



Daily Report 221/2020

16 September 2020¹

Summary

- The SMM recorded no ceasefire violations in either Donetsk or Luhansk region. In the previous reporting period, it recorded four ceasefire violations in Donetsk and none in Luhansk region.
- The SMM followed up on reports of a man injured by an explosive object while working in a field in Metalist, Luhansk region.
- The Mission saw that the power supply to its camera system in Berezove, Donetsk region was disconnected.
- The Mission continued monitoring the disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske. During evening hours, an SMM long-range unmanned aerial vehicle spotted people inside the latter two areas.
- The Mission facilitated and monitored adherence to localised ceasefires to enable repairs to and the operation of critical civilian infrastructure.
- The Mission continued following up on the situation of civilians amid the COVID-19 pandemic, including at an entry-exit checkpoint and the corresponding checkpoint of the armed formations in Luhansk region.
- The SMM monitored a peaceful public gathering in Kyiv in relation to a recent decision made in the Trilateral Contact Group.
- The SMM's freedom of movement continued to be restricted, including at checkpoints of the armed formations near Korsun and Kreminets, Donetsk region.*

¹ Based on information from the Monitoring Teams as of 19:30, 15 September 2020. All times are in Eastern European Summer Time.

Ceasefire violations^{2,3}

In Donetsk region, the SMM recorded no ceasefire violations. During the [previous reporting period](#), it recorded four ceasefire violations.

In Luhansk region, the Mission recorded no ceasefire violations during the current or [previous recording period](#).

The Mission had previously recorded no ceasefire violations in both regions between the evenings of 8 and 9 September (see [SMM Daily Report 10 September 2020](#)).

Following agreement reached at the meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group on 22 July regarding additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire, from 00:01 on 27 July until the end of the reporting period, the SMM has so far recorded a total of 1,037 ceasefire violations in both Donetsk and Luhansk regions (including 189 explosions, nine projectiles in flight, 13 illumination flares and 826 bursts and shots).

Man injured in explosion in Metalist, Luhansk region

The SMM followed up on reports of a man who had been injured by an explosive object while working in a field in Metalist (non-government-controlled, 7km north-west of Luhansk).

On 14 September, the Mission spoke to a man (in his forties) by phone who said that he had sustained injuries including a minor concussion, bruises and facial wounds when an object he drove over with his tractor exploded while working in a field near Metalist. On 21 August, in Metalist, a woman (in her sixties) who introduced herself as the co-owner of an agricultural company told the Mission that on 20 August, in a field near the same settlement, one of her workers (man in his forties) had sustained injuries on the job when the tractor he had been driving hit an explosive object. She said that after the incident, he had been transported by a private car to the Railway Hospital in Luhansk city. The same day, medical staff at the hospital told the SMM that a man (in his forties) had been brought in on 20 August in a state of shock but had not sustained any injuries.

Disconnection of SMM camera in Berezove, Donetsk region

On 15 September, during a scheduled maintenance of its camera system in Berezove (government-controlled, 31km south-west of Donetsk), the SMM saw that the power cable located in the meter box that provided the camera with electricity was disconnected and that the system was operating on a backup power supply. The Mission reconnected the power supply and re-sealed the meter box.

Disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske

On 15 September, while positioned in government-controlled areas of the **disengagement area near Stanytsia Luhanska** (government-controlled, 16km north-east of Luhansk), the Mission observed a calm situation.

² During the reporting period, the SMM recorded no ceasefire violations, therefore the report does not contain the chart presenting trends or the map of ceasefire violations.

³ During the reporting period, the SMM cameras in Petrivske and near Shyrokyne were not operational

On the night between 14 and 15 September, inside the **disengagement area near Zolote** (government-controlled, 60km west of Luhansk), an SMM long-range unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) spotted three people inside former positions of the Ukrainian Armed Forces: two about 700m north-west of the area's north-eastern corner, on the southern edge of Katerynivka (government-controlled, 64km west of Luhansk), and another near the area's north-eastern corner. The same UAV also spotted a person within a former position of the armed formations near the area's eastern edge, about 1.4km north of its south-eastern corner.

On 15 September, the SMM saw six members of the armed formations (wearing armbands with "JCCC" written on them) near the checkpoint south of the disengagement area, two of whom walked up to about 350m north of its southern edge and then returned.

On the same day, about 500m south of the disengagement area's southern edge, the Mission saw 26 workers with heavy construction equipment putting gravel on both sides of the road and levelling the area with compactors. The SMM observed that 22 concrete electrical poles had been placed on both sides of the road along the construction site.

On the evening of 14 September, inside the **disengagement area near Petrivske** (non-government-controlled, 41km south of Donetsk), an SMM long-range UAV spotted two people inside former positions of the armed formations near the area's south-eastern corner.

During the day on 15 September, while positioned at four locations near the disengagement area, the SMM observed a calm situation.

Withdrawal of weapons

The Mission continued to monitor the withdrawal of weapons in implementation of the Memorandum and the Package of Measures and its Addendum.

On 15 September, the SMM saw a tank in violation of withdrawal lines near a government-controlled area of Donetsk region (for further details, see the table below).

Indications of military and military-type presence in the security zone⁴

The Mission observed armoured combat vehicles in the security zone on both sides of the contact line in Donetsk region and in non-government-controlled areas of Luhansk region (for further details, see the table below).

Presence of mines near Dolomitne, Shchastia bridge and Trokhizbenka

On 13 September, about 1km south-east of Dolomitne (53km north-east of Donetsk), on a road leading to Novoluhanske, an SMM mid-range UAV observed that the [previously reported](#) six anti-tank mines, assessed as belonging to the armed formations, were no longer present.

On 15 September, about 2km east of Shchastia (government-controlled, 20km north of Luhansk), the SMM [again](#) observed three rows of 39 anti-tank mines (TM-62), assessed as belonging to Ukrainian Armed Forces, laid across road H-21, about 150m south-east of the bridge in Shchastia.

⁴ The hardware mentioned in this section is not proscribed by the provisions of the Minsk agreements on the withdrawal of weapons.

On the same day, in Trokhizbenka (government-controlled, 32km north-west of Luhansk), the SMM saw that ten anti-tank mines at a Ukrainian Armed Forces checkpoint near a broken bridge had been removed (for previous observations in the area, see [SMM Daily Report of 11 April 2019](#)).

SMM facilitation of repairs to and operation of critical civilian infrastructure

The SMM facilitated and monitored adherence to localised ceasefires to enable construction work south of the southern edge of the disengagement area near Zolote (see above) and near Vesela Hora (non-government-controlled, 16km north of Luhansk), south of the bridge in Shchastia.

The Mission also facilitated and monitored adherence to localised ceasefires to enable construction work on the phenol sludge reservoir near Zalizne (formerly Artemove, government-controlled, 42km north-east of Donetsk); railway maintenance and vegetation clearance in Vilkhove (government-controlled, 22km north-east of Luhansk); inspection of and repairs to water infrastructure near non-government-controlled Zolote-5/Mykhailivka (61km north-west of Luhansk) and Pankivka (16km north of Luhansk); as well as demining activities near government-controlled Hirske (63km west of Luhansk), Orikhove (57km north-west of Luhansk) and Heivka (27km north-west of Luhansk), including to support access to agricultural land.

The SMM also continued to facilitate the operation of the Donetsk Filtration Station (15km north of Donetsk).

Measures taken at entry-exit checkpoints and corresponding checkpoints to counter the COVID-19 pandemic

In Luhansk region, on 15 September, the Mission noted that the entry-exit checkpoint (EECP) in Stanytsia Luhanska and the corresponding checkpoint of the armed formations south of the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge were operational.

While at the EECP at 10:30 and 12:00, the SMM saw in total 480 people (mixed genders and ages) queuing to enter government-controlled areas and in total 150 people (mixed genders and ages) queuing in the opposite direction. The Mission also observed a golf cart operating between the new section of the bridge and the EECP.

SMM monitored a peaceful gathering in Kyiv

On 14 September, in front of the Verkhovna Rada at 5 Mykhaila Hrushevskoho Street, the SMM monitored a peaceful gathering of about 200 people (mixed gender and ages), some of whom were expressing messages critical of a recent decision made in the Trilateral Contact Group.

The SMM continued monitoring in Kherson, Lviv, Odessa, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kharkiv, Dnipro and Chernivtsi.

***Restrictions of the SMM's freedom of movement or other impediments to fulfilment of its mandate**

The SMM's monitoring and freedom of movement are restricted by security hazards and threats, including risks posed by mines, unexploded ordnance (UXO) and other impediments – which vary from day to day. The SMM's mandate provides for safe and secure access throughout Ukraine. All signatories of the Package of Measures have agreed on the need for this safe and secure access, that restriction of the SMM's freedom of movement constitutes a violation, and on the need for rapid response to these violations. They have also agreed that the Joint Centre for Control and Co-operation (JCCC) should contribute to such response and co-ordinate mine clearance. Nonetheless, the armed formations in parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions frequently deny the SMM access to areas adjacent to Ukraine's border outside control of the Government (for example, [SMM Daily Report 15 September 2020](#)). The SMM's operations in Donetsk and Luhansk regions remain restricted following [the fatal incident of 23 April 2017 near Pryshyb](#); these restrictions continued to limit the Mission's observations.

Denials:

- On 15 September, at a checkpoint of the armed formations near Korsun (non-government-controlled, 31km north-east of Donetsk), a visibly armed member of the armed formations denied the SMM passage, citing “ongoing exercises” in the area.
- On the same day, at a checkpoint of the armed formations near Kremynets (non-government-controlled, 16km south-west of Donetsk) a visibly armed member of the armed formations denied the SMM passage to Oleksandrivka (non-government-controlled, 20km south-west of Donetsk).

Delay:

- On 15 September, at the checkpoint of the armed formations near Olenivka (non-government-controlled, 23km south-west of Donetsk), a visibly armed member of the armed formations delayed the SMM for approximately 140 minutes, citing orders from his superiors.

Regular restrictions related to disengagement areas and mines/UXO:

- The sides continued to deny the SMM full access, as well as the ability to travel certain roads previously identified as important for effective monitoring by the Mission and for civilians' movement, through failure to conduct comprehensive clearance of mines, UXO and other obstacles.

Other impediments:

- On the evening of 14 September, an SMM long-range UAV, experienced GPS signal interference, assessed as caused by probable jamming, while flying over areas between Marinka (government-controlled, 23km south-west of Donetsk) and Rozdolne (non-government-controlled, 46km south-west of Donetsk).
- On 15 September, an SMM mini-UAV experienced GPS signal interference, assessed as caused by probable jamming, while flying over the areas near Hranitne (government-controlled, 60km south of Donetsk).⁵

⁵ The interference could have originated from anywhere within a radius of kilometres from the UAVs positions.

Table of weapons

Weapons in violation of withdrawal lines

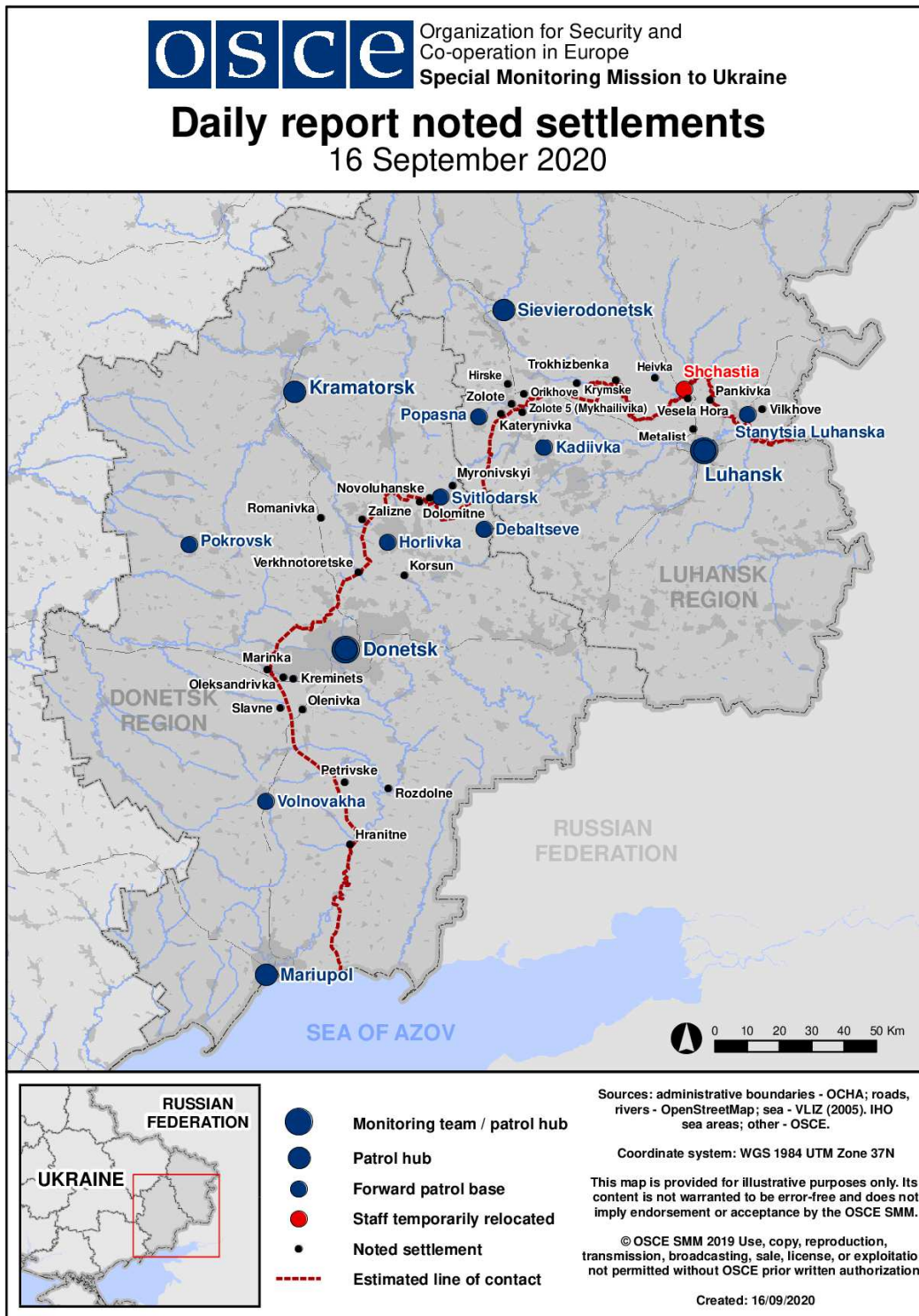
Date	No.	Type	Location	Source of observation
Government-controlled areas				
15/09/2020	1	Tank (T-72)	Near Romanivka (41km north of Donetsk)	Patrol

Table of military and military-type presence in the security zone⁶

Date	No.	Type	Location	Source of observation
Government-controlled areas				
14/09/2020	1	Armoured personnel carrier (BTR-70)	Near Slavne (26km south-west of Donetsk)	Long-range UAV
15/09/2020	1	Armoured combat vehicle	Near Krymske (42km north-west of Luhansk)	
	1	Infantry fighting vehicle (type undetermined)	Near Katerynivka (64km west of Luhansk)	
	1	Infantry fighting vehicle (type undetermined)	Near Myronivskyi (62km north-east of Donetsk)	
	1	Armoured combat vehicle	On the north-western outskirts of Trokhizbenka (32km north-west of Luhansk)	
	2	Armored personal carrier (BTR-70)	Inside a UAF compound on the north-western outskirts of Shchastia (20km north of Luhansk)	Patrol
1	Infantry fighting vehicle (BMP variant)	Near Verkhnotoretske (23km north-east of Donetsk)		
Non-government-controlled areas				
14/09/2020	12	Infantry fighting vehicle (BMP-1)	Near Rozdolne (46km south-east of Donetsk)	Long-range UAV
	2	Armoured personnel carrier (one BTR-70 and one BTR-60)		

⁶ The hardware mentioned in this section is not proscribed by the provisions of the Minsk agreements on the withdrawal of weapons.

Map of Donetsk and Luhansk regions⁷



⁷ The SMM is deployed to ten locations throughout Ukraine – Kherson, Odessa, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kharkiv, Donetsk, Dnipro, Chernivtsi, Luhansk and Kyiv – as per Permanent Council Decision 1117 of 21 March 2014. This map of eastern Ukraine is meant for illustrative purposes and indicates locations mentioned. In the report, as well as those where the SMM has offices (monitoring teams, patrol hubs, and forward patrol bases) in Donetsk and Luhansk regions. (In red: a forward patrol base from which SMM staff has temporarily relocated based on recommendations of security experts from participating States as well as SMM security considerations. The SMM uses the premises during daylight hours and patrols in this settlement during daylight hours, as well.)