



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations in Vienna

**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
in response to Mr. Matteo Mecacci, Director of the
OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights**

As for delivery by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1448th meeting of the Permanent Council,
02 November 2023

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of Ukraine welcomes back to the Permanent Council meeting Director Matteo Mecacci and thanks him for the comprehensive presentation.

Ukraine sincerely appreciates ODIHR's priority attention to the situation on the ground in Ukraine against the backdrop of russia's war of aggression, including your recent strong condemnation of russia's actions aimed at holding illegal so-called "elections" in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine in grave violation of international law.

It remains important to keep the international community duly informed on the ongoing violations and crimes committed by the russian federation in Ukraine, and express ODIHR's position on the events.

We commend your Office's well-established activities on monitoring and documenting russia's violations of international humanitarian law and human rights in Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, including the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, the city of Sevastopol and other temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

We look forward to the publication of the next interim report in December. ODIHR's work together with the OSCE Moscow Mechanism reports form an important part of a wider international efforts to ensure justice and accountability.

Mr. Director,

As you rightly mentioned, this year the Warsaw Human Dimension Conference reaffirmed to be a unique and valuable venue for a comprehensive review of implementation of the OSCE commitments with the participation on equal footing of representatives of governments and civil society.

Against the backdrop of russia's continued blocking of consensus on the vital issues for this Organization, the Warsaw Conference demonstrated yet again how important is to consolidate efforts and send a clear message that there is no place for blackmail in the OSCE.

At numerous side events in Warsaw we had an opportunity to listen and talk to the victims of russia's war and their relatives. With their testimonies they contributed to further shed light on war crimes that are being committed by the russian invaders. Witnesses' evidence clearly demonstrates that russia pursues the goal to cause immense physical pain and psychological suffering, to break Ukrainians' will and spirit and deprive them of possibility to return to normal life.

Deliberate attacks against civilians, wilful killings and summary executions, cases of torture and ill-treatment, sexual violence, abduction, forcible deportation of civilians,

including many children, and other atrocities are all parts of russia's premeditated actions aimed at the extermination of Ukrainians and erasing their Ukrainian identity. As of today, the Prosecutor General's Office registered over 111.000 russia's war crimes in Ukraine.

Dear colleagues,

I take this opportunity to summarize some of the most pressing issues identified by Ukraine in this context and voiced at the different thematic sessions of the Warsaw Conference, namely it is of crucial importance:

- to help advance by all available means and expertise on the issue of ensuring accountability for the masterminds and perpetrators of russia's crimes in Ukraine;
- to facilitate seeking out Ukrainian children who have been forcibly deported by russia, establishing their names and whereabouts, ensuring their safe return to Ukraine and promptly implementing their right to family reunification;
- to address one of the root causes of russian aggression which manifests in the campaign of dehumanization of the Ukrainian people brought in russia to a state level policy through the neo-Nazis concepts of so-called "denazification", "russian world" and "protection of russian-speaking population", as well as the incitement to genocide by the kremlin-controlled media;
- to facilitate the immediate and unconditional release of all Ukrainian political prisoners from the occupied Crimea and other TOT of Ukraine, as well as of all civilian hostages illegally detained in russian captivity;
- to ensure the provision of adequate medical assistance to all those political prisoners, civilian hostages and POWs in russian captivity;
- to apply all efforts in order to secure access for the ICRC and other independent international monitors to all Ukrainian civilian hostages and political prisoners russia unlawfully detains, as well as to the POWs;
- to make russia abide by its obligations under IHL regarding the communication of the full lists of all POWs it detains.

We count on ODIHR's continued and dedicated engagement in addressing these and other priority issues.

Mr. Director, dear Matteo,

Since your today's statement also marks your almost three-year tenure as the head of ODIHR, I take this opportunity to warmly thank you for our fruitful and friendly cooperation and ODIHR's valuable assistance to Ukraine under your skilful leadership.

Throughout this difficult time of unprecedented challenges and threats, you have always demonstrated your professionalism, dedication, openness and ability to act swiftly and smartly.

Dear Matteo, I look forward to continue our cooperation, and wish you every success in your future endeavours.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.