Germany's principled position on Russia's attempt to change European borders by force as completely unacceptable and such that can not be tolerated by the states in a secure community. We expect this position to guide the political leadership of the Organization, mandated to serve as a guardian of the OSCE principles and commitments. Given the limited effect of the OSCE crisis toolbox employed over 2014-2015 it is critically important to strengthen the OSCE security mechanisms, aimed at effective prevention and resolution of conflicts instigated by hybrid warfare.

A lot was done in 2015 by Ukraine and its international partners to keep the situation on the ground from turning into a full-fledged conflict and stimulate Russia to stop the aggression

against Ukraine.

OSCE has been an indispensable part of the international efforts, given, in particular, its role in facilitating implementation of the Minsk agreements. We highly appreciate the OSCE activities on the ground, in particular those carried out by the OSCE Institutions and the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. We are ready to further our intensive co-operation with the SMM on various aspects of the Mission's activities, first of all those related to full implementation of the Minsk agreements.

We welcome the fact that among its top priorities in 2016 the German Chairmanship will focus on ensuring peaceful resolution of the crisis in and around Ukraine, stemming from the Russian aggression. The Germany's role and experience of a mediator in the Normandy format will undoubtedly contribute significantly to the activities of the German OSCE Chairmanship on this track.

Mr.Chairman,

Although registering some signs of reducing tensions in Donbas we nevertheless remain very cautious in our assessments. The relative calm in September-October 2015 that generated, also in the OSCE, some optimistic expectations, was followed by a new outburst of violence as Russia-backed militants resumed attacks and shellings, including by heavy weapons that must have been withdrawn under the Minsk agreements.

The first days of January were again marred with the ceasefire violations by the illegal armed groups, despite agreement on a "silence regime" reached in the Trilateral Contact Group. Ukrainian military positions and residential areas remain under attack. New casualties among the Ukrainian servicemen and peaceful population have been registered. On-going provocation in Kominternove has expanded the list of violations of the Minsk agreements by the militants.

Restricting the SMM freedom of movement in the areas under their control and intimidating the monitors the militants conceal their violations. A high number of such restrictions, over 30 in the last 10 days, deprives the SMM of the possibility to effectively perform its functions. Completely inaccessible for the SMM remains a large part of the occupied areas adjacent to the border with Russia. As Russia continues to provide military and logistical support to the militants, the prospects for comprehensive peaceful resolution of the crisis will remain illusory until efficient control over the Ukrainian-Russian state border is restored.

Continuous failure by Russia to comply with the security provisions of the Minsk agreements badly impedes progress on other tracks of the peace process, including the conduct of free and fair local elections in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in accordance with the Ukrainian legislation, the OSCE standards and under the OSCE/ODIHR monitoring.

A significant confidence-building measure would be the release of all hostages and illegally detained persons on the "all-for-all" principle as envisaged by the Minsk agreements. This provision applies equally to those Ukrainians, who remain in the militants' captivity in Donbas, as well as those Ukrainian citizens, abducted from the territory of Ukraine and

illegally imprisoned in Russia on fabricated charges, including Nadiya Savchenko, Oleg Sentsov, Oleksandr Kolchenko and others. We condemn the continued detention in Russia of Ukrainian citizens as political prisoners.

Ukraine is seeking after a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Donbas and highly values the support of international community. However, the progress on this track can hardly be achieved merely through unilateral steps of Ukraine. It is of paramount importance now to urge Russia to implement in practice its commitments. We are also confident that re-enforced international presence on the ground will significantly contribute to the implementation of the Minsk agreements and peaceful resolution in Donbas.

Mr. Chairman,

On a broader Chairmanship's programme, we are pleased to note that it reflects many of Ukraine's priorities.

In politico-military dimension, we expect building progress on modernizing the OSCE confidence and security measures, which appear to be most relevant for the present uncertain security environment. As the country greatly suffering from terrorism and terrorist groups we would like to focus on the implementation of two Counter-Terrorism Declarations adopted in Belgrade. Strengthening border security, including by countering the phenomena of foreign terrorist fighters and other non-state actors, should be an important part of the collective efforts to this end. It is essential to advance discussion on updating the OSCE border-related instruments.

We welcome the particular attention of the German Chairmanship to the cyber security issues. While focusing on the implementation of the first set of cyber CBMs we hope for reaching consensus on the second set of relevant measures.

In the economic and environmental dimension, Ukraine will be particularly interested in the good-governance agenda and promotion of anti-corruption efforts.

We welcome the German Chairmanship's determination to foster the implementation of the human dimension commitments, including in such areas as freedom of expression, freedom of media, protection of persons belonging to national minorities, tolerance and non-discrimination. Enhanced cooperation with the civil society will certainly contribute in this effort.

Particular consideration within the OSCE human dimension activities should be given to addressing the dire human rights situation in the occupied Crimea and those areas of Donbas, which are not controlled by the Government of Ukraine. We deem it of utmost importance that the international institutions continue to monitor, report and react to the human rights' violations in the affected regions. The role of the OSCE Institutions is essential in this context and we encourage the German Chairmanship to provide every support to their activities.

We expect that such thematic issues as freedom from state propaganda, eradicating the phenomenon of political prisoners, ensuring right to a fair trial, combating torture and enforced disappearance, ensuring rights of IDPs and refugees will be duly reflected in the

OSCE human dimension agenda for 2016.

Mr. Minister,

Ukraine remains convinced that it is hardly possible to reinstate the European security environment until the respect to the OSCE core principles and commitments, including those of the sovereignty, territorial integrity of my country and inviolability of the internationally recognized borders is restored and committed violations are corrected.

All efforts of the German Chairmanship aimed at restoring respect to the OSCE principles and commitments will be actively supported by Ukraine. We believe that such efforts will serve the interest of all participating States and the OSCE concept of comprehensive security.

In conclusion, I would like to wish the Chairperson-in-Office and the Chairmanship's team every success at the helm of the OSCE. Ukraine looks forward to closely cooperating with the Chairmanship throughout the year.

Thank you, Mr.Chairman.