



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

## **STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE**

As delivered by HE Yurii Vitrenko, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the  
International Organizations in Vienna

### **1548<sup>th</sup> meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council**

Agenda Item 1, “Opening Address by the Chairman-in-Office, Federal Councillor and  
Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, Ignazio Cassis”

(15 January 2026)

**Mr Chairperson, dear Rafael,**

At the outset, I would like to welcome the Chairperson-in-Office, the Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis, to the Permanent Council and thank him for the address outlining the priorities of the Swiss OSCE Chairpersonship.

We welcome Switzerland’s steadfast commitment to the principles and commitments enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act, which underpin the European security order, and commend its determination to strengthen the OSCE amid profound challenges to European and global security. A rules-based international order grounded in the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act remains a core pillar of European security, and you can count on our full support in upholding them.

Against the backdrop of Russia’s ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine, a strong and principled response to violations of international law is more important than ever. Despite all efforts by Ukraine and its partners in Europe and America, Russia continues to kill civilians and destroy entire cities using the most brutal methods of warfare. Since the beginning of this year, there has hardly been a single day without acts of terror and genocidal targeting of Ukraine’s civilian population. Russia’s leadership continues to reinforce its aggressive rhetoric and manipulate facts in an attempt to justify its war of conquest.

In this context, we attach particular importance to the Chairpersonship’s commitment to supporting Ukraine and advancing peace efforts. Ukraine highly values that this task is among Switzerland’s top priorities and stand ready to work constructively with the Chairpersonship.

**Mr Chairperson-in-Office,**

As you rightly underlined on the occasion of the official assumption of the Chairpersonship on 1 January, “The [Helsinki] Decalogue is not a symbolic legacy: it is a manual for action.”

We fully agree with this assessment and expect that the Swiss Chairpersonship will take all possible steps to ensure that the principles of the Helsinki Decalogue are upheld, while those who violate them do not go unpunished.

For Ukraine, as a country that has been fighting for almost 12 years against existential aggression, it is obvious that if the Helsinki principles remain merely declaratory, they cannot guarantee security for participating States. This is precisely why it is essential not to remain silent in the face of their violation but to push for accountability of the aggressor state.

Ensuring accountability requires a resolute stance by all responsible participating States. We firmly believe that this is the only way to preserve the credibility of the OSCE and its ability to respond effectively to serious breaches of the international order.

**Esteemed colleagues,**

Last year marked the 50th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, a milestone that reminded us of the enduring value of an international order based on shared principles and rules.

This year, another anniversary comes to mind: the formal dissolution of the League of Nations 80 years ago in 1946. Although eight decades have passed since the League of Nations ceased to exist, the lesson of the past serves as a stark reminder - even when based on rights values, an organisation cannot function or remain effective without proper stance of states to protect them.

In 1946 the world had already entered the new era after the horrors of the Second World War. Today, the situation only keeps deteriorating. And it is in our mutual interest to restore the rules-based order and to protect the principles on which the security and well-being of all nations depend.

In its capacity as OSCE Chairpersonship, Switzerland is well placed to demonstrate leadership by firmly defending OSCE principles, holding Russia accountable, and addressing the consequences of Russia’s actions across all OSCE dimensions. We strongly believe that such an approach will not only strengthen the Organisation and reinforce its relevance, but also make a meaningful contribution to broader efforts to restore peace and security in Europe and beyond.

**Thank you, Mr Chairperson.**