Mr Marco NICOLINI (San Marino, UEL, Spokesperson for the group): Thank you Madame Chair.

In the first week of July, I went to Kiev for a pre-electoral monitoring mission of the political elections in Ukraine a few days after the summer session of Council of Europe, during which the Russian Federation was readmitted into the Assembly. As you can imagine, this was not a good prerequisite to the success of our mission. Most of the meetings held were deserted by journalists, politicians of all parties and wings, NGOs and central electoral committees. In general, and being euphemistic, the atmosphere was not so friendly. Our meeting with the new Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky was cancelled. In those days, we heard that he went to Canada -- a nation that has strong relations with Ukraine. At a certain point in the mission when the tension towards us was concrete, a letter was circulated by the spokesman of the Ukrainian Parliament warning us of the cancellation of the mission. We went to every appointment and we finished our job. Then, finally, the letter arrived and our vision was over.

I took a day off before flying back to visit the country's northern cities and then Kiev. Ukraine is at the moment the poorest country of Europe. 100,000 young people leave the country every year. I'm not an economist. I'm not a politician of great experience, but even a simple observer, as I am, can say that the people I met need social justice, a spread of prosperity. In fact, they need peace.

When I was back in my home country, the Republic of San Marino, I spoke to my Parliament about my mission, introducing the topics with some words about Flight MH17, destroyed by somebody with 298 people on board. There's a long list of innocent people who are paying with their lives for this absurd war. This is my last session here in Strasbourg. I strongly believe in the Council of Europe. I've been monitoring the Balkans and have had such a good experience. I'd like to close my last speech in this hemicycle as a normal citizen, as a politician, as a father, asking for something that will never be out of fashion: peace.

Thank you very much.