



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations in
Vienna

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**Closing statement by Ukraine
at the 24th Meeting of the Ministerial Council of the OSCE**

Vienna, 8 December 2017

**Mr. Chairperson-in-Office,
Excellencies,**

The delegation of Ukraine is grateful to the Austrian hosts for the warm hospitality in Austria's and the OSCE capital. We highly appreciate the work of all members of the Austrian Chairmanship team and their dedication during the year.

The conflict in and around Ukraine, caused by Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine, illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol, military intervention in Donbas stayed at the top of the OSCE agenda throughout the year and in the center of the discussions at this Ministerial Council. This aggression and related flagrant breach of Helsinki Final Act principles and the Paris Charter norms remain the biggest threat to Ukraine's and European security and the rules-based order. This year we again have not been able to agree a document that would chart the way to resolution of the conflict with full respect to the OSCE norms and principles. The reason is that Russia would not recommit itself to such basic rules as respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, inviolability of frontiers of the participating States, non-use or threat of use of force. The Russian Federation is not willing to implement in full its Minsk commitments, instead perpetrating further hostilities, violence and destruction. This Russian position provides clarity as to where the security threats to Ukraine and other European nations stem from.

It is in this disturbing context that we underline the importance to explore ways to increase the OSCE's effectiveness in dealing with cases of clear, gross and continuing violations of OSCE principles and commitments, as was agreed at the OSCE Istanbul Summit. We request the incoming Italian Chairmanship to launch respective consultations.

Addressing the serious violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the illegally occupied Crimean peninsula, including by seeking

unimpeded access there of the OSCE and other international organizations, must remain in the focus of our efforts.

Ukraine supported the Chairmanship's efforts on the draft decisions of the Ministerial Council and promoted a number of specific aspects with direct link to security. We reiterate the importance of incremental progress and added value in the adoption of OSCE documents. We welcome consensus reached in a number of areas.

We deeply regret that in the human dimension, which constitutes one of the main pillars of our common security, decisions were again not adopted, in particular on free and pluralistic media, freedom of assembly and combatting intolerance based on religious grounds. This situation is not acceptable in the environment of significant challenges to human rights and fundamental freedoms and particularly grave human rights violations in the situations of occupation.

We should continue to focus our efforts and strong attention on seeking compliance with respective OSCE commitments.

We wish our Italian friends every success in steering the OSCE work next year. Please be assured of Ukraine's readiness to closely cooperate with the incoming Chairmanship across the OSCE mandate.

The delegation of Ukraine kindly requests that this statement be attached to the journal of this Council's meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.