

Statement
by Head of the Delegation of Ukraine
H.E. Mr. Ihor Zhovkva, Special Envoy of the President of Ukraine and
Deputy Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine,
at the Forth International Conference on Small Island Developing States
(Antigua and Barbuda, 27-30 May 2024)

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Ukrainian delegation, I would like to extend our gratitude to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda for hosting this significant event. Your commitment to bringing us together in this beautiful country underscores the dedication to addressing the unique and pressing challenges faced by Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Ukraine fully recognizes these challenges, which include climate change, natural disasters, sea level rise, poverty, food insecurity, and the obstacles to securing financing for development. We fully support international efforts to mitigate the vulnerabilities of SIDS, stemming from their small size, geographic remoteness, narrow resource base, and exposure to economic, social, and environmental shocks.

This Conference presents a unique opportunity for the international community to reaffirm and strengthen its support for SIDS over the next decade. We also acknowledge the valuable contributions of UN structures and agencies to this process.

Mr. President, climate change with its debilitating and devastating effects is a global challenge we must address. Ukraine recognizes the urgency of this problem, especially for SIDS, whose people and communities suffer disproportionately from the impacts of climate change, despite being least responsible for it.

The interconnected consequences – intensified extreme weather, rising sea levels, food and water insecurity, biodiversity loss, and heightened health risks – jeopardize human life, livelihoods, and ecosystems, adversely impacting national, regional, and global stability. This multidimensional challenge is unprecedented.

Ukraine has always been a promoter of intensified and concerted actions to address climate change as a global threat to international peace and security. In particular, we fully recognize the devastating impact of this phenomena to global food security and water resources.

Mr. President, Ukraine has been a major contributor to food security worldwide. As one of the world's leading food suppliers, Ukraine is committed to ensuring the availability of safe, nutritious, and affordable food for all.

Despite Russian military aggression, Ukraine managed to harvest 81 million tons of grain and oilseeds in 2023, of which 50 million tons were supplied to foreign markets. After Russia's withdrawal from the Black Sea Grain Initiative in July 2023, Ukraine and its international partners established alternative routes for civilian vessels to and from Ukrainian Black Sea ports.

Thanks to the unblocking of Ukrainian ports, the export rate of agricultural products through the Black Sea grain corridor has nearly returned to pre-war levels. We continue to increase the capacity of all corridors. An end to Russian occupation and missile terror on our ports and infrastructure would further increase the supply of Ukrainian food to the global market, thus contributing to global food security. Even in these difficult times, Ukraine is ready to remain a guarantor of global food security.

Mr. President, the ongoing Russian war has far-reaching consequences not only for Ukraine but also for the entire international community. Ukraine is most interested in ending this war and restoring a stable and just peace based on universally recognized principles of international law and the UN Charter.

In this respect, let me draw the attention of the delegations to the upcoming first Summit on Peace in Ukraine, to be held on June 15-16, 2024, in Switzerland. We have invited all peace-loving nations at the highest political level, and each nation can help bring peace closer. The Summit will build on discussions around Ukraine's Peace Formula and other visions of the peace process. It represents the first step toward a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in Ukraine.

We count on the participation of all leaders who respect the Purposes and Principles of the UN Charter.

In conclusion, Ukraine stands firmly with the SIDS community and is dedicated to supporting efforts to address the multifaceted challenges they face. We believe that through collaboration and mutual support, we can create a more resilient and equitable world. We also urge all nations to join us in the upcoming Global Peace Summit at the highest possible political level to forge a path toward a peaceful and stable future for Ukraine and the broader international community.

Thank you.