STATEMENT

by the Delegation of Ukraine

at the plenary meeting of AEWA MOP8

(September 2022, Budapest)

Dear Chair, distinguished delegates and colleagues,

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to address you at this Meeting of the Parties to AEWA.

We would like to thank Hungary, the host country, for having organized the meeting of AEWA MOP8 and the AEWA Secretariat for their great work in preparing all the documents and arrangement of the meeting.

Today there is ongoing full-scale unprovoked and unjustified war launched by Russia against Ukraine.

As it has been repeatedly stated the Russia’s ongoing attack on Ukraine is also an attack on the environment. As a result of the foreign invasion, our natural heritage is being progressively damaged.

Russia continues destroying natural habitats – the source of biodiversity despite its membership in the Convention on Biological Diversity and other biodiversity related international treaties. It will take many years to restore them, including for rare and endangered species.

As of today, more than half of the Ramsar sites in Ukraine have been affected by the hostilities committed by the Russian armed forces. That includes the sites located at the coasts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov as well as lower part of the Dnipro and Danube rivers. More than 20 nature and biosphere reserves and national parks have suffered losses due to the Russian aggression. Ramsar sites are well known places that supports quite a number of waterbird species.

As per estimations territory of about 900 protected area objects with an area of more than 1 million hectares has been affected due to war including 200 Emerald Network sites with an area of 2.9 million hectares. Quite a number of those places are important habitats for waterbirds.

**Distinguished delegates,**

The war which is going on on the European Continent poses an existential threat to the world and brings unprecedented and long-lasting challenges to the environment and human habitat.

In accordance with the UN GA Resolution "Aggression against Ukraine" adopted by the UN member-states our delegation call on to continue our joint efforts with a view to putting an end to this aggression so that the whole world could feel safer and the wildlife and the waterbirds as its component could be better preserved for us and future generation.

Despite the war Ukraine continues to be committed to implement AEWA and other biodiversity related international treaties.

Our delegation wishes every success to the meeting in discussion and adoption of important resolutions.

I thank you, dear colleagues for your kind attention.