



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

Statement by Ukraine
at the Concluding Meeting of the 32nd OSCE
Economic and Environmental Forum
as delivered by Viktoriia Kuvshynnykova, Deputy Permanent Representative
of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna
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Mr Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished participants,

At the outset, I would like to thank the Swiss Chair-in-Office, the Slovenian Chair of the Economic and Environmental Committee and the Office of the Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities as well as our Czech colleagues for convening this Economic and Environmental Forum.

Ukraine welcomes the theme selected by the Chairpersonship. Science provides diplomacy with facts, assessment methodologies and an understanding of future risks, while diplomacy has the capacity to translate this knowledge into concerted action.

Science diplomacy should therefore contribute to the security of States and their people through evidence-based decision-making, the early identification of threats and the practical application of advanced technologies.

We highly appreciate the substantive programme of this week's preparatory meeting. We are convinced that this year's cycle of the Economic and Environmental Forum has enabled the OSCE to develop a deeper understanding of how science and technology can strengthen the Organization's second dimension.

Nevertheless, efforts to anticipate future risks must not divert attention from the principal source of the gravest threat. For the fifth consecutive year, Russia has been waging its full-scale war against Ukraine, destroying energy, transport and water infrastructure and inflicting damage upon the economy, environment, agriculture, education, healthcare and even culture. The consequences of this aggression have long extended far beyond Ukraine.

Discussions on managing the consequences of this aggression cannot serve as a substitute for responsibility to bring it to an end. Security in the region begins with respect for international law, sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as adherence to the fundamental principles of the OSCE.

Environmental damage is among the least visible, yet most enduring, consequences of the war. Preliminary estimates of such damage already exceed EUR 130 billion. Approximately one quarter of Ukraine's territory is contaminated with explosive ordnance. More than 900 protected areas, covering approximately 1.2 million hectares, have been affected – representing over 30 per cent of Ukraine's Nature Reserve Fund. Soil and water contamination, ecosystem destruction and biodiversity loss will continue to affect human health, the economy and natural resources for decades to come.

Against this backdrop, a science-based approach is of particular practical value for the accurate documentation of the damage caused by Russia, the identification of long-term risks and the determination of recovery priorities.

Furthermore, the systematic engagement of civil society must constitute an integral part of this work. Civil society organizations should become strategic partners of the OSCE in data collection, monitoring and analysis, as well as in the development, implementation and evaluation of projects. For Ukraine, their expertise is particularly important for documenting crimes and the consequences of the war, preserving evidence and identifying the needs of affected communities.

Mr Chair,

We would also like to draw attention to another challenge that is already unfolding before us. Russia's war against Ukraine is not only contributing to climate change through large-scale emissions, the destruction of ecosystems and damage to energy infrastructure; it is also undermining the capacity of OSCE participating States to adapt to its consequences. This has become particularly evident in recent weeks in transboundary river basins, including the Danube, Rhine and Dniester, where climate-related pressures increasingly intersect with security, infrastructure and governance challenges.

Therefore, the OSCE second dimension and its toolbox remain an important platform for addressing the economic and environmental aftermaths of the Russian aggression and their devastating impact across the entire OSCE region. The relevant discussions on these aspects of Russia's war should continue as we need to strengthen our collective response and enhance resilience of our region to the threats stemming from the ongoing aggression.

In conclusion, we expect the Forum's discussions on science and technology to be translated into practical follow-up through the more active application of advanced technological solutions in OSCE projects, including those supporting Ukraine.

We thank the OSCE for implementing the OSCE extra-budgetary projects in Ukraine and the donor States for their contributions. This contributes to addressing the consequences of Russia's war against Ukraine and strengthening Ukraine's long-term resilience.

Thank you.