



Statement by the UNIC Co-chairs: Andriy Parubiy (Ukraine) and Raynell Andreychuk (Canada)

Kyiv, 14 June 2016 - This meeting of the Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council has demonstrated once again the Assembly's strong support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and independence as well as the Assembly's condemnation of Russia's violation of international law and its aggressive policy, which seeks to destabilise Ukraine politically and economically.

Following today's programme, we warmly welcome NATO efforts to deepen cooperation with Ukraine, especially in security and defence sector reform, capability development, and capacity building. We support Ukraine's ambition to pass reforms that will make its armed forces compatible with those of NATO member states by 2020, according to its updated military doctrine. We also welcome the fact that the Ukrainian people have an increasingly positive view of the Alliance as Ukraine's strategic partner and increased support for the country's membership in NATO.

We strongly encourage Ukraine to continue successful implementation of the Annual National Programme (ANP) of cooperation with NATO for 2016, which identifies goals, objectives and practical measures to reform the security and defence sector. Successful implementation of this programme will contribute substantially to Ukraine's progress towards Euro-Atlantic integration. We also encourage the Ukrainian parliament to be fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the ANP.

We call on all NATO countries to increase bilateral assistance to Ukraine. The Euro-Atlantic community should demonstrate patience vis-à-vis Ukraine as it implements military, political and economic reforms. However, Ukrainian politicians should do more to accelerate the pace of reforms and, in particular, to eradicate corruption and oligarchic influences.

We regret that the Minsk II agreement has yet to be fully implemented. We call especially on Moscow and its clients in Eastern Ukraine to stop regular violations of the ceasefire, to return to Ukraine full control of the border in Donbass and to support the conduct of local elections in the temporarily occupied territories according to Ukraine's law. We welcome wholeheartedly the release of Nadiya Savchenko from illegal detention in Russia, but we also call on Moscow to release without delay the remaining Ukrainian political and prisoners of war illegally held in Russia.

We support the continuation of international sanctions until Russia convincingly demonstrates that it will abide by international law. This would include steps by Russia to return Crimea and the occupied territories in Donbass to Ukraine's jurisdiction. We condemn in the strongest terms the massive violations of human rights of minorities in the illegally occupied and annexed Crimea, particularly the systematic oppression of Crimean Tatars. The Summit in Warsaw will be an important opportunity for NATO Allies to assess Ukraine's progress with reforms and to confirm their support for a sovereign, independent and stable Ukraine. We accordingly look forward to intensifying our work in the Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council.

The Joint Monitoring Group with Ukraine was created in 1998 and adopted its current name - the Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council - in 2003. This body is a parliamentary counterpart to the NATO-Ukraine Commission and aims to demonstrate parliamentary interest and involvement in cooperation between NATO and Ukraine. Over the years, it has become an active political forum where members of parliament from NATO and Ukraine can discuss any issues of common concern and interest.

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly is the transatlantic interparliamentary organisation bringing together national parliamentarians from the 28 NATO member countries and a range of partner countries. While independent from NATO, the Assembly provides a crucial link between NATO and national parliaments. It facilitates parliamentary awareness and understanding of security issues, enhances the transparency of NATO policies, and promotes the shared values upon which the Alliance is based.

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UNIC brings together ten high-ranking parliamentarians from Ukraine with an equivalent number of their counterparts from NATO member countries. The Council normally meets twice a year: in Brussels and Kyiv.

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