



## **Donor community met with Luhansk Oblast State Administration during the first-ever virtual roundtable**

(Kyiv, Sievierodonetsk). Today, on 29 October, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) facilitated the first-ever virtual roundtable between representatives of the donor community in Ukraine and the local authorities in Luhanska oblast. During the virtual meeting, the participants discussed humanitarian needs in the region and how COVID-19 has aggravated them, medium and long-term challenges, and ways the donor community, development and humanitarian actors can support the local authorities in tackling them in a coordinated manner.

Among the participants were Mr. Serhii Haidai, Head of the Luhansk Oblast State Administration, Ms. Osnat Lubrani, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr. Kaimo Kuusk, Ambassador of the Republic of Estonia to Ukraine, Mr. Ole Egberg Mikkelsen, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark to Ukraine, Mr. Erik Svedahl, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway to Ukraine, as well as representatives of Canada, Denmark, Japan, Lithuania, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Several UN agencies, ICRC and humanitarian actors operational in eastern Ukraine also took an active part in the meeting.

‘Over recent years, Luhanska oblast has been enjoying the strong support of our international friends. Jointly, we have implemented a number of infrastructural and social projects. At the same time, like other countries worldwide, we have been fighting against the spread of a deadly virus. We are grateful to our partners for supporting health-care institutions and providing personal protective equipment and medicines,’ said Mr. Haidai. ‘I am confident that such online communication with representatives of Embassies, humanitarian and development actors will help us promptly resolve the challenges Luhanska oblast faces, especially after the recent wildfires and due to hostilities. We are looking forward to continuing our cooperation with reputable humanitarian and development organizations,’ the Head of the Luhansk Oblast Administration, Mr. Serhii Haidai, concluded.

‘I would like to thank the donor community and the local authorities in Luhanska oblast for expressing their great interest in engaging in an open discussion about the situation in the region,’ Ms. Lubrani noted. ‘This is a new format of direct engagement that we believe will help improve our cooperation and create a bridge between beneficiaries and the donor community.’ Ms. Lubrani added. ‘Since 2014, donors have contributed some US\$1.2 billion for the humanitarian response, and hundreds of millions more for recovery efforts in eastern Ukraine. We hope that such discussions will also lead to greater collaboration among humanitarian and development actors in order to reduce needs, risks and vulnerabilities in our common commitment to “leave no one behind” and the Sustainable Development Goals,’ Ms. Lubrani noted, concluding her address.



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