

STATEMENT
by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine
H.E. Mr. Petro Poroshenko
at the 17th OSCE Ministerial Council

ENGLISH only

(Athens, 1 December 2009)

Mr. Chairman,

It is my great pleasure to be here in Athens, the cradle of European democracy, among colleagues and friends, who have come here today to reaffirm our common purpose of strengthening security and fostering cooperation in Europe. Let me take this opportunity to sincerely thank the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Greek Prime Minister and Foreign Minister George Papandreou for his remarkable leadership in this endeavour.

It is a special honour for me to take the floor after the distinguished Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt, who so eloquently presented the EU position on the key issues on the OSCE agenda, with which my country fully aligns itself.

The OSCE with its concept of common, indivisible, comprehensive and cooperative security has played an important role in building confidence and trust, bringing transparency, promoting stability and democratic development in the OSCE area. The Organization's comprehensive security agenda, encompassing the military and political, economic and environmental as well as human rights dimensions remains very much relevant for Europe, providing that all participating States genuinely adhere to its full implementation.

Ukraine commends the Greek OSCE Chairmanship for making its utmost to implement this agenda and to complement it with quite interesting initiatives, such as the Corfu Process. It is very important that the Corfu Process was launched and evolved not as a substitute to the core agenda of the OSCE, but as a useful complementary reinforcement of the comprehensive security dialogue in the OSCE. We strongly believe that the discussions on how the OSCE can strengthen security in Europe should be inclusive, open-ended and cross-dimensional.

Without prejudging the outcome of these deliberations, the process should contribute to the strengthening of existing security mechanisms, to the restoration of confidence and trust among all partners and should fully address legitimate security concerns of all OSCE participating States.

Mr. Chairman,

Conflicts, protracted and potential ones, remain the greatest threat to regional stability and security and a serious challenge for the OSCE. Ukraine fully supports and stands ready to offer practical assistance to all efforts aimed at finding peaceful and sustainable solutions to the conflicts in Georgia, in the Republic of Moldova and in the Republic of Azerbaijan, which would not compromise the norms and principles of international law, pertaining to sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders of states. It would be very encouraging if the Ministerial Council could register progress and provide political impetus to the ongoing negotiations on the settlement of these conflicts.

Ukraine reiterates its firm commitment to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders. We stand for the return of the OSCE to Georgia, including to its regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

As a state-guarantor and mediator in the Transdnistrian settlement, Ukraine will spare no effort to achieve the resumption of negotiations in the "5+2" format with the purpose of finding a viable and lasting solution to the Transdnistrian problem.

Mr. Chairman,

Ukraine commends the work of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), under the able leadership of its Director Ambassador Janez Lenarcic, in assisting participating States in the implementation of their human dimension commitments in good faith and in providing objective assessments of the conduct of elections.

As Ukraine prepares to hold regular presidential elections early next year, let me reaffirm our confidence in the ODIHR internationally recognized expertise in election observation and our support for the Office's neutrality and autonomy. We look forward to continuing open and constructive cooperation with the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission, which has already started its work in Ukraine, towards ensuring that elections are conducted in line with democratic electoral standards.

Mr. Chairman,

We call upon all participating States to work together in order to ensure that national minority issues become a source of mutual cooperation rather than a source of disagreement. In this regard, we highly appreciate the relevant activities of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM). We look forward to his continued support for the Ukrainian-Romanian monitoring in the sphere of minority protection. Ukraine is prepared to take full advantage of the HCNM's initiatives with regard to his study of the educational situation of ethnic Ukrainians in Russia and the educational situation of ethnic Russians in Ukraine, which could be a useful complementary measure to the existing bilateral mechanisms of cooperation in this sphere.

Ukraine believes that the HCNM Bolzano / Bozen Recommendations on National Minorities in Inter-State Relations deserve endorsement and practical implementation by the OSCE participating States.

Mr. Chairman,

The role that the OSCE can play in ensuring energy security should not be underestimated. This may include political support of the OSCE for solidarity actions by participating States, assistance in preventing and resolving crisis situations, promotion the establishment of a reliable and predictable investment climate and development of transparent energy market mechanisms.

Mr. Chairman,

It is of fundamental importance to rebuild mutual trust and confidence between OSCE participating States, especially in the politico-military dimension. In this regard, Ukraine calls upon all States-Parties to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) to do their part for preserving the CFE regime. We also reiterate the relevance of the 1999 Vienna Document.

Allow me also to draw your attention to the initiative of Ukraine to adopt a ministerial declaration on non-proliferation. We are convinced that the OSCE should send a strong message of support to the measures, taken recently by the international community in order to strengthen the non-proliferation regimes. It is also topical in view of the upcoming Washington Summit on

nuclear security as well as the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. We call upon the participating States to join consensus on this very important document.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to note an excellent example of Ukraine's practical and beneficial participation in the OSCE, such as the *mélange* project. It successfully started thanks to the financial support by a number of the OSCE participating States, which we greatly appreciate.

Ukraine together with the OSCE will continue to develop priorities for our joint project activities to be implemented by the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine.

I thank the OSCE Greek Chairmanship for its very dedicated and constructive work well done in the course of the year, for traditional Greek hospitality here in Athens and warmly welcome Kazakhstan as the incoming Chair. We are confident that Kazakhstan's OSCE chairmanship will be successful for the Organization and for the country. I wish my dear colleague, Minister Saudabayev, the best of luck in fulfilling his challenging mission.

Ukraine believes that Kazakhstan's initiative to hold an OSCE Summit is timely and we all should consider it after a decade of no OSCE meetings at the highest level. We agree that such a high level meeting would require adequate preparation in terms of substance and modalities and stand ready to engage in exploratory consultations on this matter.

In closing, I would like to reiterate Ukraine's readiness to assume the leadership of this Organization in 2013.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.