STATEMENT
by the representative of Ukraine at the Third Committee on the agenda
item 69 (a, b, d) “Promotion and protection of human rights”

Mr. Chairman,

This year we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Vienna World Conference, the Forum which reconfirmed once again the adherence of the international community to the principles of universality, indivisibility and interdependence of human rights.

The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action outlined top priorities for strengthening of the rule of law and democratic institutions as well as protecting vulnerable groups, such as minorities, indigenous people and others. These documents significantly influenced the situation of the human rights worldwide.

But despite the progress made in this sphere we regret to note that human rights violations continue to occur in different parts of the world. Hence while continuing activities as a follow-up to the Vienna World Conference the search for more effective and efficient means of addressing existing human rights issues and tackling new challenges should be enhanced and broadened. We believe that the action oriented recommendations, developed by the Working Groups at the conference “Vienna+20: advancing the protection of human rights”, should be taken into account.

In this context I cannot but mention the important role of prevention in the promotion and protection of human rights.

We strongly believe that prevention of human rights violations is an important instrument for securing full enjoyment of all human rights, their promotion and protection. It is in this context that Ukraine initiated and together with core group of main co-sponsors encompassing Hungary, Maldives, Morocco, Poland and Uruguay submitted at the last HRC session resolution on the role of prevention in the promotion and protection of human rights.

We hope that adoption and implementation of this resolution will pave the way for better understanding of the role of prevention in promotion and protection of human rights with its further practical application in relevant policies and strategies on national, regional and international levels.

Mr. Chairman,

Ukraine is strongly committed to promotion and protection of human rights. My country is Party to the main international instruments in this sphere. This year Ukraine
moved forward in the relevant direction by ratifying two more international instruments. Those are Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness and Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, which in some extent touch upon the rights of the relevant groups of people.

Ukraine continues to make every effort to bring national legislation in line with relevant standards. In the recent year this process has been accelerated given priorities that the President and the Government put on the European integration of Ukraine. The adoption of the new Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine and the Law of Ukraine “On the bar” as well as drafting of the new Law of Ukraine "On the Prosecutor's Office" are among the latest developments in the mentioned sphere. According to the newest amendment to the Law of Ukraine "On the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights" the National Preventive Mechanism has been established in Ukraine in line with provisions of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture. Its functions are assigned to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights.

Ukraine cooperates with relevant treaty bodies inter alia by submitting periodic reports on the fulfillment of its obligations.

My country fully supports the mandate of the United Nations Human Rights Council. We consider its mechanisms, in particular the Special Procedures and UPR as an extremely important tool for the protection of human rights.

We appreciate the activities of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights as it detailed in the relevant report.

Mr. Chairman,

Recent years have witnessed the crystallization of the social expectation that business enterprises, and transnational corporations in particular, have a responsibility to respect the human rights of the people and communities that may be adversely affected by their activities.

The unanimous endorsement of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights by the UN Human Rights Council in 2011 has helped clarifying the scope of corporate responsibility to respect human rights, in interaction with the state’s duty to protect those rights. The conceptual framework “Protect, Respect and Remedy” has contributed to a rapid development of policy and regulatory standards worldwide.

Ukraine welcomes the creation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Governments, businesses, trade unions and civil society all have roles to play in implementation of these, domestically and internationally.

Realizing the value of systematic dialogue and cooperation of business, Government and society, work on the National Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategy has been initiated in Ukraine. This year the President of Ukraine has issued a Decree which among other things related to the development of civil society in Ukraine includes development of the National CSR Strategy.

The Strategy is envisioned as a “soft policy” document that would promote CSR on the national level (similarly to 19 countries in the EU which already have such a strategy).

Ukraine strongly supports the activities of the Council of Europe in this field, in particular the decision of Steering Committee for Human Rights to establish an open-ended drafting group to fulfill specific tasks regarding corporate social responsibility in
the field of human rights with the aim to implement the UN Guiding Principles at the European level, focusing on areas where the Council of Europe can best add value.

We believe that the UN Guiding Principles are not a point of arrival, but a starting point for future developments. We expect that the increasing international attention on business and human rights will result in more pro-active approach to the implementation of Principles. And we see in this context the special role of international organizations including such an important one for the region Ukraine belongs to, the Council of Europe.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by confirming Ukraine's strong commitment to cooperation and dialogue with all Member States in order to promote and protect human rights worldwide.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.