



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine in response to Henrik Villadsen,
the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine**

As delivered by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna, to the 1342nd meeting of the Permanent Council, 28 October 2021

Madam Chairperson,

On behalf of the delegation of Ukraine I would like to join to the words of welcome to Ambassador Henrik Villadsen and thank him for presenting the Semi-Annual Activity Report on the project work in my country.

We support efforts undertaken by the Project Coordinator to protect his staff in terms of the Covid-19 pandemic, in particular by finding a balance between online and personal meetings.

We also welcome the fact that despite the late approval of the Unified Budget 2021, the PCU managed to implement most of the planned activities and achieved a high implementation rate.

In this context, we hope that the UB 2022 will be adopted timely and the PCU will be able to continue his activities in a stable manner.

Ukraine strongly supports the PCU's work in the framework of 4 main programmatic areas which are aimed at providing assistance to the Government of Ukraine in the reform implementation process.

Taking a positive note of all your activities in the reported period, I would like to highlight just several of your achievements.

Firstly, we commend the provided support to the elaboration of the National Strategy Promoting the Development of Civil Society in Ukraine for 2021-2026. Civil society is a crucial element of the Ukrainian reforming process and, we welcome the inclusion of civil society in the PCU's activities. We are looking forward to the further PCU's assistance with the implementation of this Strategy in the most effective way.

We also note the PCU's continuing work aimed at facilitation of the decentralization reform, in particular, the work related to the elaborating maps of the recently established local communities as well as gathering, accumulating and sharing useful data on new communities.

Likewise, the ongoing online trainings for the representatives of newly established local self-government bodies is another good example of the importance of the PCU's practical assistance in the field of decentralization.

In general, I would like to mention that we support the PCU's approach to apply different digital tools for its projects as this approach is totally in line with Ukraine's national policy of digitalization of public services. Therefore, we welcome the PCU's projects such as recently presented application that assists in the preparation of

documents to election commissions by reducing technical mistakes. In this regard, we also strongly support your activities on the introduction of IT tools in the election processes in Ukraine as we are convinced that IT tools present one of the most effective means to increase transparency of processes.

In the context of promoting media literacy, we took a positive note of the creation of an online knowledge-base platform on media literacy "Filter". In the light of the ongoing disinformation campaign against Ukraine from the abroad, it is highly important to form a high media culture in the society.

We also appreciate the PCU's involvement in promoting awareness about human rights and democratic values among the young generation. We believe your activities aimed at raising awareness of human rights and constitutional rights among youth and children should be continued.

Finally, we would like to underscore the gender mainstreaming approach in your work. In particular, training programs for school educators which are focused on identifying and combating gender stereotypes in education.

Ambassador Villadsen,

We would like to pay particular attention to your activities in the framework of the "Human security program" and "Economic, environmental, political military program", which remain our priorities.

Unfortunately, since the beginning of the Russian aggression, we have to reprioritize activities in order to meet new challenges stemmed from the aggression. Due to the conflict, there are already mine-affected communities in my country and, accordingly, we have to increase people's, notably children's, knowledge on safe behavior with unexploded objects. And I would like to stress the importance of your work in this regard.

As the ongoing conflict continues to affect seriously the whole Ukrainian society, the importance of the PCU activities directed to supporting conflict-affected people can hardly be overestimated.

Particularly, the developed course on psychological support in emergency situations for psychologists of the Ministry of Interior is a good example of the PCU's practical assistance in this regard.

A number of similar projects can make a real difference for the conflict-affected people and we encourage your further cooperation with Ukraine's state partners in this regard.

We also commend the PCU's activities in the context of chemical and biological safety and security that already resulted in the draft law on Ukraine's biological safety and security. All interconnected activities, including trainings, workshops and seminars dedicated to these issues are very much welcomed.

In the context of the environmental implications of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, we value your initiated preparation of recommendations for improving interagency co-ordination in case of water crisis that Donbas may face in the nearest future.

Besides this, we will strongly support all your activities linked to the environmental monitoring in the conflict-affected area, which can be an effective tool in preventing further environmental deterioration in the region.

And we express our deep regret that despite the PCU's mandate which covers the entire Ukraine's territory within its internationally recognized borders, since 2014 there has been no possibility to implement Coordinator's mandate in the territory of the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol as well as in temporarily occupied parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

In conclusion, I would like to express our high appreciation to all OSCE participating States who have generously contributed to the implementation of projects in Ukraine.

I will conclude to thank again Ambassador Henrik Villadsen and his able team for the important work on the ground and to wish them all the success in their future work.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.