

Statement by Ukraine

Dear Chair,

Distinguished delegates,

- Thank you for giving me the floor now, as what I would like to highlight is related to each of the agenda items of this meeting and many other international fora in the field of environmental protection.
- Throughout more than two years of large-scale Russia's war and 10 years of Russian aggression our country has been faced with the toxic legacy of war, among which there are war-related water, air, land pollution and degradation of ecosystems. The war damaged almost a third of Ukrainian forests, we became the most mined country in the world, the destruction of water bodies led to a significant reduction in water reserves.
- Russia's invasion of Ukraine resulted, among other things, in almost 3,600 cases of environmental damage that have already been recorded.
- One of the most terrible cases is the breach of the Kakhovka dam, a far-reaching environmental disaster that goes beyond Ukraine's borders; according to the UNEP report, the magnitude of which might not be clear for years or even decades to come.
- Ukraine highly appreciates the efforts made during the Ramsar Convention COP14 resulted in the Resolution XIV.20, recognizing the devastating impact of the Russian Federation's aggression on the environment in Ukraine, including the disruption of the ecological status of 16 Ramsar Sites and potential damage to another 15 Ramsar Sites. We also welcome the efforts made by the Secretariats of the Ramsar Convention and UNECE in assessing ecosystem damage in Ukraine. We call upon the UNECE Secretariat to contribute within its mandate to the efforts for the comprehensive assessment of the environmental damage on the ground.
- We also welcome the efforts of the High Level Working Group on the Environmental Consequences of the War on Ukraine, comprising of the Ukrainian officials and international experts, giving life to the Environmental Compact for Ukraine on Ensuring Accountability and Green Reconstruction Following the Destruction of Russia's War on Ukraine. This document includes profound recommendations to the Government of Ukraine and international community on how to address this challenge and may serve as a turning point that environmental

damage in war was fully recognized, understood, and appropriately addressed.

- Ukraine is also working on the Environmental Declaration - a fundamental document aimed at creating truly effective mechanisms for the protection and restoration of the environment from the impact of wars or other conflicts, regardless of the continent – and, dear colleagues, we welcome your support of this initiative.
- Such of our common achievements show the ability of the international instruments to respond to the emergency situations. The damage assessment should be followed by the restoration measures.
- We call upon all distinguished delegations present at this assembly to unite in actions toward assessing the consequences of Russia's war for the environment of the region and restoring a safe environment for all. As a step toward this goal, your engagement in implementing Ukraine's Peace Formula is crucial.
- We would like once again express our appreciation of the support and cooperation shown by many of the parties in facing these challenges.

Thank you.