STATEMENT

by

the representative of the delegation of Ukraine

at

the 69th session of the
General Assembly of the United Nations

on

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian
and disaster relief assistance of the United
Nations, including special economic assistance,
item 69(a)

New York, 11 December 2014
Mr. Chair,
Distinguished delegates,

Today we meet after long rounds of the negotiations to reaffirm the need of scaling up the United Nations humanitarian approach, with a view to ensuring fuller coverage of the needs in all sectors and across humanitarian emergencies.

Together we strive to make significant steps in this direction. There is no doubt that all actors engaged in the provision of humanitarian assistance should fully respect the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, as it was clearly stated at every relevant document of the United Nations.

This year is about to end. It was the year of tremendous changes and challenges for my country. The Ukrainian peaceful life and development was fundamentally disrupted by the illegal annexation of Crimea and struck by the provoked conflict in two Eastern regions, which have had devastating consequences for people and communities in the whole region.

Despite a number of ceasefire agreements serious violations are reported daily. Displacement is on the rise and lives of civilians are endangered by irresponsible acts of illegal militants. My country is facing the situation when 5.1 million Ukrainian citizens are living in conflict-affected areas.

Ensuring protection and relief to these particularly vulnerable persons of concern represents the key Ukrainian priority. We have been doing our utmost to alleviate the situation since the first months of the crisis. The government has immediately established aid and support mechanisms for the conflict-affected population with the special attention to IDPs and participants of anti-terrorist operation. On October 20, a law on IDP was adopted.

We act, but rely on our supporters in providing the response to meet the basic humanitarian needs of the affected population, acknowledging the fact that the winter has come. With the expert and technical international support, we have established a system of registration of IDPs.

Ukrainian authorities undertake comprehensive steps to reconstruct areas that returned under Ukraine’s control, ensure due payments of social benefits and provide vital services to the residents. It is decided to continue delivering gas and electricity to civilians at the militants-controlled areas in the east of Ukraine, despite significant arrears in payment. Hundreds of tons of humanitarian aid have been sent to affected region. Yet, there are obvious obstacles in delivery and distribution of this aid due to militants’ interference.
At the same time, full responsibility for depriving local population of social benefits rests with illegal armed groups who seize all respective funds that the Ukrainian government allocates for social needs in the region. All social allowances will be kept in escrow for each individual and paid immediately after we regain control over these areas.

In August-November, Russia sent 8 “humanitarian aid convoys” which illegally crossed Ukraine’s border without consent of and inspection by the Ukrainian authorities and without coordination with ICRC. The content of convoys is largely unknown. So is their impact on humanitarian conditions in Donbas.

Ukraine prizes the universal humanitarian response and welcomes the solidarity of the international organizations, multilateral cooperation and their determination to stay engaged. At the time of the unprecedented crisis, Ukrainian authorities have been working in close cooperation with our supporters from IOM, OCHA, OHCHR, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, USAID, the UE, OSCE and the Red Cross.

Specifically, we call on our partners to support the launch of the Strategic Response Plan and fulfillment of the Preliminary Response Plan, a joint endeavors of the Government of Ukraine and the UN humanitarian community, which enable thousands of Ukrainians who suffered to start rebuilding their lives in a safe and stable Ukraine.

To conclude, I would like to reiterate that while humanitarian relief and support should be provided to every conflict-affected region in the world, we are to prevent and to stop fueling conflicts in the first place.

I thank you.