**PRESS STATEMENT**

by Ms. Osnat Lubrani, the United Nations Resident Coordinator,
Humanitarian Coordinator in Ukraine

(23 December 2021, Kyiv)

2021 has been another challenging year for all of us, but more so for the people caught in conflict.

The July 2020 ceasefire is becoming more and more shaky. Military clashes become more frequent and civilians residing in the conflict area continue to pay the heaviest price. Between January and November 2021, at least 90 civilians have been killed or injured. Only during last month, we recorded 547 security incidents, which is a 22 per cent increase compared with November 2020.

COVID-19 also continues to keep a firm grip and drive the needs of vulnerable populations on both sides of the “contact line”. In November 2021, the number of COVID-19 infections in Ukraine surpassed 3 million, and by the end of the month, more than 85,000 deaths were registered.

Notwithstanding the complicated challenges, the efforts of the Government of Ukraine to alleviate needs and enhance the rights of the affected population deserve acknowledgement, including the increased availability of more comprehensive housing schemes for IDPs and the adoption of a new national IDP integration strategy and Action Plan, among other achievements.

As hostilities and COVID-19 persist, the work of the humanitarian community in Ukraine has remained a lifeline for people in 2021. We have been able to reach over 1.5 million conflict-weary people during the first nine months of 2021. This is the highest level of people who have received life-critical aid and services since 2017. This has been possible in part due to enhanced access to areas beyond Government control that allowed humanitarian actors to meet the needs of the greater number of people in need.

In 2022, 2.9 million people will need humanitarian assistance. A sustained ceasefire is the only way to avoid the deepening of people’s needs and vulnerabilities. On my visits to eastern Ukraine, I hear people repeat the same plea over and over. They want hostilities to stop. They want not to fear for their lives any longer. On behalf of those whose voices often remain unheard, I call on parties to respect the ceasefire.

The humanitarian community stands ready to support people who continue to suffer. We need US$190 million to help as many people in need as possible next year. We count on the strong support of our international donors to continue our life-saving work.

The determination of parties to adhere to the July 2020 ceasefire will help revive people’s hope and lay ground for the recovery in conflict-affected areas. People deserve to live in dignity, safety and security.

End.

**Photos can be accessed** [**here.**](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/upbinlpmxdw2pj2/AADv9l4DrCN3ngTTYtkAi9B9a?dl=0)

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