

Remarks by the ambassador of Denmark Ole Egberg Mikkelsen on the occasion of the handover of Danish donated vehicles for the psycho-social mobile teams, Kyiv 24 May 2023

Madam deputy prime minister, dear Ukrainian and international friends

Let me first of all thank UNFPA for inviting me this morning to witness the transfer of vehicles for, providing vital support to people, who suffer from gender based violence.

As you can see these are special vehicles equipped to provide services also to people with mobile disabilities. The vehicles will be provided to the teams operating in various regions of Ukraine.

Currently, 100 UNFPA mobile teams operate throughout Ukraine, providing free social and psychological assistance to gender based violence survivors. They can also refer them to other specialized services.

The teams also ensure transportation of survivors of domestic violence and gender based violence so they can receive assistance and services.

They also conduct outreach activities, including providing information on rights, available services, and confidential and survivor-oriented support options.

The mobile teams support people nationwide, all over Ukraine also in remote and hard-to-reach areas, near the frontline in Eastern and Southern Ukraine. I am particularly pleased to hear that they also operate in Denmark's partner city, Mykolaiv – the city of Heroes - that was a frontline city for 8 months.

The teams are working very hard: As of May 2023, mobile teams had provided over 100,000 services, including for cases of domestic and gender-based violence.

As Denmark's ambassador, I am proud that Denmark is supporting the work of the mobile teams by donating 15 vehicles to help survivors of gender-based violence in Ukraine.

Denmark is committed to supporting individuals with disabilities and survivors of gender-based violence, and we hope that these vehicles will provide a much-needed lifeline for those who may feel isolated or alone. We strongly believe in the importance of inclusion and accessibility. We are honored to partner with UNFPA and our Ukrainian friends and partners in this critical endeavor.

How does this donation fit into Denmark's overall support for Ukraine?

Denmark is a strong supporter of Ukraine's struggle for freedom. And actually it is not the first time that we are providing vehicles to support Ukraine.

But normally the vehicles that we are providing are of a different kind.

Denmark is for instance providing Caesar self-propelled howitzers, armed personnel carriers and not least Leopard tanks to support Ukraine's armed struggle.

Defense equipment and weapons are actually by far the biggest component of Denmark's support for Ukraine. For good reasons: Because your freedom is also our freedom. Thus, your struggle is also our struggle and we will support you as long as it takes.

Even though military support is crucial our support for Ukraine has a very important civilian component, including through the UN system as we see today.

Ukraine's struggle is not only a fight against brutal aggression and a fight for freedom and survival as a nation. It is also a fight for dignity and humanity, ensuring that for instance that victims of gender based violence are being assisted in a dignified, compassionate and humane manner.

Thus, the work of the teams of social workers and the volunteers, who will be using these vehicles, is also part of the epic struggle between democracy and tyranny, between light and darkness and between good and evil that is unfolding on Ukrainian soil.

I wish to take this opportunity to salute the teams that will be using these vehicles for your resilience. Denmark is proud to support you.

Let me also thank the UNPFA and the government of Ukraine and local and regional authorities for their strong commitment to support victims of gender based violence at this difficult time.

And finally my warmest thanks to you madam Deputy prime minister for taking time to be with us on this occasion. I wish you all the best with your important work in these difficult times.