



**Statement of the OSCE Parallel Civil Society Conference  
on the occasion of the upcoming Normandie summit**

**Bratislava, 4 December 2019**

On December 9, 2019 the Normandie Summit will be held in Paris with the aim to negotiate a permanent ceasefire in eastern Ukraine and to define a framework for a political solution to the conflict.

Since 2014, all fundamental OSCE principles have been violated by the Russian Federation in eastern Ukraine, starting with the inviolability of borders and the territorial integrity of States. The armed conflict in this region has led to over 13,000 deaths.

Fundamental rights and freedoms are systematically violated in the non-government-controlled areas of eastern Ukraine. Over a hundred people are held today in places of illegal detention.

We welcome the efforts by the OSCE in the process of conflict management in eastern Ukraine through the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission and the continuous work of the Trilateral Contact Group.

We express our hope that diplomatic efforts at the upcoming Normandie summit will help to ensure that ceasefire is fully respected and that humanitarian and human rights organisations have access to non-governmental controlled areas.

We demand that key OSCE principles are not abandoned or compromised by the participants of the Normandie format in the political process of conflict resolution. A sustainable solution of the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine requires that visible efforts by the Russian government are taken now, including withdrawal of military forces and special services from the territories, currently not controlled by the government of Ukraine.

We call upon all stakeholders in Ukraine and OSCE to support comprehensive reintegration of these territories and citizens and to use all available means in the humanitarian, legal, economic, educational, cultural and other spheres.

Meaningful local elections on the non-government-controlled territory can be held only when security is provided, when the legacies of five years of absent rule of law and free media on this territory are overcome and after Ukraine re-establishes its control over the Russian-Ukrainian border. Only when fundamental human rights which are not currently in force in the occupied territory - freedom of thought, freedom of expression, freedom of association, the right to be elected and elect, freedom of conscience and religion, access to justice - will be guaranteed, the international missions will be able to ensure a transparent and democratic process that can be called an election.

The existence of a number of non-governmental-controlled areas in the OSCE region as well as the annexed Crimea shows that the emergence of new "grey areas" where fundamental OSCE principles are violated over a long period has extremely negative impact on the protection of the rights of people living in these areas.

Therefore, we call upon all OSCE participating States, institutions and political bodies to renew their efforts to end armed conflicts in the OSCE region, build sustainable peace in conflict-affected areas and ensure the territorial integrity of all participating States. Attention should be focused now on eastern Ukraine as the most urgent situation which still has chances of not turning into a "frozen conflict" with no control of the government of the territory for decades. We also call upon OSCE participating states, institutions and political bodies to more energetically support Ukraine's efforts of democratic and rule-of-law reforms.