



REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ukraine Reform Conference, 7-8 July 2021

Statement by H.E. Ms. Zaritsa Dinkova, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me extend my Government's sincere gratitude to the Republic of Lithuania and Ukraine for jointly organizing this event.

This year's conference is taking place against the background of extremely challenging circumstances for Ukraine. The negative effect of the continuing hostilities in the eastern parts of the country and of the global coronavirus crisis has been exacerbated by the massive build-up of Russian armed forces in and around Ukraine and active and targeted disinformation campaign. The situation in eastern Ukraine and on the illegally annexed Crimean peninsula today remains among the most pressing security challenges on the European continent.

However, despite the continuing threats to Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity and well-being of its citizens, Ukraine's President and Government have demonstrated strong commitment and determination in sustaining the reform momentum. We share the understanding that further strengthening of the impartiality and the independence of the judicial system is key to the overall success of the reform process and we commend, in this respect, the will and efforts undertaken by the Ukrainian political leadership to uproot corruption. The impressive set of policies launched in the past year have also contributed to the overall progress and improvement in the implementation of the Association Agreement with the European Union.

We support our Ukrainian partners in their determination to deepen the political association and economic integration with the EU and their efforts to build on the results achieved so far with a view to thoroughly transforming Ukraine's political, administrative and economic life. At the heart of this transformation lie measures that systematically foster good governance, rule of law and economic growth. In this context, we welcome the newly adopted National Economic Strategy 2030, its ambitious goals and comprehensive, long-term nature.

I would like to seize this opportunity to underline that the Republic of Bulgaria will continue to support Ukraine's reform agenda bilaterally and within the EU and NATO, as well as in the framework of relevant international fora. Bulgaria will remain among the firm supporters of Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic

choice and aspirations, based on the common values and principles of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights. We welcome the recent setting-up of the Association Trio by Ukraine, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova and its purpose to facilitate and strengthen the cooperation with the EU.

Let me share my hope that in the coming year the Ukrainian authorities will keep up the reform momentum and accelerate the delivery of tangible results in all priority areas. We are convinced that further reform efforts are critical not only for the advancement of Ukraine's cooperation with the EU, NATO and key international organizations such as the IMF, but above all for meeting the expectations of the Ukrainian citizens for a better future; for a stable, secure and prosperous Ukraine, which they fully deserve.

Finally yet importantly, let me reiterate Bulgaria's unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. We welcome and support the diplomatic efforts aimed at addressing the challenges Ukraine is facing in this regard and look forward to participating in next month's Summit of the International Crimean Platform.

Thank you.