

**Speech by Mr. Ruslan KOSHULYNSKYI,
Deputy Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine,
at the Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly**

Baku, 28 June 2014

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Colleagues,

I am honoured to see you all today in Baku and take part in the Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

I would like to thank sincerely the President of the Assembly, Mr. Ranko Krivokapic, for the invitation and to re-affirm that Ukraine highly values its cooperation with the OSCE to establish European standards of democracy and respect for human rights.

At the moment, due to Russia's criminal actions, the human rights situation in Crimea and eastern Ukraine has worsened dramatically.

The Russian occupation of Crimea has led to drastic restrictions on the political, linguistic and cultural rights and freedoms, first of all, for the Crimean Tatars.

Cases of torture, intimidation, abductions and killings have been confirmed by UN and OSCE representatives.

The violation of the freedom of speech, the right to education, to peaceful assembly and to worship has acquired a systemic character. Ukrainian citizens, who do not recognize the occupation regime, have found themselves deprived of their rights and protection.

Many representatives of the Ukrainian government, activists and leaders of the Crimean Tatar people have been denied entry to the territory of the peninsula. The Mejlis leader, Mr. Mustafa Dzhemilev has become a *persona non grata* in his native land.

Speaking one's mind on public issues has become a life-threatening exercise in Crimea. Ukrainian activists, Crimean Tatars and journalists are intimidated and kidnapped. The murder of the Crimean Tatar activist, Reshat Ametov, is not investigated. The fate of Ukrainian activists - Leonid Korzh, Timur Shaymardanov and Seyran Zinedin, – who have disappeared, remains unclear.

The Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People had to address the UN and call for preventing further cases of disappearance.

The most destructive obstacle on the way to stabilize the situation in the east of Ukraine is the position of the Russian Federation, which supports and coordinates the activities of militants, replenishes their human and material resources, as well as weapons, including heavy military equipment.

Russia has ignored our calls to establish effective border controls.

A logical question is - how many more Russian mercenaries and military equipment should get into Ukraine to make us call a spade a spade – there is an undeclared war that Russia is waging against Ukraine.

An important part of that war is anti-Ukrainian information aggression by the Russian mass media. They utterly misrepresent the truth about events in Ukraine. As an example – the recent case of spreading lies about the use of phosphorus bombs in the east of Ukraine, which was supported by footage from the war in Iraq.

The result of this propaganda is terrible - a rapidly growing percentage of Russians are hostile to Ukrainians and support Moscow's aggressive policy towards Ukraine. Doesn't it look like preparing for an use-of-force scenario?

Ukraine is taking all steps to de-escalate the situation.

Ukraine's commitment to restore peace and stability is confirmed by the Peace Plan presented by President of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko, designed to settle the situation in the east.

It has three main components: de-escalation, stabilization and dialogue.

All of Ukraine's main partners have supported the Peace Plan. However, all our efforts will be in vain if Russia continues to play a double game and to export terrorism.

We are ready to support a truce. However, since the implementation of the ceasefire, many cases of its violation by the militants have been recorded. The Ukrainian military have been killed and wounded.

We expect real steps from Russia, not words, to support the Peace Plan.

I hope that this position of Ukraine will find understanding and support from our European partners.

I am pleased to note once again our constructive cooperation with the OSCE, in particular, with regard to resolving the situation in the east of Ukraine.

In March and April 2014, at the invitation of the Government of Ukraine, the Human Rights Assessment Mission worked in our country. As a result of its work, the Mission confirmed the absence of violations of the rights of the Russian-speaking population in Ukraine.

In May this year, the largest ever observation mission for the early presidential elections in Ukraine recognised that the elections had been free and fair.

A particularly important role in resolving the situation in Ukraine is played by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, which was established following a request of the Ukrainian side. The task of the Mission is to assist in reducing tension and promoting peace, stability and security, as well as in monitoring and supporting the fulfilment of OSCE principles and commitments. We believe that such a mission could play an important role in monitoring the implementation of the Peace Plan of the President of Ukraine.

And finally, let us remember that once, in a not-so-distant history, mankind paid an immense price for failing to stop the aggressor on time. Then, as now, a tragedy on a worldwide scale could have been prevented if the principle of solidarity and shared responsibility for European peace and security had timely worked. So today, on the floor of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE, I urge the representatives of the Member States of this reputable European and international institution – let us not repeat past mistakes. They may cost dearly for our European future.

Thank you.