

Daily Report 298/2020

15 December 2020¹

Summary

- The SMM recorded no ceasefire violations in Donetsk region. In the previous 24 hours, the Mission recorded 34 ceasefire violations in the region.
- The Mission recorded 21 ceasefire violations in Luhansk region. In the previous 24 hours, it recorded one ceasefire violation in the region.
- A man was injured by the detonation of an explosive object in Slovianoserbsk, Luhansk region.
- The SMM continued monitoring the disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske and observed a calm situation inside all three.
- The Mission observed 13 tanks in violation of withdrawal lines in non-government-controlled areas of Donetsk region.
- The SMM facilitated and monitored adherence to localised ceasefires to enable the construction and maintenance of and repairs to critical civilian infrastructure.
- The Mission continued following up on the situation of civilians, including at four entry-exit checkpoints and four checkpoints of the armed formations in Donetsk and Luhansk regions. At the Stanytsia Luhanska entry-exit checkpoint in Luhansk region, the SMM saw the body of a person who had died from natural causes.
- The SMM visited four border crossing points in areas outside government control of Luhansk region.
- The Mission's freedom of movement continued to be restricted, including at a border crossing point outside government control near Izvaryne, Luhansk region.*

Ceasefire violations²

Number of recorded ceasefire violations³



Number of recorded explosions⁴



¹ Based on information from the Monitoring Teams as of 19:30, 14 December 2020. All times are in Eastern European Time.

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

³ Including explosions

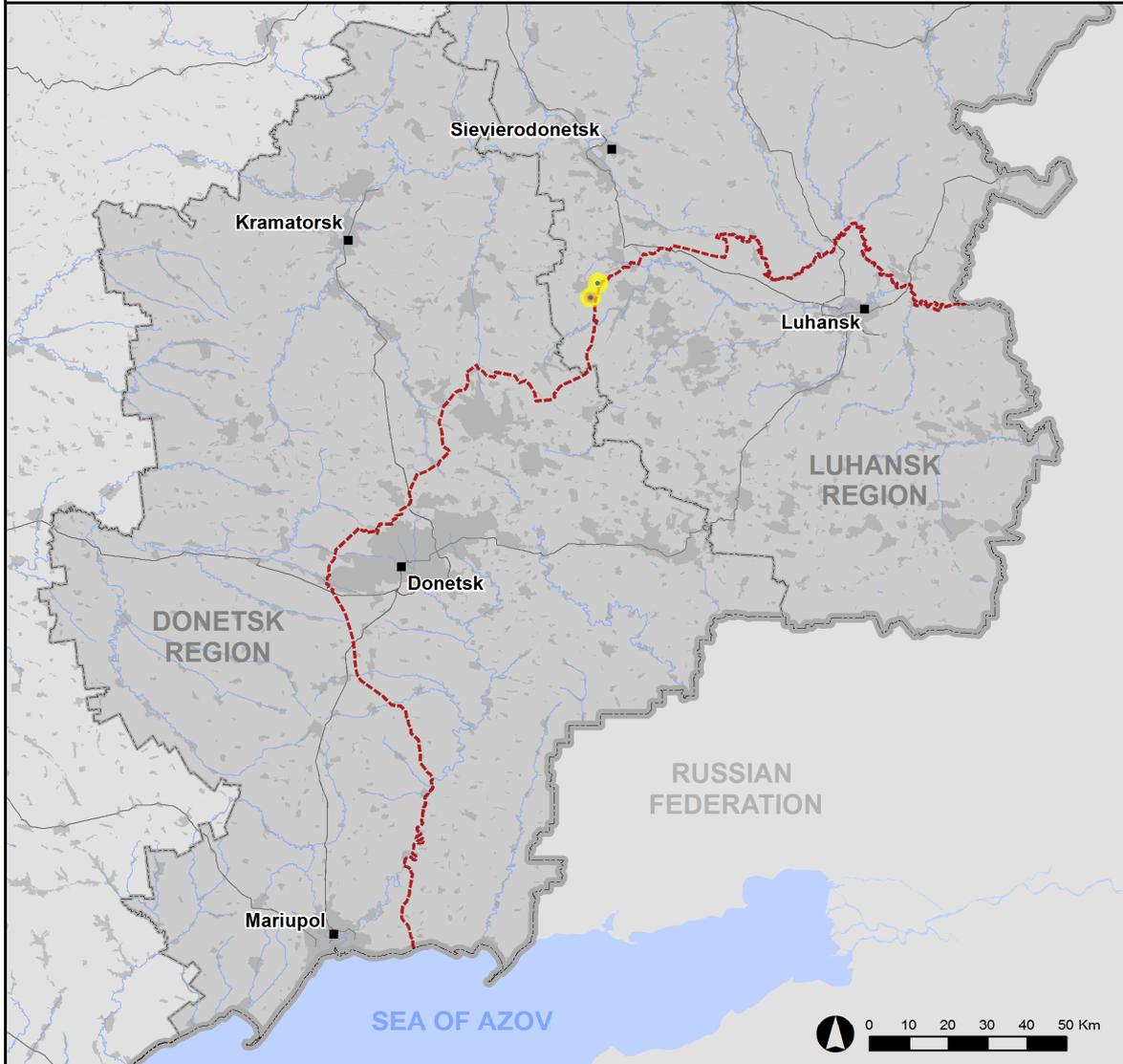
⁴ Including from unidentified weapons

Map of recorded ceasefire violations

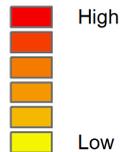


Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe
Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine

Ceasefire violations observed by the SMM 14 December 2020



Ceasefire violation concentration



- Explosion
- Settlement
- Estimated line of contact

Sources: Administrative Boundaries - OCHA; Roads, Rivers - OpenStreetMap; Sea - VLIZ (2005), IHO Sea Areas; Other - OSCE.

Coordinate System: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 37N

This map is provided for illustrative purposes only. Its content is not warranted to be error-free and does not imply endorsement or acceptance by the OSCE SMM.

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Created: 15/12/2020

In Donetsk region, the Mission recorded no ceasefire violations. In the [previous 24 hours](#), the Mission recorded 34 ceasefire violations in the region.

In Luhansk region, the SMM recorded 21 ceasefire violations, all undetermined explosions, 20 of which in an area south-east of Popasna (government-controlled, 69km west of Luhansk). In the [previous 24 hours](#), the Mission recorded one ceasefire violation in the region, an undetermined explosion in the same area.

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 3,683 ceasefire violations in both Donetsk and Luhansk regions (including 1,693 explosions, 118 projectiles in flight, 51 muzzle flashes, 41 illumination flares and 1,780 bursts and shots).

Man injured by detonation of an explosive object in Slovianoserbsk, Luhansk region

The SMM followed up on reports of a man (in his sixties) who suffered injuries from the detonation of an explosive object in Slovianoserbsk (non-government-controlled, 28km north-west of Luhansk).

On 12 December, a man (in his sixties) told the Mission that on 4 October he had been fishing on the Siverskyi Donets river bank somewhere between Slovianoserbsk and Dovhe (non-government-controlled, 22km north-west of Luhansk) and had stepped on an object which had subsequently exploded. He said that as a result, he had lost the lower part of his left leg, which the SMM visually confirmed. According to medical certificates which the man showed to the Mission, he had been admitted to a hospital in Luhansk city on 4 October. On 5 October, staff at the hospital told the SMM by phone that on 4 October, a man (in his sixties) had been admitted with injuries consistent with those caused by the detonation of an explosive object.

Disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske⁵

Inside the **disengagement area near Stanytsia Luhanska** (government-controlled, 16km north-east of Luhansk), the SMM saw three members of the armed formations (wearing armbands with “JCCC” written on them) on the southern edge of the repaired span of the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge (15km north-east of Luhansk).

While positioned about 1.7km south-west of Molodizhne (non-government-controlled, 63km north-west of Luhansk), the Mission heard an undetermined explosion at an assessed range of 1-2km west-north-west, assessed as outside the **disengagement area near Zolote** (government-controlled, 60km west of Luhansk) but within 5km of its periphery. Near the checkpoint of the armed formations south of the area, the SMM saw four members of the armed formations (wearing armbands with “JCCC” written on them), of whom three walked inside the area to about 350m north of its southern edge and then returned.

While positioned at two locations near the **disengagement area near Petrivske** (non-government-controlled, 41km south of Donetsk), the Mission observed a calm situation.

⁵ Disengagement is foreseen in the Framework Decision of the Trilateral Contact Group relating to disengagement of forces and hardware of 21 September 2016.

Anti-tank mines near Lohvynove, Donetsk region

On 13 November, about 3km north-west of Lohvynove (non-government-controlled, 59km north-east of Donetsk) an SMM mini-unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) again spotted 32 anti-tank mines (probable TM-62), 14 of which were laid across road M-03 and 18 in the adjacent field east of the road (assessed as part of a larger minefield). All these mines were assessed as belonging to the armed formations (for previous observations in the area see SMM Daily Reports of [20 January](#) and [7 August 2020](#)).

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.

In non-government-controlled areas of Donetsk region, in violation of withdrawal lines, the SMM saw 12 tanks in a training area and a tank near a residential area (for further details, see table below).

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

In non-government-controlled areas of Donetsk region, the SMM spotted armoured combat vehicles in residential areas and in a training area (for further information, see the table below).

SMM facilitation of construction and maintenance of and repairs to critical civilian infrastructure

The SMM facilitated and monitored adherence to localised ceasefires to enable construction of a power line between government-controlled Lopaskyne (23km north-west of Luhansk) and Lobacheve (17km north-west of Luhansk), repairs to a water conduit between government-controlled Raihorodka (34km north-west of Luhansk) and Lopaskyne, inspection of and repairs to water infrastructure in Zolote-5/Mykhailivka (non-government-controlled, 61km west of Luhansk) and demining activities near Heivka (government-controlled, 27km north-west of Luhansk).

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

Situation at entry-exit checkpoints and corresponding checkpoints

In Donetsk region, the Mission observed that the entry-exit checkpoint (EECP) near Novotroitske (government-controlled, 36km south-west of Donetsk) and the corresponding checkpoint of the armed formations near Olenivka (non-government-controlled, 23km south-west of Donetsk) were operational, with pedestrians and vehicles passing through in both directions.

In Luhansk region, the SMM noted that the EECP near Stanytsia Luhanska as well as the corresponding checkpoint of the armed formations south of the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge were operational, with pedestrians queueing to travel in both directions.

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

On 13 December, while at the EECP, the Mission saw the body of a person covered over with a black plastic sheet. A Ukrainian Armed Forces representative to the Joint Centre for Control and Co-ordination (JCCC) told the SMM that the body was of a man (in his eighties) who had died while crossing towards government-controlled areas. On 14 December, staff at a hospital in Stanytsia Luhanska told the Mission that on 13 December, the body of a man (in his eighties) had been transferred to the hospital's morgue, where it had been later established that he had passed away from natural causes.

The Mission also noted that the EECPs near Zolote and Shchastia (government-controlled, 20km north of Luhansk) were operational but that the corresponding checkpoints of the armed formations south of the disengagement area near Zolote and 3km south-east of the bridge in Shchastia remained closed.

Border areas outside government control

While at a border crossing point near Izvaryne (52km south-east of Luhansk) for 15 minutes, the Mission observed two cars (including one with "LPR" plates) and about 36 people (two men and four women, mixed ages, and about 30 children, about 12-14 years old) exiting Ukraine. After three minutes, a member of the armed formations told the SMM to leave the area.*

While at a border crossing point near Verkhnoharasymivka (57km south-east of Luhansk) for about 20 minutes, the SMM saw four people (one woman and two men, about 25-35 years old, and one child, about ten years old) exiting Ukraine.

While at a border crossing point near Krasnodarskyi (58km south-east of Luhansk), the Mission noted that it appeared to be closed and that there were no personnel present.

While at a border crossing point near Nyzhnia Harasymivka (56km south-east of Luhansk) for about ten minutes, the SMM saw four people (men in their twenties) entering Ukraine and two people (one woman in her forties and one man in his fifties) exiting Ukraine.

The SMM continued monitoring in Kherson, Odessa, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kharkiv, Dnipro, 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 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 below). 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.

Denial:

- At the border crossing point near Izvaryne (non-government-controlled, 52km south-east of Luhansk), a member of armed formations told the Mission to leave the area, referring to a “lack of permission for the SMM from senior members of the armed formations”.

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 weapons

Weapons in violation of withdrawal lines

Date	No. of weapons	Type of weapons	Location	Source of observation
Non-government-controlled areas				
13/12/2020	1	Tank (T-64BV)	Near a residential area of Novohryhorivka (61km north-east of Donetsk)	Mini-UAV
	12	Tank (T-72B)	In a training area near Sofiivka (formerly Karlo-Marksove, 40km north-east of Donetsk) (see also the table below)	

Table of military and military-type presence in the security zone⁷

Date	No.	Type	Location	Source of observation
Non-government-controlled areas				
13/12/2020	1	Probable armoured personnel carrier (BTR variant)	In a residential area of Novohryhorivka (61km north-east of Donetsk)	Mini-UAV
	11	Infantry fighting vehicle (BMP variant)	In a training area near Sofiivka (formerly Karlo-Marksove, 40km north-east of Donetsk)	
	1	Armoured personnel carrier (MT-LB)	In a residential area of Lohvynove (59km north-east of Donetsk)	
11/12/2020	1	Target and acquisition radar (1RL134, P-19, <i>Danube</i>)	Near Verbova Balka (28km south-east of Donetsk) (for previous observations in the area, see SMM Daily Report 14 December 2020)	

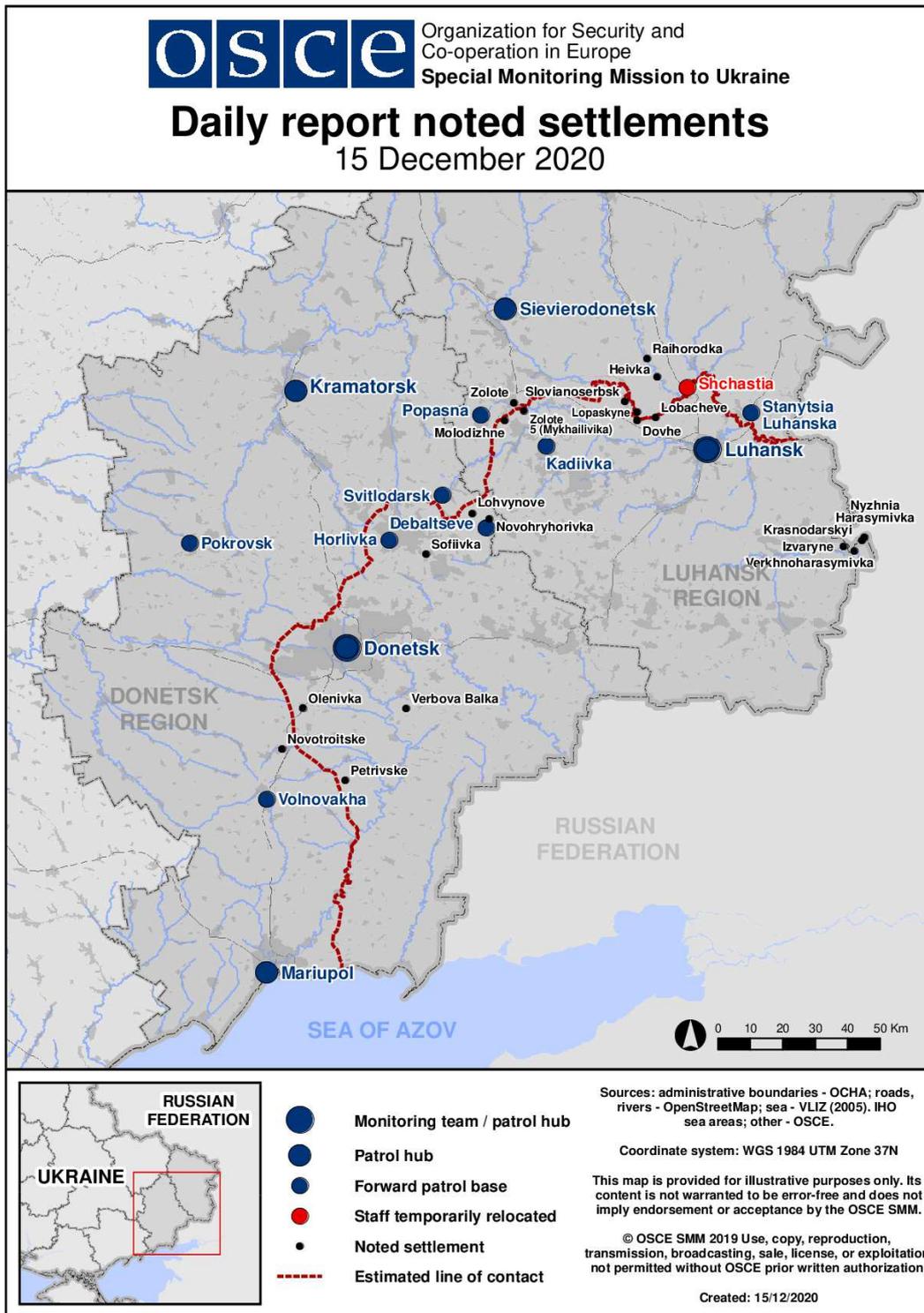
⁷ The hardware mentioned in this section is not proscribed by the provisions of the Minsk agreements on the withdrawal of weapons.

Table of ceasefire violations as of 14 December 2020⁸

SMM position	Event location	Means	No.	Observation	Description	Weapon	Date, Time
N edge of Popasna (government-controlled, 69km W of Luhansk)	5-8km SSE	Heard	11	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	13-Dec, 22:04-22:07
	5-8km SSE	Heard	9	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	13-Dec, 22:35-22:55
1.7km SW of Molodizhne (non-government-controlled, 63km NW of Luhansk)	1-2km WNW	Heard	1	Explosion	Undetermined (assessed as outside the disengagement area)	N/K	14-Dec, 13:37

⁸ The table only includes ceasefire violations directly observed by SMM patrols or recorded by the SMM cameras, and it may include those also assessed to be live-fire exercises, controlled detonations, etc. Details provided – in terms of distance, direction, weapons-type, etc. – are based on assessments provided by monitors on the ground and technical monitoring officers, and are not always necessarily precise. When information is not known (indicated with an “N/K”), the SMM was unable to ascertain such information due to distance, weather conditions technical limitations and/or other considerations. Ceasefire violations recorded by more than one patrol/camera and assessed to be the same are entered only once.

Map of Donetsk and Luhansk regions⁹



⁹ 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).