



# Daily Report 254/2020

24 October 2020<sup>1</sup>

## Summary

- The SMM recorded no ceasefire violations in both Donetsk and Luhansk regions. In the previous reporting period, it recorded 45 ceasefire violations in Donetsk region and none in Luhansk region.
- The SMM continued monitoring the disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske. During the evening hours, an SMM long-range unmanned aerial vehicle spotted people inside the disengagement area near Petrivske.
- The Mission facilitated and monitored adherence to localised ceasefires to enable repairs to and the operation of critical civilian infrastructure, including to enable repairs to water infrastructure and construction work in government-controlled and non-government-controlled areas of Luhansk region.
- The SMM continued following up on the situation of civilians amid the COVID-19 pandemic, including at an entry-exit checkpoint in Luhansk region.
- The Mission's freedom of movement continued to be restricted.\*

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<sup>1</sup> Based on information from the Monitoring Teams as of 19:30, 23 October 2020. All times are in Eastern European Summer Time.

## Ceasefire violations<sup>2</sup>

In Donetsk region, the SMM recorded no ceasefire violations, compared to the [previous reporting period](#), when it recorded 45 ceasefire violations (all explosions) near Donetsk Filtration Station (15km north of Donetsk).

In Luhansk region, the SMM recorded no ceasefire violations, as in the [previous reporting period](#). The last time it recorded a ceasefire violation in the region was on 15 October (see [SMM Daily Report 17 October 2020](#)).

Following the 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 1,832 ceasefire violations in both Donetsk and Luhansk regions (including 542 explosions, 29 projectiles in flight, 16 muzzle flashes, 22 illumination flares and 1,223 bursts and shots).

## Disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske<sup>3</sup>

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.

Throughout the day, near the checkpoint of the armed formations south of the **disengagement area near Zolote** (government-controlled, 60km west of Luhansk), the Mission saw three members of the armed formations (wearing armbands with “JCCC” written on them), all of whom entered the disengagement area up to about 350m north of its southern edge and then returned. South of the checkpoint of the armed formations, the SMM saw 34 workers with heavy machinery and equipment conducting vegetation clearing, graveling and leveling of both sides of road T-1316, constructing a metal structure, drilling holes in the asphalt, assessed as for the installation of metal poles, and working on the installation of roadside concrete blocks.

On the same day, about 250m south of the disengagement area’s southern edge, the Mission saw about 15 workers with one mini-bus and one asphalt-rolling machine, assessed as in preparation for laying asphalt. It also observed a member of the armed formations (wearing an armband with “JCCC” written on it) and nine other people inside the disengagement area, three people carrying metal detectors while conducting checks on road T-1316 and six others clearing the vegetation from the aforementioned road.

On the evening of 22 October, inside **the disengagement area near Petrivske** (non-government controlled, 41km south of Donetsk), an SMM long-range unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) spotted four people inside a former position of the armed formations, near the area’s south-eastern corner.

On 23 October, while positioned north of Petrivske, the Mission saw a car with two men in military-type clothing, driving from Styla (non-government-controlled, 34km south of Donetsk) towards Petrivske and another car with two men in military-type clothing driving in the opposite direction.

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<sup>2</sup> For a complete breakdown of ceasefire violations, please see the annexed table. During the reporting period, the SMM cameras in Petrivske and Berezove were not operational.

<sup>3</sup> Disengagement is foreseen in the Framework Decision of the Trilateral Contact Group relating to disengagement of forces and hardware of 21 September 2016.

### **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.

### **Indications of military and military-type presence in the security zone<sup>4</sup>**

The Mission observed armoured combat vehicles in a residential area of government-controlled areas of Luhansk region and in a non-government-controlled-area of Donetsk region (for further information, see the table below).

### **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, north of Shchastia (government-controlled, 20km north of Luhansk), and near Vesela Hora (non-government-controlled, 16km north of Luhansk), south of the bridge in Shchastia.

It also facilitated and monitored adherence to localised ceasefires to enable railway inspection, maintenance and vegetation clearance near Vilkhove (government-controlled, 22km north-east of Luhansk); maintenance of road T-1316 near Zolote – north and south of the disengagement area – and of road H-21 south of Shchastia; and demining activities near government-controlled Hirske (63km west of Luhansk) and Zolote-4/Rodina (59km west of Luhansk).

North of the bridge in Shchastia, at the junction of roads H-21 and T-1309, about 190m north-west of the checkpoint of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, the Mission saw 14 workers with heavy equipment, installing electricity cables on containers, reportedly being assembled for administrative use.

Near the checkpoint of the armed formations about 2.5km east of Vesela Hora and about 3km south-east of the bridge, the SMM saw around 30 workers from non-government-controlled areas with heavy equipment digging holes for the installation of light poles and asphaltting both lanes of road H-21.

The SMM continued to facilitate the operation of the DFS.

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

In Luhansk region, the Mission noted that the entry-exit checkpoint (EECP) in Stanytsia Luhanska remained non-operational.<sup>5</sup>

While at the EECP at about 08:30, 11:00 and 15:00, the Mission saw in total 110 people (80 women and 30 men, mixed ages) queuing to travel towards non-government-controlled areas.

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

<sup>5</sup> Notice about the EECP's temporary closure from 15 October to 31 October 2020 was published on the website of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 13 October. A representative of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine reconfirmed to the SMM on 23 October that the EECP would remain closed until 31 October because of COVID-19 mitigation measures, with special exceptions.

A representative of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine told the SMM that the Border Guards do not make the assessment on whether someone qualifies for an exception or not to be allowed to cross the EECP inside or outside government-controlled areas. That assessment is conducted by the Ukrainian Armed Forces and submitted to them in the form of a list for implementation. The reason that qualifies a specific person for an exception is not written on the list thus they can't tell which categories qualify for an exception.

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

### **\*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-ordination (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, see [SMM Daily Report 12 October 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.*

*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.

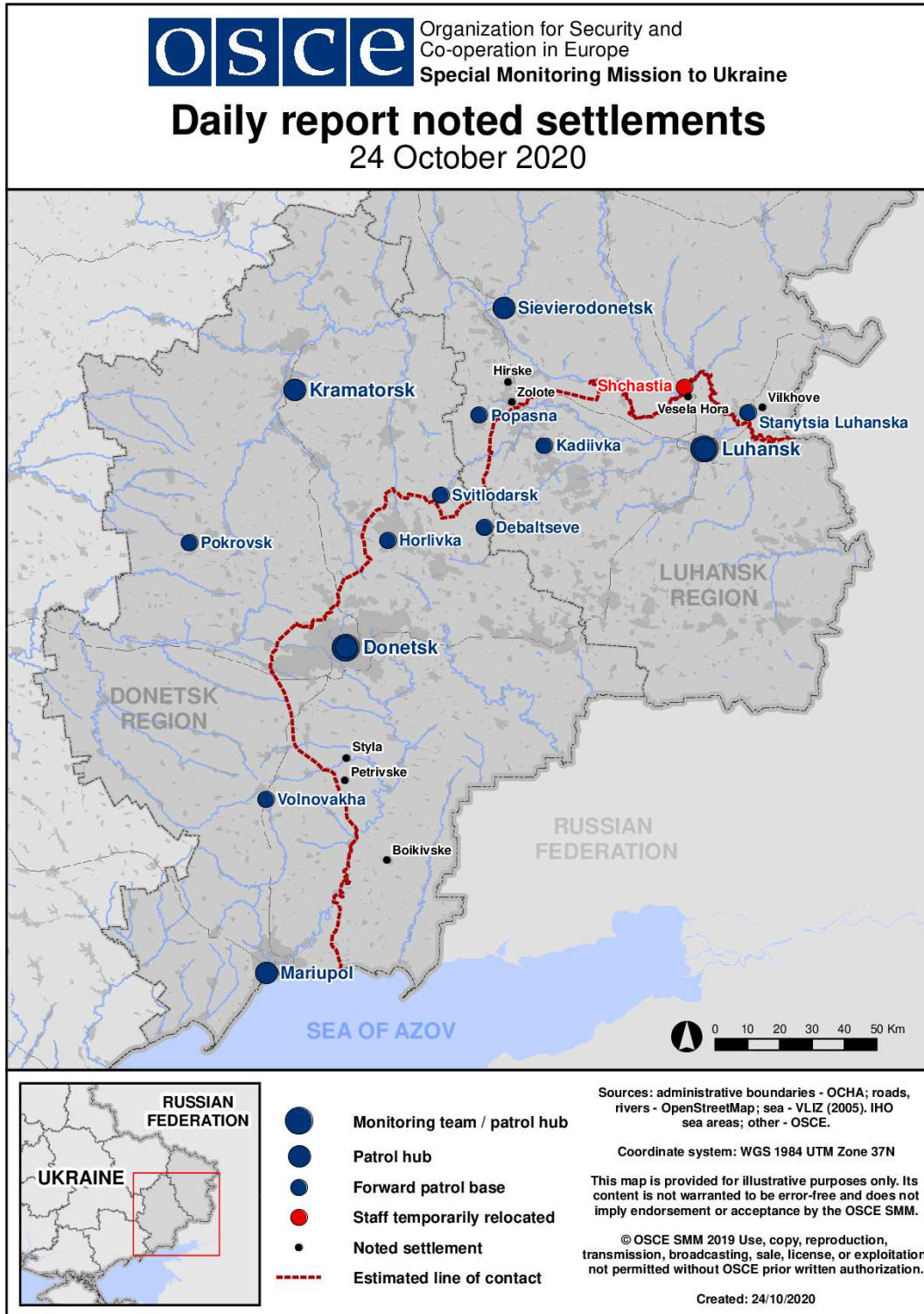
**Table of military and military-type presence in the security zone<sup>6</sup>**

<b>Date</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Source of observation</b>
<b>Government-controlled areas</b>				
22/10/2020	2	Armoured personnel carrier (BTR-70)	In a residential area of Shchastia (20km north of Luhansk)	Long-range UAV
	1	Trench digger (PZM-2)		
<b>Non-government-controlled areas</b>				
22/10/2020	5	Armoured combat vehicle (including a probable infantry fighting vehicle)	In a training area near Boikivske (formerly Telmanove, 67km south-east of Donetsk), in a zone within which deployment of heavy armament and military equipment is proscribed according to Point 5 of the Memorandum of 19 September 2014	Long-range UAV

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<sup>6</sup> 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 regions<sup>7</sup>



<sup>7</sup> 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 have 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 also patrols in this settlement during daylight hours.)