



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

**Statement by HE Mr Andrii SYBIHA**  
**Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine**  
**at the Opening Session of the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference**  
17 June 2026

**Dear Ignazio, dear Feridun**  
**Dear friends, colleagues,**

I will start with three names. I believe every OSCE event should do the same.  
Maksym Petrov. Dmytro Shabanov. Vadym Golda.

Three Ukrainian employees of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission who became prisoners of Russia.

This happened right after the Special Monitoring Mission failed to prevent Russia's so-called "special military operation".

More than four years later, the Organization still has not secured their release.  
This is a disgrace.

I sincerely appreciate the Secretary General's commitment and personal efforts.  
Thank you, Feridun, for making this case a matter of personal responsibility.  
Still, the overall picture remains dark.

A security organization that cannot ensure the security of its own staff is doing something fundamentally wrong.

I spoke with the wife of one of these men. I felt ashamed. I did not know how to look her in the eyes.

In Ukraine, we have lived through many disappointments when it comes to the OSCE. Today, we no longer have high expectations. But we have

every right to demand OSCE action for the release of its own employees.

My broader question goes to the heart of this annual conference.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

Which security are we reviewing today? The security of a region in a genocidal war?

The security of a world order under destruction?

Or the security this very Organization failed to ensure? My review will be very brief.

Today, there is no security in the OSCE area. End of report.

I am now on a train to Moldova. Today, our two countries are opening the first negotiation clusters in our EU accession talks.

This step alone contributes more to European security than the OSCE has achieved in recent years.

I am recording these remarks on Monday morning. Ukraine has just lived through another night of Russian ballistic terror.

Our mornings begin with a minute of silence.

Our children can now tell the difference between the sound of a ballistic missile and a cruise missile.

Our Holocaust survivors are being killed by Russian missiles in their own apartments.

So once again: what security are we reviewing?

And are we not, in fact, protecting the aggressor's veto over security itself?

Today, the strongest part of the OSCE is not its institutional structure. It is the Chairpersonship.

Finland demonstrated this last year. Switzerland is demonstrating it today.

Ignazio, I am grateful to you for making lasting peace based on international law and Helsinki principles the top priority of your Chairpersonship. Thank you for your deep personal engagement in peace efforts.

The war is still far from ending.

Not because of a lack of our efforts. Because of Russia's lack of will.

Today, instead of reviewing non-existent security, we should revisit its very foundations.

If one participating State systematically violates every one of the ten Helsinki principles and still keeps its seat and full rights, then the question is whether those principles alone are enough.

Any values matter only when we are prepared to defend them. Rules-based order works only when rules are enforced. Today, Russia is the greatest security threat to the OSCE area.

Yet the OSCE remains hostage to Russia in virtually every decision-making process.

Simply allowing Russia to abuse the consensus rule again and again is worse than appeasement. It is capitulation.

The OSCE must ensure that no aggressor can simply veto any effort to end its own aggression.

Concrete mechanisms are needed.

Today, a new security architecture is already under construction.

And its foundations are not being laid in the Hofburg. They are being laid in Pokrovsk and Kupiansk.

The OSCE has to decide whether it belongs to the ruins of yesterday's Potemkin security order.

Or whether it can reinvent itself and become part of tomorrow's security architecture.

With ambitions that go beyond monitoring.

With prevention mechanisms that actually work. With the ability to stand up for its own employees.

There was a slogan at Ukraine House during the Munich Security Conference this February.

Three simple words:

“Change or die.”

In Ukraine, we always choose life.

And we know what real security looks like.

It has nothing to do with the ritual repetition of outdated formats.

The time to stop reviewing illusions and start confronting reality was more than four years ago.

Still, better late than never.

I hope this conference becomes the OSCE’s awakening conference.

**Thank you.**