

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Arseniy Yatsenyuk,  
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine  
at the 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council  
(Madrid, November 29, 2007)**

**Mr. Chairman,**

Ukraine firmly believes that the OSCE remains a key pillar of the modern but still evolving security structure in Europe which provides a pattern to follow for other regions of the world.

That is why Ukraine supports transformation of the OSCE into a fully-fledged international organization. We consider the current moment as the most appropriate for adopting the text of the Convention on the international legal personality of the OSCE which has been on our minds for a few years.

Election assistance and monitoring remains a key instrument of the Organization in promoting democracy and human rights across Europe.

As Ukraine went through early elections in 2007, we highly appreciate the OSCE's valuable assistance in assuring their free and fair conduct. It is of great importance that the conclusions of the International Election Observation Mission left no doubt that Ukraine's commitment to the principles of freedom and democracy remains unquestionably strong.

While drawing your attention to the fact that this was the third time in a row for Ukraine to get from the OSCE a positive assessment of its elections, we are committed to improve further our national electoral system based on the ODIHR's recommendations.

**Mr. Chairman,**

We appreciate the efforts of the Spanish Chairmanship aimed at making the environmental security more visible on the OSCE agenda. I should stress that Ukraine, which suffered from the Chernobyl disaster, commends a comprehensive, pragmatic and action-oriented approach to tackling these problems.

In this regard, it is important to mention the recent environmental challenges Ukraine has been facing. In particular, as a result of a severe storm in the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait on November 11, 2007, a number of maritime accidents occurred. They led to a spillage of a huge amount of oil into the sea. Around 4,000 tons of oil products have so far been collected from the water surface and this number is increasing.

The consequences of the disaster had a detrimental impact not only on Ukraine and its marine environment, but also on other countries in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov

basin. In this context, we reiterate our support for the adoption and implementation of the OSCE Strategy on Environment and Security. We also welcome the decision of the incoming Finnish Chairmanship to put the issue of maritime security at the top of the OSCE economic and environment agenda.

Ukraine reiterates its commitment to the 2006 OSCE Ministerial Decision on the Energy Security Dialogue and calls for further consideration of this issue in the framework of relevant OSCE events.

At the same time, we should not forget about the emergence of new challenges of global nature, such as rapid growth of prices for energy resources, food security, major swing in exchange rates and inflation, which have a negative impact on the security in the OSCE area and could jeopardize the global security.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The OSCE should continue to play an important role in conflict prevention and resolution.

Ukraine closely follows the developments in and around Kosovo. I have got my personal impressions after having visited this province not so long ago. We support the continued engagement of the OSCE in Kosovo which complies with the basic decisions of the UN Security Council, including resolution 1244 (1999). We welcome the intention of the European Union to increase its responsibility for the future of Kosovo. The clear European perspective and economic integration in order to unite the entire region represent a powerful stabilizing factor in this regard. Ukraine will accept the future status of Kosovo, as it will be defined by the UN Security Council.

We appreciate the high level of cooperation between Kyiv and Brussels on the issue of the Transdnistrian settlement. As a major contributor to the peace effort, Ukraine does its utmost to help renew the talks in the "5+2" format under the Yushchenko plan, which remains the feasible framework for future negotiations.

On Nagorno-Karabakh, South Ossetia and Abkhazia, Ukraine's position is based on the universal principles of international law. We stand for a peaceful resolution of these conflicts on the basis of sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognised borders.

To complement the existing international efforts, on 14 November 2007 Ukraine hosted the first meeting in the framework of the Kyiv Security Forum. It was launched as a regular platform for regional and global organizations as well as for governments and independent experts to share their approaches on the issues ranging from regional conflicts, illegal migration and refugees, to terrorism, nuclear proliferation and human trafficking. Despite a surprisingly low response on the part of some OSCE participating states, the event with 250 participants was a success.

Ukraine supports the decision on the OSCE engagement with Afghanistan. Having

recently visited Afghanistan, I am fully convinced that the OSCE has a lot to offer in the areas of border security and management as well as customs training for border personnel. Ukraine has already offered to the Government of Afghanistan its practical assistance in these matters.

The political and military aspects of security on the European continent have been equally important in 2007 as they have been ever since Helsinki. Beyond any doubt, the daunting prospect of a unilateral suspension of the application of the CFE Treaty represents the most challenging and erosive perspective for the whole structure of European security.

Moreover, the eventual suspension of the CFE Treaty implementation will have serious legal and security implications for Ukraine - and not only for Ukraine. Continued lack of progress, including at yesterday's consultations here in Madrid, can only strengthen our preoccupations. We stand ready to contribute to the search for a solution to the existing problems in order to ensure an early entry into force of the Adapted CFE Treaty.

**Distinguished colleagues,**

The years 2007-2008 mark the 75th anniversary of the Holodomor of 1932-33 in Ukraine when up to 10 million of innocent Ukrainians were murdered by the artificially created famine.

This atrocity was deliberately directed against Ukrainians by the communist totalitarian regime with the aim to physically destroy the Ukrainian nation.

With regard to the OSCE human dimension commitments, we would like to stress the importance of disseminating knowledge about the Holodomor in Ukraine, of promoting tolerance and non-discrimination, strengthening the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in order to prevent the recurrence of similar crimes in the future.

That is why our delegation will consistently continue to draw the attention of our Organization to this tragedy.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Finally, I would like to reaffirm Ukraine's full commitment to a comprehensive *aquis* of shared values and principles in all three dimensions of the OSCE. This very commitment to and confidence in our Organization has inspired us to put forward the candidature of Ukraine for the OSCE Chairmanship in 2013.

In a much closer perspective, I wish to thank the outgoing Spanish Chairmanship and welcome the incoming Finnish Chairmanship. I wish my Finnish colleague every success in guiding the OSCE throughout the next year.

Thank you.