



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE

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

1567th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council

Agenda Item 2, “Report by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities”
(4 June 2026)

Mr Chairperson,

Dear High Commissioner Kamp,

We highly value your work, continued engagement with Ukraine, and thank you for your comprehensive report.

In particular, we appreciate your visit to Kyiv and the Chernivtsi region earlier this year, which provided an important opportunity to exchange views on legislation, policies and practical measures concerning national minorities and indigenous peoples.

We also highly appreciate the High Commissioner’s long-term approach focused on strengthening Ukraine’s institutional capacity and resilience.

Mr Chairperson,

Even as Ukraine continues to defend itself against Russia’s ongoing war of aggression, we remain committed to advancing the protection of the rights of national minorities and indigenous peoples, in line with OSCE commitments.

We continue improving legislation, policies and practical mechanisms in this field, including in close co-operation with the Council of Europe, the European Union, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

We attach particular importance to the effective implementation of the relevant legislation at the local level, and the strengthening of institutional capacities.

We also continue to implement the **Roma Strategy**, alongside broader measures aimed at strengthening interethnic harmony, promoting cultural diversity, and maintaining dialogue with minority communities across Ukraine.

Mr Chairperson,

We note that the **High Commissioner rightly underlines the dangers of the instrumentalization of minority issues**, and the harmful impact such practices may have on inter-State relations, peace and stability across the OSCE area.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine remains the clearest and most destructive example of such instrumentalization. For years, the Russian Federation has been using minority-related narratives to justify its aggressive actions against sovereign States.

Today, in the **temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, Russia continues to destroy the very diversity it claims to protect.**

The occupying authorities pursue a systematic policy of russification, forced assimilation and suppression of national identity. Ukrainian language and culture are being removed from public life and education. Residents are pressured to accept Russian citizenship, while those who refuse face discrimination, intimidation and restrictions on their fundamental rights. In Russia itself for over a 2 million Ukrainians, there is no a single school.

The situation of indigenous peoples and national minorities in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine remains equally alarming. Crimean Tatars continue to face politically motivated persecution, arbitrary detention and enforced disappearances.

Russia's repression also extends to freedom of religion or belief. Religious communities that do not conform to the occupation authorities' policies face systematic pressure and persecution.

We also wish once again to draw attention to one of the gravest crimes of Russia's occupation policy – the abduction, indoctrination and militarisation of Ukrainian children.

High Commissioner Kamp,

We count on your continued attention to the situation of national minorities and indigenous peoples in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, as well as in Russia.

Mr Chairperson,

We also took note of the High Commissioner's **focus on historical memory and contested historical narratives.** In this context, we welcome the forthcoming Siena Recommendations on contested histories and national minorities.

Ukraine knows from its own experience that history can be manipulated as a weapon. Russia's aggression is accompanied by systematic historical distortion, denial of Ukrainian statehood, glorification of imperial narratives, and attempts to erase the identity of Ukrainians and other communities living in Ukraine.

We believe that the OSCE can play an important role in preventing the instrumentalization of history, and support mutual respect among communities and States.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.