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GENEVA: OLDEST CAPITAL OF MULTILATERALISM WHERE UKRAINE'S INTERESTS ARE DEFENDED

While the world of high fashion pivots on the Paris–London–Milan–New York axis, with New York recently recognised as the leading capital in this list of four, in the world of high diplomacy there is another undeniable axis of New York–Geneva–Vienna, with each of these cities rightfully occupying its unique niche in the global system of multilateral relations.

As for Geneva, former Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva Michael Moeller once noted that ‘diplomacy has been hard-wired in the DNA of the city since at least 1863, when Henri Dunant created the Committee of the Red Cross.’ (The Committee is still successfully functioning, and Ukrainian diplomats in Geneva are actively cooperating with it).

The history of Geneva is closely linked to the emergence of multilateralism, whose 100th anniversary was widely celebrated last year all over the world. It was a century ago that the League of Nations, the predecessor of the modern UN, was founded in Geneva. The reputation of this international organisation was somewhat tarnished in Soviet history and diplomacy textbooks, not least because more than 80 years ago the League expelled the Soviet Union from its ranks for waging war against Finland, and later the USSR did its utmost to destroy any positive memory of the League (and we know from our own experience how good Kremlin historians are at doing this). In my opinion, it is for this bold move of 1939 alone that the League of Nations should be especially respected by its descendants, and its principled stance should be a model for contemporary international organisations.

Geneva is now known not only for the League of Nations and the United Nations Office. Peace, disarmament, health, labour protection, human rights, humanitarian action, emergency response, intellectual property protection, trade, sustainable development, science, high technology, research, and education – this is a far from complete list of issues addressed by international organisations headquartered in Geneva.

All Geneva-based organisations and specialised agencies make up a unique community that is often referred to in expert circles as the Geneva ecosystem. Mutually reinforcing each other, its elements work together with the private sec-

tor and civil society to make practical recommendations and take concrete steps to improve the social and economic situation in the world, reduce poverty and inequality, and find answers to global challenges and threats facing humanity.

One of the main goals of the Geneva ecosystem at the moment is to assist countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving its 17 goals (Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs). The key driving force in this process is the SDG Lab, a special institution established at the United Nations Office at Geneva in 2017 to promote the practical implementation of the SDGs by member states, international organisations, and other actors both inside and outside Geneva. This platform provides an opportunity for countries, academia, and civil society to share ideas, information, experiences, and discuss challenges in the implementation of the SDGs as well as their possible solutions.

A relatively small team of the Permanent Mission of Ukraine in Geneva (18 diplomats including the Permanent Representative) manages to engage with all these organisations, attend numerous meetings, devise a position on documents to be adopted, coordinate it with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine (and if it concerns not only external relations, with a range of other national executive authorities concerned), defend the Ukrainian position during meetings, consultations, negotiations, and ensure that Ukraine's interests are reflected in resolutions, decisions, statements, and other documents adopted by all of these international institutions. Within the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO) alone, there are 44 working bodies (committees, special sessions, groups) and a large number of informal working groups that carry out day-to-day painstaking work to facilitate trade by updating its current rules as well as overcome various barriers and restrictions in the field and keep abreast with progress.

The WTO is the only international organisation dealing with global rules of trade. Its main task to liberalize, stabilize and regulate international trade is achieved by providing a forum for monitoring the implementation of commitments made by member states and negotiations of new rules and multilateral agreements. The fundamental principles of the WTO trading system are non-discrimination, reduction of trade barriers, transparency and predictability, promotion of fair competition, and economic development. WTO rules help to reduce corruption and carry out necessary reforms.

The Ministerial Conference, which meets at least biennially, is the topmost decision-making body of the WTO, and the General Council (composed of permanent representatives of states and heads of delegations in Geneva) is responsible for decision-making in the period between ministerial conferences and overseeing trade policy and dispute settlement. Additionally, WTO's organisational structure provides for three councils: 1) Council for Trade in Goods; 2) Council for Trade in Services; 3) Council for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. Members of more than 40 committees, subcommittees,



Невелика, але витривала команда ППУ в Женеві

A small but hardy team of the Permanent Mission in Geneva

and working groups accountable to these councils, monitor the implementation of the commitments contained in 17 WTO multilateral trade agreements in various fields (including sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical regulation, import licensing, trade defence and trade facilitation instruments).

Ukraine's accession to the WTO in 2008 marked a milestone in the process of integrating the national economy into the comprehensive global trading system. Adhering to hard-and-fast rules of the game on the world market and following them in relations with other 163 WTO members, which account for more than 98 percent of world trade, is an important systemic factor in ensuring further development of the national economy.

I remember how the mass media constantly asked quite a fair question when covering the preparation for Ukraine's accession to the WTO since the 1990s: what good would it do for Ukraine and the Ukrainian business community? Today, based on more than 12 years of experience as a member of the organisation, I can confirm that:

- accession to the WTO has made it possible to start negotiations on free trade agreements with the major current and prospective trade partners of our state, including the EU, the European Free Trade Association (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), Montenegro, Canada, Israel;

– WTO membership has provided domestic exporters with predictable and favourable non-discriminatory treatment in member countries' markets as well as an ability to resolve current trade issues and disputes in bilateral and multi-lateral formats;

– as part of the negotiation process on Ukraine's accession to the WTO, our state was granted market economy status by the EU and the US, an important positive factor in anti-dumping investigations against Ukrainian exporters.

Ukraine's share of exports in the GDP is about 50 percent, therefore making it essential to be directly involved in the ongoing multilateral trade talks and negotiations on the accession of new members to the WTO in order to fulfil our national interests in the trade and economic spheres. Joining the WTO information system and taking advantage of the early information sharing has given Ukrainian enterprises access to data on changes in trade regimes of WTO members and an opportunity to initiate negotiations to improve the conditions of trade.

The professional development of the cooperation between Ukraine and the WTO is overseen by the Permanent Mission in Geneva in coordination with the Ministry of Economy and other Ukrainian authorities. The Permanent Mission ensures our country's participation in multilateral trade negotiations within the WTO and does effective work aimed at reaping the benefits of Ukraine's membership in the organisation in order to expand export opportunities of domestic producers and protect national trade and economic interests in foreign markets.

In the negotiation process, Ukraine is actively involved in the settlement of topical issues facing the WTO and the multilateral trade system as a whole. Thus, in regard to the formation of comprehensive rules regarding e-commerce, domestic regulation of services, limitation of certain types of fishery subsidies, and reform of agricultural trade rules, Ukraine defends its position, makes relevant proposals on key negotiation documents, and co-sponsors many of them. With a view to strengthening the national negotiating position in agriculture, in January 2020 our state joined the Cairns Group as an observer. The Group is a coalition of leading agricultural exporting countries accounting for over 25 percent of world exports that support the policy of further liberalisation of trade rules in this area.

This year, Ukraine has also co-sponsored the Multi-Party Interim Appeal Arbitration Arrangement that has once again underscored Ukraine's continued support for the WTO at the time of systemic problems faced by the organisation, in particular due to the deadlock at the WTO Appellate Body.

The WTO, as a global platform, also gives us an opportunity to draw the attention of the international community to Russia's breaches of and non-compliance with its international obligations as a WTO member state; to exert pressure on Russia to bring its legislation in line with WTO rules and agreements, and to eliminate unjustified restrictions, prohibitions and discriminatory measures against Ukrainian goods, services and producers. In this regard, one of Ukraine's

recent significant achievements within the WTO framework was winning an appeal in the case against Russia with regard to its blocking of Ukrainian railway equipment imports. In addition, in another case against Russia, Ukraine defended its right to use the price adjustment procedure with respect to Russian gas when calculating anti-dumping measures. This will allow our country to effectively protect domestic producers in future by applying market-conscious and fair duties on imported products manufactured with the use of Russian gas.

In June 2020, Ukraine signed the Protocol of Accession to the Agreement Establishing the Advisory Centre on WTO Law (ACWL). Membership in the ACWL will provide Ukraine with an opportunity to receive highly professional legal services, result in budgetary savings, and strengthen human and institutional capacity of Ukraine to protect our national interests within the WTO.

A vast majority of the day-to-day work of this organisation aiming at facilitating unimpeded trade does not hit the headlines. However, at the time of current global instability, we can see the key role of international trade in ensuring employment and economic growth as well as addressing issues related to food security and access to essential goods and services.

Another important institution influencing world economic processes is also located in Geneva. The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was founded in 1964 and has the status of a permanent intergovernmental body of the UN General Assembly dealing with trade, investment, and development issues. As of today, 195 states are UNCTAD members. Its decisions are issued in the form of resolutions and are of an advisory nature.

The Conference is the focal point within the UN system for the integrated management of trade and development as well as interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development. UNCTAD focuses on the implementation of the SDGs through the expansion of trade relations, introduction of a comprehensive e-commerce system, development of investment opportunities, etc. Among key pillar of UNCTAD's work there is the provision of technical assistance to the least developed countries (LDCs) with a view to enhancing their trade capacity.

The UNCTAD Secretariat regularly publishes its own research, particularly on competition, consumer protection, digitalisation as well as investment trends, and assists in design and implementation of a system of measures aimed to attract investment and new technologies into the economy.

The highest decision-making body of UNCTAD is the Quadrennial Conference at which member states assess the results for the reporting period, exchange views on current trade and development issues, and set priorities for the next four years. In the intervals between regular meetings of the Conference, the Trade and Development Board performs its functions and monitors the implementation of identified priorities.

Ukraine has been a member of UNCTAD since its establishment. The main activities of Ukraine within the framework of the Conference are to represent the interests and position of our state at the meetings of UNCTAD working bodies, to implement joint projects in Ukraine and to facilitate the participation of Ukrainian experts in meetings and training courses.

For example, in the process of the implementation of the Government of Ukraine – United Nations Partnership Framework for 2012–2016, UNCTAD was one of the 20 UN agencies that provided assistance to our government in such areas as good governance, social and economic policy, and sustainable development.

In the light of these efforts, special mention should be made of the International Trade Centre (ITC), a Geneva-based joint cooperation agency of UNCTAD and the WTO that focuses on supporting the least developed and developing countries in export promotion through technical assistance at the national institutional and business levels. In order to strengthen Ukraine's export potential and related institutional capacity, the Permanent Mission is working to involve the ITC in the implementation of technical assistance projects in our state. Thus, with the assistance of the Mission, a number of ITC projects have been implemented in Ukraine in recent years, including:

- supporting the development of Ukraine's export strategy as well as nine sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies;
- facilitating the entry of small and medium-sized horticultural enterprises into foreign markets and their inclusion into global value chains;
- integrating Ukrainian berry growers into European and global value chains under the joint project of the ITC and the EU entitled *Eastern Partnership: Ready to Trade – an EU4Business initiative*.

Within the Geneva ecosystem, Ukraine pays specific attention to its membership in a regional institution co-founded by our state – the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). Established in 1947, the UNECE is one of the five regional economic commissions of the UN. The Commission is composed of 56 member states, including European and Central Asian countries, the US, Canada, and Israel. The UNECE is one of the most active Geneva institutions, with more than 120 sessions of its working bodies (committees, working groups, expert meetings, etc.) held annually. Representatives of Ukraine are members of several governing bodies of the UNECE committees, including Committees on Inland Transport and Sustainable Energy. Ukrainian diplomats were also elected vice chairpersons for the UNECE for 2002–2003, 2006–2007, 2007–2009.

A notable area of the Commission's intersectional work is providing assistance to countries in transition. According to the United Nations, Ukraine belongs to this category. Activities in this important domain are carried out in the form

of seminars, training and working meetings on topical issues of transition to a market economy, preparation of studies and guidance materials, provision of advisory services on the adaptation of industries to market conditions, implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achievement of the SDGs. The Secretariat of the Commission has prepared a number of research and guidance materials on legal aspects of privatisation in industry, attraction of foreign investments, development of small and medium enterprises, trade expansion, and so on, which have been useful for Ukrainian ministries and agencies. ECE experts assist in the assessment of draft national legislation on transport and energy.

The Permanent Mission ensures Ukraine's participation in the work of the UNECE in cooperation with a number of relevant ministries, agencies, and organisations. This allows their representatives not only to receive up-to-date information about the economic, industrial, transport, and environmental policies of UNECE member states or share experiences with them but also be directly involved in the development of common European norms, relevant standards, and other international legal instruments.

The Russian Federation, which is also a member of the UNECE, is doing its utmost to legitimise the occupation of Crimea, in particular by providing statistical information that includes data from the temporary occupied peninsula. In this regard, the Mission exerts a focused effort to monitor the information disseminated by the Russian Federation and remove, if necessary, its misleading statistical data, including from the UNECE web page. In particular, the statistical publication *UNECE Countries in Figures 2019* prepared by the UNECE Secretariat and presented during the 68th session of the Commission in April 2019 for the first time did not contain any statistical data on the Russian Federation. All Russia-related statistics for 2014–2019 have been removed from the UNECE's online resources as well.

The 8th sustainable development goal, in addition to promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth, provides for full and productive employment and decent work for all. In this regard, an important role is played by an organisation founded as early as 1919, almost a century before the adoption of the SDGs – the International Labour Organisation (ILO). In 1946, it became the first specialised agency of the United Nations. The ILO develops international labour norms in the form of conventions and recommendations setting minimum standards for the fundamental labour rights to freedom of association, organisation, collective bargaining, prohibition of forced labour, gender equality, etc. The ILO's main strategic objectives are to realise the fundamental principles and rights at work, create greater opportunities for women and men in order to secure adequate employment and decent wages, improve social protection for all segments of the population, and strengthen tripartism and social dialogue.



Постійний представник України Ю.А. Клименко головує на Конференції з роззброєння

Permanent Representative of Ukraine Yurii Klymenko acting as President of the Conference on Disarmament

Throughout its history, the ILO has adopted 189 conventions and 202 recommendations. The Organisation spends annually about \$130 million on the implementation of selected technical assistance projects in member countries. Today, the ILO carries out over 1,000 technical cooperation programmes in more than 80 countries, including Ukraine. The priority areas of ILO-Ukraine cooperation are reforming labour legislation, adjusting labour relations and settling disputes, strengthening the capacity of employers' associations and trade unions to conclude collective agreements as well as the implementation of the Decent Work Agenda at the national level, which includes such priorities as increasing employment rates and social protection, ensuring gender equality and non-discrimination at work, establishing effective social dialogue, improving working conditions, introducing international labour standards and developing sustainable enterprises for stability and growth.

Peace and security are the guarantees of stability, growth, and decent working conditions.

Even though Geneva is not home to the world's principal body charged with this mission (i.e. the UN Security Council), without the contribution of the international organisations located here, the efforts of the Security Council would be significantly diminished.

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) plays a leading role here. It is a unique international community's standing body for negotiating multilateral arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation agreements in a consensual manner. The CD in its current format was founded in 1978 under the provisions of the Final Document of the First Special Session on Disarmament of the United Nations General Assembly.

Ironically, for more than twenty years now, the CD has been unable to begin its substantive work because of a lack of consensus on the content of its annual Programme of Work, which stems from divergent views of member states on the priorities of this forum. Nevertheless, the CD plays an important communicative and preventive role and is duly utilised by Ukraine, in particular, for the regular dissemination of information on Russia's unlawful actions against our state (a gross violation of the provisions of the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances in connection with Ukraine's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the militarisation of Crimea, the ongoing aggression in Southeastern Ukraine, etc.), which pose a direct threat both to our country and to international peace and security as well as for the mobilisation of international support to counter the aggressor. An important milestone in the history of Ukraine's membership was its presidency of the 2019 Conference, which strengthened the international image of our state as an active and influential participant in arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation processes.

Other important Geneva security fora include meetings of experts and member states of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (the Ottawa Treaty). They are the principal international platforms for combating explosive remnants of war and discussing topical issues of explosive ordnance disposal, ensuring effective efforts to assist victims of these weapons, and preventing the use of inhumane weapons such as improvised explosive devices. The proper participation of Ukraine in the work of the aforementioned international fora makes it possible to regularly promote our national interests in the fight against weapons prohibited by the conventions and draw the attention of the international community to subversive actions of the Russian Federation and Russia-backed illegal armed groups directed against Ukraine.

Another important arms control platform in Geneva are meetings of experts and member states of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BTWC). This document plays an important role in the non-proliferation of biological weapons of mass destruction, ensuring

the peaceful use of biology amidst the rapid development of biological sciences as well as the coordination of the international effort to combat modern biothreats and spread knowledge in the field of biosafety, biosecurity, and bioethics. By participating in international activities within the BTWC, Ukraine has an opportunity, among other things, to promote its own national interests in the field of non-proliferation of biological weapons as well as draw a proper attention of the international community to the significant weakening of our country's biosafety and biosecurity as a result of the Russian aggression and subversive actions of the illegal armed groups it supports. It has been manifested, inter alia, in the loss of control over the Ukrainian anti-plague station of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, Donetsk and Luhansk regional sanitary and epidemiological stations, and the State Regional Laboratory of Veterinary Medicine in Luhansk.

Geneva hosts several leading centres in the field of arms control and international security, including:

- The Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) is an international fund established in 1995 at the initiative of the Swiss Confederation's Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection, and Sports within the framework of NATO's Partnership for Peace programme. Its core activity is to train qualified personnel in the field of international security and introduce best practices for the exchange of experience and knowledge on a wide range of military and political issues. Since 1999, the GCSP has enjoyed the status of a Partnership for Peace training programme. Its Foundation Council consists of representatives of 45 member states overseeing the centre's work, including Ukraine. The GCSP's training courses, in which more than 1200 experts (including from Ukraine) take part every year, are designed to improve the training of specialists involved in solving a wide range of problems of international security policy. GCSP's parallel tasks are to initiate an international dialogue on security issues and develop a network of partner research projects in the field of international security.

- The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) was established in 1998 to facilitate the clearance of mines, cluster munitions, and explosive remnants of war. The GICHD actively supports national governments, including the Ukrainian (which is especially important as part of countering the Russian mine threat), international organisations, and civil society in the fight against explosives, and develops appropriate recommendations and standards for their clearance.

- The Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) was established in 2000 by the Government of the Swiss Confederation. It is working on the development, dissemination and implementation of security sector standards based on best practices from leading countries and rule of law principles to ensure the preconditions for sustainable peace in the world. The DCAF

actively supports Ukraine's security sector reform and the development of Ukraine-NATO cooperation. When visiting Ukraine in March 2020, DCAF Director Thomas Guerber inaugurated the Centre's office in Kyiv. Over the next few years, the Centre, with the support of the Government of Canada, will primarily assist our state in reforming the National Police of Ukraine.

Destruction of weapons, control of their proliferation and usage are closely linked to the protection of victims of armed conflicts. This issue is addressed by the oldest international organisation in Geneva, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC, est. 1863). According to its Statutes, the ICRC is a neutral, impartial, and independent humanitarian organisation, whose mission is to protect the victims of armed conflicts and provide them with humanitarian assistance. The Committee was at the origin of the Red Cross Movement, whose main task is to observe the belligerents' compliance with the provisions of the 1949 Geneva Conventions for the protection of victims of armed conflict and their Additional Protocols and disseminate knowledge of international humanitarian law (IHL). During armed conflicts, the ICRC provides protection and assistance to victims, both military and civilian, including prisoners of war, civilian internees, the war-wounded, etc.

The Committee's activities in our country intensified in December 2013, when the ICRC allocated funds to the Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS) to purchase first aid medical kits for URCS volunteers who were involved in providing assistance to those injured in street clashes during the Revolution of Dignity in 2013–2014.

Since the beginning of the Russian aggression against Ukraine in 2014, the Red Cross has been regularly providing humanitarian aid to civilians on both sides of the contact line. During 2014–2019, more than 3 million citizens of Ukraine received assistance from the ICRC (food, non-food, financial, psychological, etc.). During April–December 2014, the ICRC raised \$12 million for humanitarian activities in Ukraine. In 2019, this figure increased to \$69.5 million. This year, the International Committee plans to mobilize \$73.5 million. Today, by the Committee's own definition, the ICRC's mission in Ukraine is one of its ten largest and highest-priority operations in the world.

Every month the ICRC delivers 50–100 tons of humanitarian aid to the Ukrainian territories most affected by the Russian aggression. In particular, the Committee regularly provides residents of Donetsk and Luhansk regions with medicines, food, drinking water, personal hygiene items, psychological assistance, and construction materials. In addition, the ICRC regularly monitors and facilitates the operation of hospitals in certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, audits and repairs damaged water and gas supply systems in those areas, trains teachers and the local population on mine and pyrotechnic safety, and disseminates information on international humanitarian law.

Moreover, the Committee has three times already played a prominent role as a neutral intermediary between Ukraine and Russia in the release and transfer of detainees (on 27 December 2017, 7 September and 29 December 2019). The ICRC's active participation in these processes, in close cooperation and coordination with the relevant executive authorities of Ukraine, has contributed to their effectiveness.

Ukraine's short- and medium-term priorities in the cooperation with the ICRC are:

- engaging the Committee's capacities to improve the humanitarian situation in eastern regions of Ukraine;
- working with the ICRC to prevent the legitimisation of the arbitrary crossing of the Ukrainian state border by the so-called 'humanitarian convoys' from the Russian Federation;
- coordinating efforts to facilitate the release of Ukrainian citizens illegally detained in the Russian Federation and in the Ukrainian territories occupied by it;
- intensifying the Committee's interaction with the URCS in establishing a missing persons service;
- disseminating information on international humanitarian law;
- obtain the support of the ICRC in the destruction of mines and unexploded ordnance for the protection of civilians.

Another international body where the Russian aggression against Ukraine remains high on the agenda is the UN Human Rights Council (HRC).

Established in 2006 on the basis of the UN Commission on Human Rights that had operated since 1946, the Council is a subsidiary body of the UN General Assembly responsible for promoting and protecting human rights in the world, addressing situations involving human rights violations, and preparing relevant recommendations for the General Assembly. The HRC holds regular sessions three times a year in Geneva. The Council consists of 47 UN member states elected by the UN General Assembly for a three-year term. Ukraine is a member of the HRC for the period 2018–2020 (previously, in 2006–2011, was elected for two consecutive terms), and on 13 October 2020 was re-elected for the next term (2021–2023) with overwhelming support by the UN member states.

The HRC has a number of mechanisms at its disposal, to wit: the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), during which every state reports on its compliance with international human rights obligations (last time Ukraine successfully underwent the UPR in November 2017); the Advisory Committee, which provides the Council with expertise and advice on thematic issues; the Complaint Procedure, which allows individuals and organisations to bring human rights violations by individual states to the attention of the Council; thematic and country Special Procedures; a number of expert mechanisms and fora (in particular, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, minority, social, busi-

ness and human rights, human rights, democracy, and rule of law fora) as well as open-ended intergovernmental working groups that draft new international human rights instruments and make recommendations for a more effective implementation of existing instruments (there are currently nine such groups).

Since the beginning of the Russian aggression against Ukraine and the occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea by the Russian Federation, the Ukrainian delegation has implemented a number of initiatives in the Human Rights Council aimed at condemning Russia's violations of human rights in Ukrainian territories by the international community and increasing pressure on Russia to release illegally imprisoned Ukrainians on trumped-up charges in the Russian Federation and the territories temporarily occupied by it, etc. In accordance with the resolutions 29/23, 32/29, 35/31 and 41/25, entitled *Cooperation with and assistance to Ukraine in the field of human rights*, initiated by Ukraine and adopted by the Council, interactive dialogues to discuss reports on the human rights situation in Ukraine submitted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights have been held since 2015 as part of Council sessions and during the intersessional period in December.

The results of those dialogues (of which there were 19), in which from 30 to 40 states, international and non-governmental organisations take part, testify to the unanimity of the world community in condemning the Russian aggression against Ukraine and Russia's violations of human rights in the Ukrainian territories occupied by it. Thus, Russia's isolation in the main UN human rights body is continuing. Not a single state, including Russia's traditional satellites, has openly supported it.

Within the framework of the Human Rights Council, Ukraine systematically holds side events on the human rights situation in Crimea and Ukrainian hostages of the Kremlin. It has already become traditional to organize a ministerial-level side event on Crimea during annual high-level segments as part of March sessions, which are attended by senior officials of HRC member states and observers. At the latest event of this kind, which took place on 24 February 2020, the panelists were the foreign ministers of Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland as well as the former political hostages of the Kremlin, V. Balukh and E. Bekirov.

During the event, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine highlighted a vital necessity to establish an international platform to discuss the Crimean issue. By common consent of the delegations of partner countries, the ministerial side events within the High Level Segment of the Human Rights Council are to be held until the complete de-occupation of Ukrainian Crimea.

In the Council, as in other Geneva-based international fora, Russia uses all means to legitimise its seizure of Crimea and lift the sanctions imposed on it in this regard by a number of countries and international organisations. However, these attempts are always met with strong resistance from the Ukrainian delega-

tion and partner states. One recent example is Russia's attempt to take advantage of the situation with the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the meeting of the resumed 43rd session of the HRC, which was held in a 'hybrid' format (some delegations were present in the hall, others presented their speeches in the format of pre-recorded video messages), the Russian delegation demonstrated a video of the speech of an unidentified person who spoke on behalf of the 'people of Crimea'. The speaker later turned out to be a representative of the Russian occupation authorities – G. Muradov, 'deputy chairman of the council of ministers of Crimea, permanent representative of the Republic of Crimea to the president of Russia'. The Ukrainian delegation had to react immediately: from making a strong point of order to sending the appropriate notes verbales to the HRC Secretariat. Thanks to the actions of the Ukrainian delegation, supported by the EU, after the aforementioned Russian provocation, the OHCHR and HRC Secretariat established a chain of fairly reliable safeguards, including a multi-stage verification of the identity of each speaker announced by a delegation to participate in the Council's meetings in virtual format. This allowed to avoid the repetition of such insidious steps by the Russian Federation during the next sessions.

Sure enough, our work in the HRC is not limited to the confrontation with Russia, although it now takes up the lion's share of time and effort. As a responsible member of the Council, Ukraine contributes to strengthening the effectiveness of the work of this principal human rights body and preventing human rights violations in the world, therefore successfully initiating in the Council, with a significant number of co-sponsoring states, the resolution *The role of prevention in the promotion and protection of human rights*. The main objective of this Ukrainian initiative is to attract significant potential of prevention strategies to ensure respect for human rights and prevent their gross violations in the future as well as focus the attention of the international community on the very concept of prevention and the need to further develop and establish comprehensive preventive mechanisms at the national, regional, and international levels.

As regards human rights, our state works closely with another Geneva-based institution, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Its main task is to monitor the human rights situation in the world, provide technical assistance to countries and coordinate the activities of the OHCHR missions on the ground. Its priorities include: strengthening international human rights mechanisms; promoting equality and overcoming discrimination; combating impunity and strengthening the rule of law; integrating human rights into development and economy; early warning and protecting human rights in situations of conflict, violence, and insecurity.

The OHCHR serves as a secretariat for the treaty bodies instituted by relevant international human rights instruments and the HRC. It provides support to the HRC Special Procedures, fora, working groups, and expert mechanisms within

the Council, as well as to human rights teams within UN peace missions. It also deploys human rights advisers to work with the United Nations country teams. The OHCHR is currently present in 84 countries, including Ukraine. Twelve human rights sections are incorporated into UN peacekeeping missions, and another 37 human rights advisers work in the UN country offices.

The Office is led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (position was established in December 1993 by a decision of the UNGA), who is the principal UN official responsible for human rights activities around the world. The High Commissioner is appointed by the UN Secretary-General and approved by the UN General Assembly for a fixed term of four years. This post is currently held by former Chilean President Michelle Bachelet.

Ukrainian diplomacy actively involves the OHCHR in solving problems related to the Russian-Ukrainian war. In March 2014, at the request of the Ukrainian Government, the UN Secretary-General established the Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU) to track the human rights situation in Ukraine, with a special focus on the situation in Eastern Ukraine and Crimea. Since its launch in March 2014, the HRMMU has been preparing regular reports on the human rights situation in Ukraine, which form the basis for the aforementioned interactive dialogues within the HRC. As of October 2020, 30 regular and 5 thematic reports have already been prepared. The HRMMU also prepares UN Secretary-General's reports on the human rights situation in the occupied Crimea pursuant to the relevant UNGA resolutions.

The Monitoring Mission has offices in Kyiv and several cities in Ukraine. The HRMMU monitors the situation in Crimea from its offices in Kyiv and Odesa, as the occupation authorities do not agree to grant access to the peninsula to the HRMMU, which is guided in its work by UNGA resolution 68/262 *Territorial Integrity of Ukraine*. Under other circumstances, the Russians would have already invited the Monitoring Mission to Crimea and organised a demonstration of 'Potemkin villages'. However, the invaders can only disseminate fairy tales about 'happy Crimeans' under the Russian occupation. Unfortunately, the UN has not yet developed a strong immunity to the Russian narrative.

In addition to monitoring, the HRMMU also provides Ukraine with technical assistance. The Mission has contributed to the development of the National Human Rights Strategy and the Action Plan for its implementation. It co-organises trainings on human rights and cooperates with government agencies, human rights institutions, and civil society organisations.

Another essential element of the UN Human Rights Council's monitoring activities is its system of Special Procedures (with special rapporteurs, independent experts, and working groups as its executors), which is one of the main UN human rights monitoring mechanisms. This system covers all rights, including civil, cultural, economic, political, and social. The Council's Special

Procedures mandate holders are independent experts on a wide range of human rights issues, and their mandates, in accordance with their area of responsibility (either thematic or country-specific) enable them to offer advice to UN member states on certain issues. With the organisational and technical support from the OHCHR, Special Procedures mandate holders undertake country visits; in individual cases of alleged violations and concerns of a broader, structural nature, they send communications and inquiries to states; conduct thematic studies and expert consultations. Their mission is also to assist states in the development of international human rights standards, engage in information campaigns, raise public awareness, and provide advice on technical cooperation. To date, the Council oversees 44 thematic and 12 country-specific mandates.

As part of fulfilment of Ukraine's voluntary commitments as a member of the UN Human Rights Council, in particular as regards a standing invitation to all HRC's Special Procedures, more than ten mandate holders have visited our country since 2006, including the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, and Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the Independent Expert on Protection against Violence and Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. Dates for visits of other special rapporteurs to Ukraine are being agreed upon and will take place following the lifting of restrictions imposed due to the epidemiological situation.

Ensuring human rights, especially in the midst of hostilities, as is the case of Donbas, is closely linked to meeting the humanitarian needs of affected populations. Geneva is rightfully considered an international centre for the coordination of humanitarian activities. The city is home to the headquarters of major United Nations humanitarian agencies, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs – Geneva (OCHA). There are also offices and representations of a significant number of international non-governmental organisations whose activities are related to this area. The city hosts numerous events every year that bring together people from all over the world.

The global humanitarian situation has deteriorated significantly in recent years due to various crises, the root causes of which are predominantly conflicts and violence, climate change and natural disasters, depletion of natural resources, institutional fragility, and endemic poverty. A great deal of human sufferings is also caused by violations of IHL norms. The number of forcibly displaced persons is steadily increasing and, according to the UNHCR, by the end of 2019 it reached 79.5 million (45.7 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), 29.6 million refugees, and 4.2 million asylum seekers).

In coordination with the OCHA, the United Nations and its partners are focusing their efforts on providing assistance, from immediate to long-term, to affected people in virtually every region of the world. Ukraine is among the recipient states, with an envisaged \$157.8 million for 2020 allocated to assist 2 million affected people.

At the same time, despite the humanitarian organisations' annual appeals to donors, the gap between identified needs and available resources is growing every year. The deficit of funds to assist affected countries and populations sometimes reaches 50 percent of the total needs identified by the UN agencies. It is therefore increasingly important to find ways to improve humanitarian coordination, establish effective funding mechanisms and reach out to more people affected, combine humanitarian assistance programmes with development and peacebuilding, and so on.

With a view to strengthening the international protection regime for refugees and migrants in practice, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees were approved in 2019. Their development lasted several years within the framework of the implementation of the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. At the same time, both agreements have no legally binding status and are voluntary for implementation.

Given the international community's increased attention to internally displaced persons and their protection, UN Secretary-General António Guterres together with a number of countries and organisations initiated the establishment of the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement in October 2019.

Diplomats of the Ukrainian Permanent Mission in Geneva sustain contacts with representatives of these humanitarian agencies to report objective information on the root causes of migration and the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine resulting from the ongoing Russian aggression and find ways to effectively involve them in providing assistance to the Government of Ukraine in helping the affected population.

In this regard, since the beginning of the Russian aggression against our country in 2014, the OCHA has annually drawn up the UN Humanitarian Response Plan providing for a strategy of priorities of the UN and its humanitarian partners in Ukraine. Within the framework of the outlined plans, but not limited to them, the UN agencies, including the UNHCR and the IOM, and their partners provide necessary assistance by delivering essential goods, clothing, and other non-food items, construction materials for shelters, cash, medicines, and psychological rehabilitation, legal advice and protection. They also implement programmes to support the self-sufficiency and self-employment of the affected population, increase socio-economic stability and cohesion of communities that host IDPs, etc. In addition, advisory and expert assistance is provided to governmental institutions in Ukraine on the preparation and implementation of a legal framework ensuring the protection and rights of the affected population.

Meanwhile, similar to human rights mechanisms, such as the HRMMU, international humanitarian organisations have limited access to the temporarily occupied territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. They are constantly facing difficulties in their work, particularly due to arbitrary demands of local occupation administrations to obtain a 'permission to operate' or other far-fetched pretexts. So far, because of the blockage of the UNHCR's relevant efforts by the Russian side, its intentions to send a mission to the Autonomous Republic of Crimea to assess the situation of asylum seekers and refugees that had been monitored by the Office until March 2014 as well as the situation of displaced persons from Donbas have not been successful.

Thanks to the efforts of the Permanent Mission of Ukraine in Geneva and its organisational support, IOM Director-General William Swing and UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi visited Ukraine in 2016. They got acquainted with the operational activities of their representative offices in our country, including those in the temporarily occupied territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, and discussed further cooperation with the representatives of relevant ministries and agencies. Ukrainian diplomacy is working to strengthen interaction with the abovementioned international institutions and their further effective involvement in providing humanitarian assistance to our country, first and foremost, as regards the problems of IDPs caused by the Russian aggression.

The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia is also located in Geneva. Among the key priorities of cooperation between the Permanent Mission and the Office is assistance to children suffering from the consequences of the Russian aggression in the east of our country. UNICEF provides socio-psychological support to thousands of children and caregivers; reaches out to hundreds of thousands of children and their families with mine risk education programmes; assists in the refurbishment and repair of schools and kindergartens; engages in improving school environments for children living near the contact line in Eastern Ukraine. Being a coordinator of the Water Sanitation and Hygiene Cluster, UNICEF, together with its partners, including the ICRC, has been working since late 2014 to ensure unhindered access to clean drinking water for the affected population, provide first aid kits and hygiene items, etc.

In accordance with the Ukraine – UNICEF country programme of cooperation for 2018–2022, during this period the Fund's activities in Ukraine are focused on the following: the provision of integrated social services, child protection, education, and child healthcare, monitoring of compliance with children's rights, and activities to provide clean drinking water and sanitation in the afflicted areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The total budget of the programme for Ukraine is \$41.5 million.

Under an agreement with the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, UNICEF supplies drugs for antiretroviral therapy and vaccines to our country. The Fund vigorously promotes immunisation campaigns in Ukraine. To date, five joint UNICEF projects are being implemented in our country in the field of education, particularly those aimed at supporting inclusive education.

Another international organisation that cannot be ignored in the light of current events and whose opinions are now heeded all around the world, is also headquartered in Geneva. It is the World Health Organisation (WHO), the UN specialised agency established by the San Francisco Conference in 1945. In 1946, the International Health Conference in New York approved the Constitution of the World Health Organisation, which came into force on 7 April 1948 (Ukraine joined the WHO in the same year). This day – 7 April – is considered the date of birth of this organisation celebrated annually as World Health Day.

The main goal of the WHO is promoting global health. The organisation coordinates international cooperation in order to develop and improve health-care systems, eradicate infectious diseases, introduce universal immunisation, combat the spread of HIV/AIDS, regulate pharmaceutical activities of member states, etc. In recent years, health issues have become a global priority. They have appeared on the agenda of the most important political fora, and additional financial resources are being allocated to address problems in this area.

To better respond to regional health priorities and ensure closer alignment with the needs of the national health system, the WHO's core activities are carried out through its six regional offices and numerous country offices. The WHO Regional Office for Europe that works with 53 countries, including Ukraine, is located in Copenhagen, Denmark, and is headed by a regional director. The organisation has a country office in Kyiv.

Since the beginning of Russia's occupation of Crimea and the outbreak of hostilities caused by it in the east of our country, the WHO has been actively providing the necessary support to the affected population of Ukraine with medical supplies and services.

The WHO assumed special prominence after the spate of the COVID-19 pandemic. The organisation constantly informs the world community about the current dynamics of the disease spread and the latest trends in the development of effective treatment and vaccines, develops recommendations for states and population, provides technical assistance to countries, including Ukraine. In April 2020, 13 tons of humanitarian aid collected by the ICRC and the WHO, which included medical supplies and equipment to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, were delivered from Geneva to our country.

Ukraine, for its part, is actively involved in the WHO's work. On 19 May 2020, during the first part of the virtual 73rd session of the World Health Assembly (WHA, the organisation's supreme decision-making body), member states ad-

opted by consensus the resolution entitled *COVID-19 Response*, which, inter alia, calls for ‘an independent international evaluation’ of global pandemic preparedness and provides for an investigation into the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ukraine actively participated in the preparation of this document and was one of its first co-authors.

Other international institutions in Geneva with which our country works closely in the field of healthcare include the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control; the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; and Médecins Sans Frontières.

Human health directly depends on the environment. Sustainable Development Goals 11–15 provide for environmental preservation and protection, environmental security, and judicious use of natural resources. Here, again, Geneva comes to the fore as one of the leading international platforms where strategic guidelines on environmental protection and management are defined, and mechanisms for effectively addressing global environmental problems are developed.

Geneva hosts the secretariats of several environmental conventions. The UNECE holds regular meetings of the convention bodies, namely those of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention); Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution; Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes; Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents; Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention). The secretariats of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora operate under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Geneva. Ensuring that the position of Ukraine is presented during the meetings of the treaty bodies, coordinating the implementation of the relevant decisions of the supreme bodies of these conventions that concern Ukraine, and preparing the relevant information and reference materials is an integral part of the daily work of the Permanent Mission’s diplomats.

The Permanent Mission regularly participates in the work of the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy, which aims to enhance the effectiveness of environmental conventions and provides for the development and implementation of environmental performance reviews in Central and Eastern Europe as well as the exchange of experiences on the implementation of these conventions into national legislation.

Taking into account the ongoing aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, the Mission's work in the environmental area includes countering Russia's efforts to legitimize its occupation of Crimea, inter alia, by putting local data into reporting information and statistics or including experts from Crimea in the delegations that represent the Russian Federation in various events associated with the environmental conventions.

Non-compliance with environmental conventions and irresponsible attitude towards nature unleash upon humankind natural and man-made disasters. The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), also headquartered in Geneva, deals with these issues. The Office focuses on the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–30. Every two years the UNDRR convenes sessions of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (the latest one was held in Geneva in 2019). These events are attended by representatives of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine with the assistance of the Permanent Mission. As part of its activities, the UNDRR coordinates international assistance to countries affected by natural and human-induced disasters. The Mission cooperates with the Office, among other things, regarding disaster management in Ukraine.

Environmental processes heavily influence weather conditions, thus prompting us to mention another Geneva-based organisation that celebrates its 70th anniversary this year, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). The WMO is a UN specialized agency for observing the state of the Earth's atmosphere and its interaction with the oceans. It is mostly focused on realization of its principal programme *World Weather Watch* and on further improving the Global Telecommunication System as a multi-hazard early warning system. In addition, the organization is actively engaging the developing and least developed countries, primarily from the African continent, in global climate laboratory research. The WMO member states and territories have access to the scientific infrastructure necessary for integrated meteorological, climatological, hydrological and environmental observations, which are usually carried out by national meteorological and hydrological agencies.

Ukrainian diplomacy and the WMO cooperate with the Ukrainian Hydrometeorological Centre of the State Emergency Service within the framework of the WMO Strategic Plan (valid up to 2030), which, in particular, focuses on: improving preparedness for extreme hydrometeorological conditions; expanding observations and forecasts within the Earth system; promoting targeted scientific meteorological research; increasing demand for meteorological, hydrological and climatological services; reformatting the overall structure and programme of the WMO. Ukraine's commitments to the WMO are, inter alia, to provide hydrometeorological information to the Global Telecommunication System within the framework of the international exchange of such data.

In regard to information exchange, one cannot but mention the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), a specialised agency of the United Nations that, among other things, provides technical support, develops standards and regulations in the field of telecommunications, coordinates global radiofrequency management, ensures equitable access to the Internet all over the world, and formulates recommendations aimed at enhancing the development of telecommunications and improving the quality of related services, etc. Created right after the ICRC in Paris on 17 May 1865 under the name International Telegraph Union, the second-oldest organisation received its current name in 1932 and is also headquartered in Geneva. Its membership includes 193 member states, more than 800 private organisations and academic institutions, including telecommunication equipment companies, software developers, network operators, and regional telecommunication organisations. Ukraine has been a member of the ITU since 7 May 1947. After gaining independence, our state has been elected twice as a member of the ITU Council, the Union's highest governing body (in 1994 and 2006). Representatives of Ukraine have repeatedly chaired committees of the ITU conferences.

Even in this sphere, we also observe the kleptomaniac behaviour of the Russian Federation. Since March 2014, after the occupation of Crimea, Russia began to use the frequencies assigned to Ukraine, contrary to the ITU Charter and the ITU Master International Frequency Register. The Permanent Mission of Ukraine in Geneva constantly opposes the illegal use by the Russian Federation of the Ukrainian radio frequency resource in the temporarily occupied territory of Crimea and finds support in this regard from the Union's leadership. It is worth mentioning the refusal of the ITU to transfer the Ukrainian frequency resource in Crimea to the Russian Federation, recognition of Russia's violation of the ITU Charter and a number of its regulatory documents as well as public statements by the ITU Secretary-General on the subject, in particular, during meetings of the organisation's governing bodies.

Another eloquent evidence of the Union's support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine was the placement in the ITU Operational Bulletin No. 1127 of 1 July 2017 of the Ukrainian communication on this issue together with the relevant statement by the ITU Secretary-General.

The 9th sustainable development goal provides for the establishment of resilient infrastructure, promotion of comprehensive and sustainable industrialisation and innovation. This sphere directly falls within the purview of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), which was established under the 1967 Convention adopted by the states members of the Paris Union for the Protection of Industrial Property, the Berne Union for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, and other specialized unions. In 1974, the WIPO received the status of the United Nations specialised agency, and since then its secretariat, the International Bureau of the WIPO, has been functioning in Geneva.



«Інноваційна Україна» у ВОІВ Innovative Ukraine exhibition in WIPO

The WIPO's goal is to promote the protection of intellectual property rights across the world through ensuring cooperation among states and compliance with multilateral treaties governing the legal and administrative aspects of intellectual property. The organisation works on the development of a global intellectual property policy and harmonisation of national intellectual property laws and procedures; provision of services to international applicants for industrial property rights; exchange of information; provision of technical, organisational, and advisory support to WIPO member states; assistance in resolving intellectual property disputes between private law entities, and so on.

Ukraine has been a member of the WIPO since 1970. In 1992, the Government of Ukraine confirmed the extension of several major international agreements in the field of intellectual property, and since then cooperation with the organisation has been developing and expanding. Ukraine actively participates in meetings of all WIPO governing bodies as well as in the activities of its thematic committees. Cooperation programs between Ukraine and the WIPO are adopted every two years. In 2018, the parties signed a bilateral Memorandum of Understanding on Alternative Dispute Resolution in the Area of Intellectual Property, which establishes in Ukraine, with the involvement of the WIPO, the institution for arbitration and mediation in the field of intellectual property.

As regards Russia's ongoing efforts to legitimise the occupation of Crimea, the Permanent Mission of Ukraine actively opposes any attempts by legal entities of the occupying country to register various Crimean trademarks as Russian-owned ones through the WIPO Madrid System.

Along with the main activities envisaged by membership in the organisation, the Permanent Mission uses this platform to promote Ukraine's achievements in the intellectual sphere. An important milestone was the event held in October 2019 within the framework of the 59th series of Meetings of the Assemblies of WIPO member states, namely the exposition of high-tech achievements of our country under the motto *Innovative Ukraine: From Soul to Brain*. It allowed drawing the attention of the world community to the brand *Innovative Ukraine* that shows our country's attractiveness for business and investments, combines strong traditions with a vision of modernity and openness to the future. During the exhibition built on the principle 'from the past through the present towards the future', members of the WIPO Assemblies got acquainted with the most advanced technologies and innovative solutions proposed by Ukrainian specialists as well as know-hows that are already used in everyday life. In addition to this presentation, the event had a cultural and gastronomic component, during which guests were able to enjoy music performed by the National Academic Orchestra of Folk Instruments and traditional Ukrainian cuisine.

Touching upon the topic of innovation and advanced technology, one cannot but mention the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN), which is also covered by the Permanent Mission of Ukraine in Geneva. It is the leading European intergovernmental organisation for high energy physics research, based in Switzerland and France. Scientists from all over the world, including Ukraine, are actively involved in CERN's projects. Ukrainian scholars are well known at CERN due to their successful participation in several activities for the project related to the Large Hadron Collider that lies in a tunnel 27 kilometres in circumference and as deep as 175 metres beneath the Earth's surface. In October 2016, Ukraine was granted associate member status of the organisation, which allows our scientists, students, teachers, and pupils to officially participate in its various programmes, and our companies to partake in tenders for the purchase of high-quality equipment for CERN. Now more than 100 representatives from Ukraine are participating in the relevant research activities. In addition, there are annual visits of Ukrainian pupils and teachers to CERN, where they have an opportunity to get acquainted with scientific developments in the field of high energy physics and later share their knowledge with colleagues in Ukraine.

This article would be incomplete without at least mentioning the Geneva-based International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) and the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) that are responsible for developing standards in various fields.

The parliamentary dimension of interstate relations is particularly visible in Geneva thanks to the activities of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) stationed here. The organisation articulates the views and position of the world's parliamentary community on issues of international interest in the form of resolutions and reports, offers recommendations on parliamentary activities. The delegation of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine every year participates in the spring and autumn IPU assemblies and its other events, including those held jointly with the UN. Among the latest achievements is the approval at the 140th IPU Assembly in April 2019 of the resolution initiated by the member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the 8th convocation B. Tarasiuk together with his Jordanian counterpart K. Al-Bakkar entitled *Non-admissibility of using mercenaries and foreign fighters as a means of undermining peace, international security and the territorial integrity of States, and violating human rights*. Diplomats of the Permanent Mission actively participated in drafting the text and its promotion.

To conclude the story of Geneva's international platforms, it is necessary to mention the World Economic Forum (WEF), whose annual meetings in Davos at the beginning of each year have become a major event for the mass media and yet another piece of hard work for diplomats of the Permanent Mission.

The WEF is an international non-profit, non-governmental organisation, whose main objective is to promote public-private partnerships at the global level. Among other WEF activities is the creation and development of informal networking opportunities for world and regional leaders in the fields of politics, business, social, humanitarian, and security relations as well as providing a platform to unofficially discuss pressing global issues and formulate priorities for cooperation in such key areas as socio-economic development, strengthening of international security, health care, environmental protection, poverty reduction, etc.

Through the joint efforts of world leaders, annual meetings of the World Economic Forum resulted in bold initiatives and compromise solutions to complex political problems, external and internal alike. Prominent examples in contemporary history include:

- 1987 – German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher urged participants of the World Economic Forum to support the desire of the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to put an end to the Cold War;
- 1988 – driven to the brink of armed confrontation, the governments of Greece and Turkey found a peaceful way to resolve the conflict by signing the 'Davos Declaration';
- 1992 – State President of the Republic of South Africa F. W. de Klerk met with Nelson Mandela;
- 1994 – Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat reached a preliminary agreement on a peaceful solution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict;



Міжнародна Женева вивчає документальні свідчення про геноцид українців, який учинив радянський режим, на виставці «Страчені голодом»

International Geneva studies documentary evidence of the genocide of Ukrainians by the Soviet regime at the exhibition Executed by Hunger

- 1999 – UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan announced a programme to unite the efforts of all states to address social problems and overcome poverty;
- 2000 – WHO Director-General Gro Harlem Brundtland announced the establishment of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI), whose secretariat, by the way, is also located in Geneva.

Numerous events of the annual WEF–2020 meeting held under the theme *Stakeholders for a Cohesive and Sustainable World* were attended by more than 3,000 representatives of political, business, academic circles, and civil society, over 40 heads of state and government, including the President of Ukraine. Top Ukrainian officials regularly participate in the work of the WEF in Davos and its regional summits, using the opportunities of the Forum to bolster Ukraine’s development. The year of 2020 has been marked by the interaction with the WEF with respect to enabling Ukraine to take full advantage of the fourth industrial revolution.

This is by no means a complete list of international organisations located in Geneva with which Ukraine cooperates. In addition to official events on human rights, humanitarian, security, economic, intellectual and other platforms that are used by the Permanent Mission to draw attention to Ukraine and its huge potential or to win support from international partners in the face of the Russian aggression and hybrid war, considerable attention in the Mission’s work is devoted to cultural diplomacy.

In this way, in November 2018 the Permanent Mission organized a series of events to mark the 85th anniversary of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine – the genocide of the Ukrainian people. Together with the Ukrainian Society in Switzerland, we joined the international campaign *Light a Candle of Remembrance* and organised the exhibition *Executed by Hunger* in the premises of the Villa La Pastorale located in the heart of international Geneva. Those events enabled the international community to better understand the tragedy of the Ukrainian people against the background of the ongoing Russian aggression.

It is no exaggeration to say that a retrospective exhibition of the living legend of Ukrainian painting and world-famous artist Ivan Marchuk, titled *The Genotype of Liberty*, was an extraordinary event for international Geneva. It was organised by our Permanent Mission at the Palais des Nations in February – March 2019. The opening ceremony was attended by the leadership of the UN Office and other international organisations at Geneva, the diplomatic corps, the public of the canton and the city of Geneva as well as the local Ukrainian community. The Geneva exhibition featured about 60 paintings from six cycles of the artist's phenomenally rich creative background. It is symbolic that the exhibition of Marchuk's works, whose entire creative universe is permeated with a thirst for freedom, was placed right next to the hall where the UN Human Rights Council, a body responsible for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, meets.



Відкриття в Палаці націй виставки праць українського художника, генія сучасності Івана Марчука

Opening of an exhibition by the Ukrainian genius of our time Ivan Marchuk at the Geneva Palais des Nations



Українські стенди завжди поміж найпопулярніших на щорічному благодійному базарі в женеvському Палаці нації

Ukrainian stands are always one of the most popular at the annual charity bazaar held at the Palais des Nations

I would like to conclude with the least formal but no less important event on which the Permanent Mission focuses – a charity bazaar, which is held annually on the eve of the Christmas holidays by the UN Women’s Guild. Some readers may be sceptical about such events, but, when it comes to attendance, the charity bazaar can be compared to the most serious UN fora. It is never missed by the head of the UN Office at Geneva (at the last fair, its current Director-General was happy to buy a couple of souvenir pigs from the Ukrainian tent). In terms of popularity and number of visitors, the bazaar is not inferior to the Geneva Motor Show. The aim of the fair is to raise funds to finance projects supporting disadvantaged children and women. Annually, the charity bazaar attracts more than 6,000 guests and accumulates funds amounting to about ₴300,000. The preparation for it is a joint work of the entire Mission family, including children. It is traditionally organised and led by Zoia Klymenko, the spouse of the Permanent Representative.

This is where artistic, graphic, culinary, and commercial talents of the Permanent Mission staff and their families are fully revealed because the participation in the charity bazaar is also an additional opportunity to promote our country. The bazaar is not just about trading Ukrainian souvenirs and handmade delicacies. It is also a presentation of folk artworks that decorate the Ukrainian stand, Ukrainian folk costumes worn by our charming salesladies and salesmen, and, indeed, Ukrainian humour and the ability to convince a buyer, for example,

from faraway Gabon, that porridge made of Ukrainian buckwheat will certainly be tasty and healthy. And our lads and lasses successfully convince not only him but also dozens of other delegates. It is always a pleasure to hear nostalgic stories about delicious Ukrainian dishes tasted at the charity bazaar from heads of other missions later, when discussing disarmament, human rights, trade, ecology or some other working moments or to be invited to my colleague's residence and see a Ukrainian charm or carved dish decorating the living room. The main thing, however, is that thanks to the cooperation with Ukrainian craftspeople we can help disadvantaged children and elderly people in Ukraine every year.

That's how we work – at all platforms, with all audiences.

The COVID-19 pandemic has obviously affected international life in Geneva. Its ecosystem has quickly adapted to the new realities by introducing an emergency *modus operandi*. The 'hybrid' format, which combines remote work with physical presence in meeting rooms, has become quite common. International Geneva has proven in practice that it can respond quite dynamically to the challenges facing humanity. It is quite possible that the experience of the use of digital platforms for interaction between delegations and secretariats of international organizations, we gained during the quarantine, will be further exploited as the newest tool of modern diplomacy. Under these circumstances, Ukrainian diplomats in Geneva continue to defend the interests of our state in order to prevent an abuse of the situation and of new formats by the Russian Federation that may use them to impose its anti-Ukrainian narratives and avoid responsibility for numerous violations of international law, the occupation, and war crimes.

As was already mentioned, with the beginning of the Russian aggression against Ukraine in 2014, the Mission's work, as well as for all Ukrainian diplomats around the world, has not just doubled but increased manifold. In addition to constantly drawing the attention of international organisations and national delegations to Russia's illegal actions and engaging them to support Ukraine and condemn the Russian Federation, we have to daily fight the tough information war that Russia is waging against our state at international fora. Having rich Soviet experience in lying, eyewashing, and propaganda tricks under its belt, Russia is no less serious and insidious opponent in this field than on the battlefield.

Although no blood has, luckily, been spilt in diplomatic battles, the defeat in them may lead to real bloodshed hundreds and thousands of kilometres away from the place where they occur. Victories in such battles are quiet, without fireworks, but largely thanks to them, the shooting stops, the aggressor turns to be more subdued, and the world becomes a calmer and safer place.

History will evolve,
Ukraine will prevail –
Always and forever!