

Daily Report 67/2021

23 March 2021¹

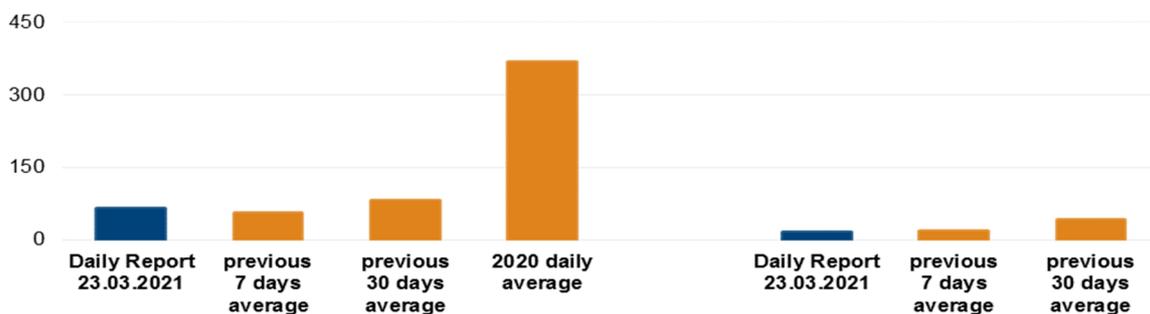
Summary

- In Donetsk region, the SMM recorded 65 ceasefire violations. In the previous 24 hours, it recorded 15 ceasefire violations in the region.
- In Luhansk region, the Mission recorded no ceasefire violations, as in the previous 24 hours.
- The SMM lost spatial control of its mini-unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) in non-government-controlled Donetsk city and small-arms fire was assessed as directed at another UAV in Spartak, Donetsk region.
- The SMM continued monitoring the disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske. An SMM mini-UAV spotted a person, and for the first time, a trench extension inside the area near Zolote.
- The Mission facilitated and monitored adherence to localized ceasefires to enable maintenance and operation of critical civilian infrastructure.
- The SMM continued following up on the situation of civilians, including at five entry-exit checkpoints and four corresponding checkpoints of the armed formations in 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, 22 March 2021. 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 camera in Petrivske was not operational.

³ Including explosions.

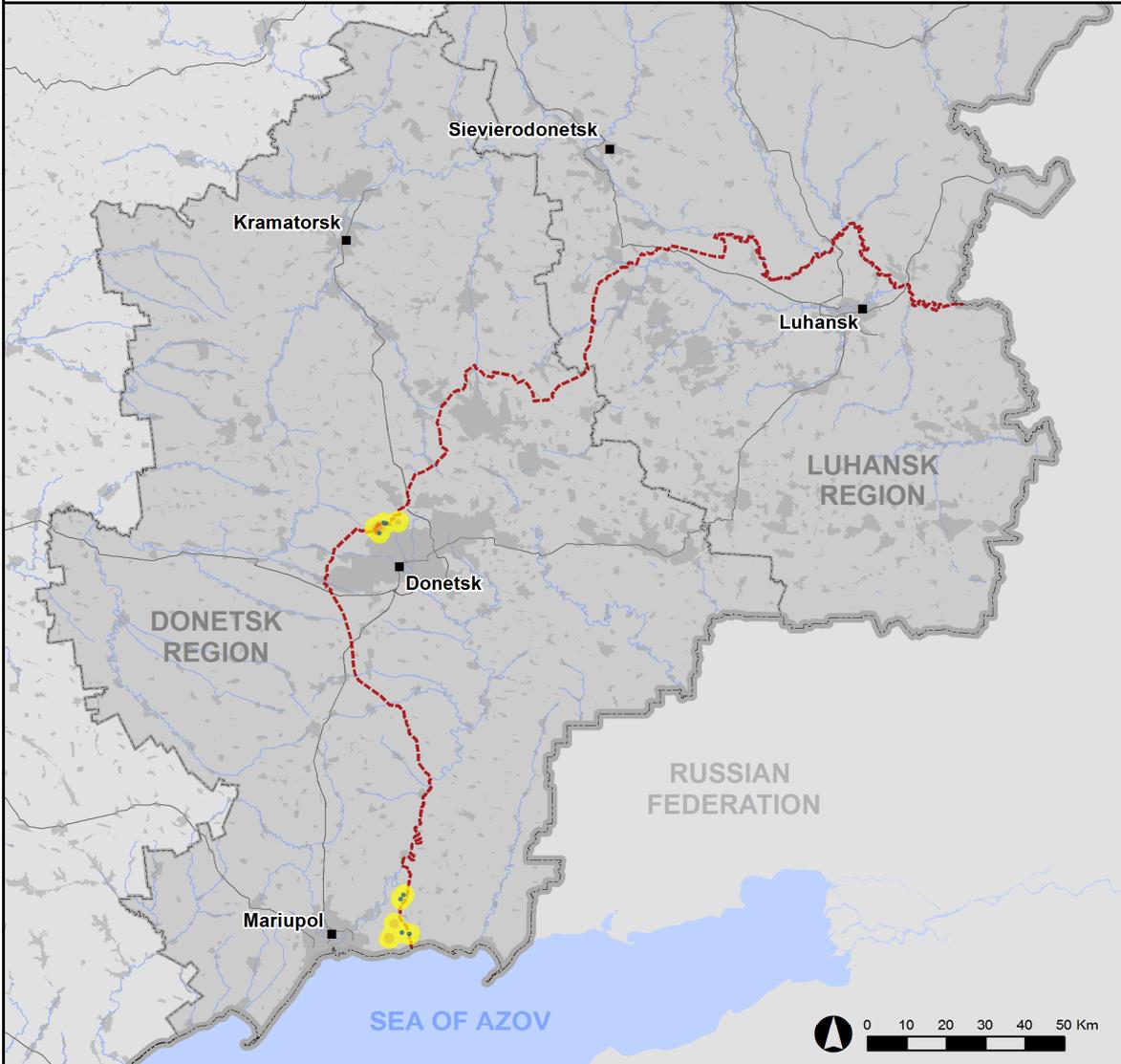
⁴ Including from unidentified weapons.

Map of recorded ceasefire violations

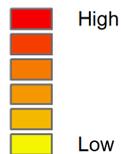


Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe
Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine

Ceasefire violations observed by the SMM 22 March 2021



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: 23/03/2021

In Donetsk region, the SMM recorded 65 ceasefire violations, including 15 undetermined explosions, most of which occurred at southerly and north-easterly directions of Lebedynske (government-controlled, 99km south of Donetsk) and at northerly and westerly directions of Vesele (non-government-controlled, 9km north-west of Donetsk). In the [previous 24 hours](#), the Mission recorded 15 ceasefire violations.

In Luhansk region, the Mission recorded no ceasefire violations for the second consecutive day. The last time the Mission recorded ceasefire violations in the region was on 20 March. (See [SMM Daily Report of 22 March 2021](#).)

Following agreement reached at the meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group on 22 July 2020 regarding additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire, from 00:01 on 27 July 2020 until the end of the reporting period, the SMM has so far recorded at least 12,785 ceasefire violations in both Donetsk and Luhansk regions (including 4,590 explosions, 1,521 projectiles in flight, 154 muzzle flashes, 63 illumination flares and at least 6,457 bursts and shots).

The SMM lost spatial control of its mini-UAV in non-government-controlled Donetsk city and small-arms fire was assessed as directed at SMM UAV in Spartak

On the morning of 22 March, the SMM was positioned on the north-western edge of non-government-controlled Donetsk city to conduct an announced mini-unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) flight. From 09:31 to 09:37, while the UAV was flying over an area about 2km north-north-west of the SMM's position, the aircraft experienced signal interference, after which, at 09:37, the Mission lost spatial control over it. The SMM was not able to retrieve the UAV. On the same day, during two previous flights in the area, the same UAV also experienced signal interference.*

While positioned in Spartak (non-government-controlled, 9km north of Donetsk) to conduct an announced mini-UAV flight, the Mission heard eight shots of small-arms fire at assessed range of 300-400m north, assessed as aimed at the UAV, which was flying about 300-400m north of the SMM's position. The Mission landed the UAV and left the area. During the same flight, prior to the shots being heard, the UAV had experienced signal interference.*

Disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske⁵

While positioned inside the **disengagement area near Stanytsia Luhanska** (government-controlled, 16km north-east of Luhansk), the SMM saw four members of the armed formations (wearing armbands with "JCCC" written on them) south of the repaired span of the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge (15km north-east of Luhansk).

While positioned at the checkpoint of the Ukrainian Armed Forces on the northern edge of the **disengagement area near Zolote** (government-controlled, 60km west of Luhansk), the SMM saw two vehicles, one mini-van and another car bearing the logo *civil-military administration*, driving from the direction of the entry-exit checkpoint (EECP) near Zolote and then turning in a north-easterly direction towards Zolote-4/Rodina (government-controlled, 62km west of Luhansk).

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

While positioned near the checkpoint of the armed formations south of the area, the Mission again saw five containers inside a fenced perimeter south of its southern edge, on the southern edge of the road leading eastwards towards Zolote-5/Mykhailivka (non-government-controlled, 61km west of Luhansk). The Mission also again saw another container on the area's southern edge. Inside the area, it again saw a container about 60–70m north of the other five and another one about 350m north of the area's southern edge, both on the western edge of road T-1316.

On 20 March, inside the disengagement area, an SMM mini-UAV spotted one person wearing military clothing and carrying a weapon near a former position of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, about 450m north-east of the railway bridge. On the northern edge of the disengagement area, about 400m west of its north-eastern corner, an SMM mini-UAV spotted an infantry fighting vehicle (BTR-4).

On the same day, inside the disengagement area, the same mini-UAV spotted for the first time a 10m-long trench extension extending in a north-easterly direction, about 60m east of the area's western edge and about 580m north-north-east of its south-western corner (not visible in imagery from 26 July 2020).

On 22 March, an SMM mini-UAV experienced signal interference, assessed as caused by probable jamming, while flying over and near the disengagement area near Zolote.*

On the same day, while positioned at three locations near the **disengagement area near Petrivske** (non-government-controlled, 41km south of Donetsk) the Mission 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.

In violation of withdrawal lines, the SMM observed 21 howitzers and seven multiple launch rocket systems in a non-government-controlled area of Luhansk region, as well as two mortars in a non-government-controlled area of Donetsk region.

Beyond withdrawal lines but outside designated storage sites, the SMM observed 20 tanks in non-government-controlled areas of Luhansk region. (For further information, see the tables below.)

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

The SMM saw armoured combat vehicles in government-controlled areas of both Donetsk and Luhansk regions, including in residential areas. (For further information, see the table below.)

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

Anti-tank mines near Staromykhailivka in Donetsk region, Molodizhne and Popasna in Luhansk region

On 19 March, an SMM mini-UAV again spotted at least 240 anti-tank mines laid in a field about 1.8km north-north-west of Staromykhailivka (non-government-controlled, 15km west of Donetsk), north of the road leading to Krasnohorivka (government-controlled, 21km west of Donetsk), as well as six anti-tank mines laid across the same road 200m further west, all assessed as belonging to the armed formations. (For previous observations in the area, see [SMM Daily Report of 12 May 2020](#).)

On 20 March, an SMM mini-UAV again spotted about 75 anti-tank mines laid in a field about 2.4km west-south-west of Molodizhne (non-government-controlled, 63km north-west of Luhansk) north of road T-0504, assessed as belonging to the armed formations. On the eastern edge of Popasna (government-controlled, 69km west of Luhansk), the same UAV spotted about 100 anti-tank mines in a field south of the same road, assessed as belonging to the Ukrainian Armed Forces. (For previous observations in the area, see [SMM Daily Report of 12 January 2021](#).)

SMM facilitation of maintenance and operation of critical civilian infrastructure

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

The SMM also monitored the security situation near the pumping station near Vasylivka (non-government-controlled, 20km north of Donetsk).

The Mission also monitored adherence to localized ceasefires to enable regular railway track inspection, maintenance and vegetation clearance in Vilkhove (government-controlled, 22km north-east of Luhansk), as well as maintenance to power lines in non-government-controlled Metalist (7km north-west of Luhansk), Obozne (18km north of Luhansk), and Pryvitne (11km north of Luhansk).

Situation at entry-exit checkpoints and corresponding checkpoints

In Donetsk region, the Mission noted that the 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 open, with traffic passing through in both directions.

While positioned near the EECP near Hnutove (government-controlled, 90km south of Donetsk), the SMM observed that it was open, but did not observe any traffic passing through.

In Luhansk region, the Mission noted that the EECP near Stanytsia Luhanska and the corresponding checkpoint of the armed formations south of the repaired span of the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge were open, with people queuing to travel in both directions.

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 were closed.

Border areas outside government control

While at a border crossing point near Izvaryne (52km south-east of Luhansk), the Mission observed two cars (including one with “LPR” plates) and one bus entering Ukraine. During the same time, it also observed one car exiting Ukraine. After about 5 minutes, a member of the armed formations told the SMM to leave the area.*

While at a pedestrian border crossing point near Verkhnoharasymivka (57km south-east of Luhansk), for about 30 minutes, the SMM observed two people (a man and woman, in their forties) entering Ukraine and four people (two men and two women, mixed ages) exiting Ukraine.

While at a pedestrian border crossing point near Krasnodarskyi (58km south-east of Luhansk), for about 10 minutes, the Mission observed four people (three women and one man, mixed ages) entering Ukraine and one man (in his fifties) exiting Ukraine.

While at the pedestrian border crossing point near Nyzhnia Harasymivka (56km south-east of Luhansk), for about 10 minutes, the SMM observed one woman (in her fifties) entering Ukraine and one woman (in her thirties) exiting Ukraine.

The SMM continued monitoring in Odessa, Kherson, 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 Minsk agreements 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 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 a border crossing point near Izvaryne (non-government-controlled, 52km south-east of Luhansk), a member of the armed formations told the SMM to leave the area, citing “orders from 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:⁷

- On 22 March, an SMM mini-UAV experienced signal interference, while flying over areas on the north-western outskirts of Donetsk city, after which the Mission lost spatial control over it (see above). On the same day, during two previous flights in the area, the same UAV also experienced signal interference. All cases were assessed as caused by probable jamming.
- While positioned in Spartak (non-government-controlled, 9km north of Donetsk) to conduct an announced mini-UAV flight, the SMM heard eight shots of small-arms fire, assessed as aimed at the UAV. The Mission landed the UAV and left the area. During the same flight, the UAV experienced signal interference, assessed as caused by probable jamming (see above).
- An SMM mini-UAV experienced signal interference, on four occasions during four separate flights, all assessed as caused by probable jamming, while flying over areas near Vesele (non-government-controlled, 9km north-west of Donetsk).
- An SMM mini-UAV experienced signal interference, assessed as caused by probable jamming, while flying over areas near Lebedynske (government-controlled, 99km south of Donetsk).
- An SMM mini-UAV experienced signal interference, assessed as caused by probable jamming, while flying over and near the disengagement area near Zolote (government-controlled, 60km west of Luhansk).

⁷ For cases of probable jamming and jamming mentioned in this section, the interference could have originated from anywhere within the radius of kilometres from the UAVs' positions.

Table of weapons

Weapons in violation of withdrawal lines

Date	No. of weapons	Type of weapon	Location	Source of observation
Non-government-controlled areas				
19/3/2021	2	Mortar (2B11 <i>Sani</i> , 120mm)	Near Staromykhailivka (15km west of Donetsk)	Mini-UAV
22/3/2021	8	Self-propelled howitzer (2S1 <i>Gvozdika</i> , 122mm)	At the airfield near Peremozhne (19km south of Luhansk)	Patrol
	7	Multiple launch rocket system (BM-21 <i>Grad</i> , 122mm)		
	6	Towed howitzer (2A65 <i>Msta-B</i> , 152mm)		
	6	Towed howitzer (D-30 <i>Lyagushka</i> , 122mm)		
	1	Self-propelled howitzer (2S3 <i>Akatsiya</i> , 152mm)		

Weapons beyond withdrawal lines but outside designated storage sites

Date	No. of weapons	Type of weapon	Location	Source of observation
Non-government-controlled areas				
22/3/2021	13	Tank (seven T-72 and six T-64)	At the airfield near Peremozhne (19km south of Luhansk)	Patrol
	5	Tank (T-64)	Near Khrustalnyi (formerly Krasnyi Luch, 56km south-west of Luhansk)	
	2	Tank (T-72)	Near Heorhiivka (15km south of Luhansk)	

Table of military and military-type presence in the security zone⁸

Date	No.	Type	Location	Source of observation
Government-controlled areas				
20/3/2021	1	Infantry fighting vehicle (BTR-4)	Near Zolote (60km west of Luhansk)	Mini-UAV
	1	Armoured combat vehicle	In residential areas of Zolote (60km west of Luhansk)	
21/3/2021	4	Infantry fighting vehicle (BTR-4)		Mini-UAV
22/3/2021	4	Infantry fighting vehicle (two BMP-1 and two BMP-2)	In a residential area of Bohdanivka (41km south-west of Donetsk)	Patrol
	1	Armoured personnel carrier (MT-LB)		

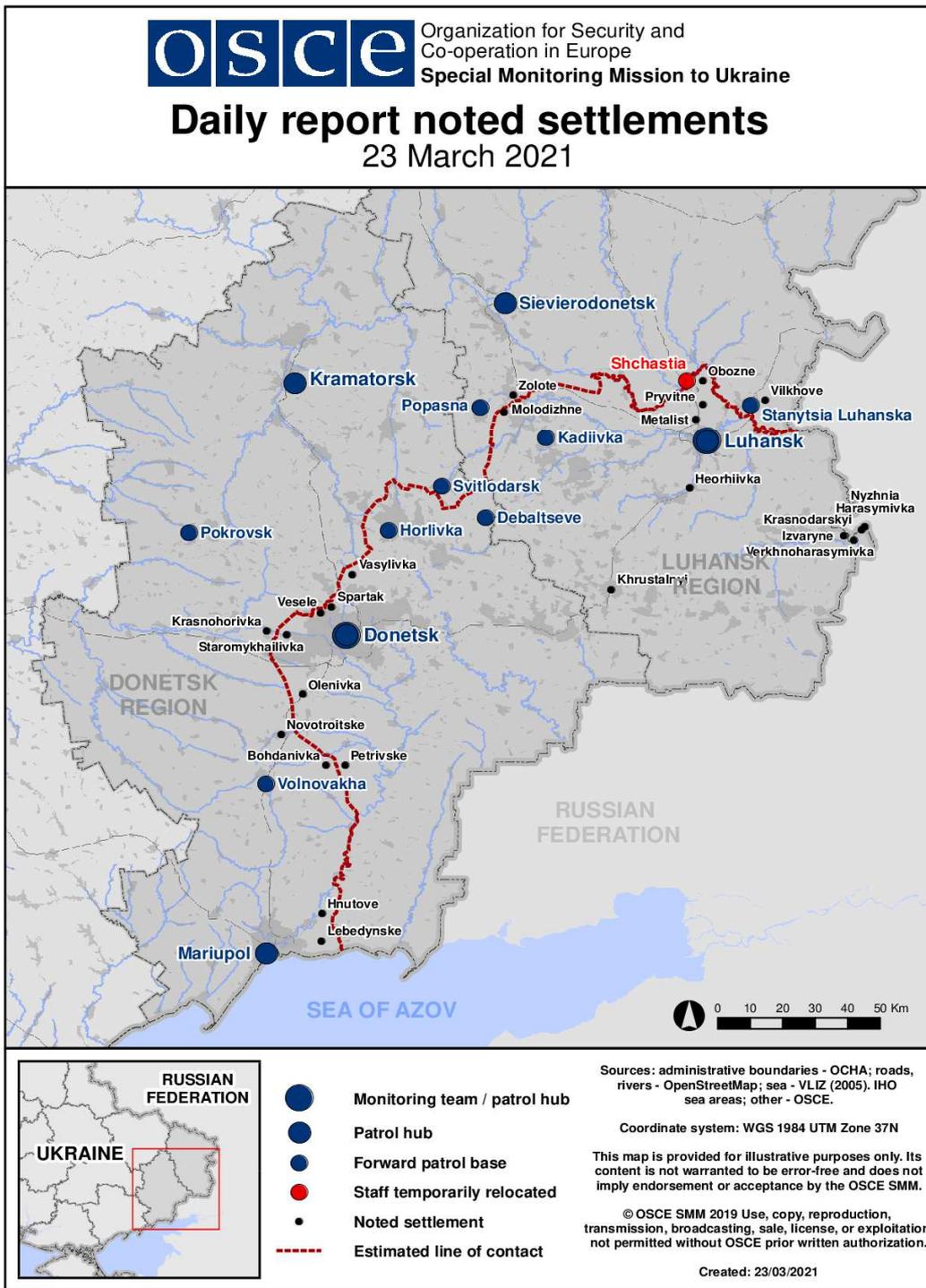
⁸ The hardware mentioned in this section is not proscribed by the provisions of the Minsk agreements on the withdrawal of weapons.

Table of ceasefire violations as of 22 March 2021⁹

SMM position	Event location	Means	No.	Observation	Description	Weapon	Date, time
SMM camera 1.5km NE of Hnutove (government- controlled, 90km S of Donetsk)	2-4km ESE	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	22-Mar, 01:24
SMM camera 1km SW of Shyrokyne (government- controlled, 100km S of Donetsk)	4-6km NNE	Recorded	3	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	21-Mar, 19:31
	4-6km N	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	21-Mar, 19:53
About 2km NE of Chernenko (government- controlled, 86km S of Donetsk)	2-4km SE	Heard	3	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	22-Mar, 09:00-09:12
About 600m NE of Lebedynske (government- controlled, 99km S of Donetsk)	1km S	Heard	13	Shot		Small arms	22-Mar, 11:02-11:04
	2-4km NNE	Heard	8	Shot		Small arms	22-Mar, 11:26
	2-4km NNE	Heard	3	Shot		Small arms	22-Mar, 11:31
W edge of Vesele (non- government- controlled, 9km NW of Donetsk)	1-2km N	Heard	5	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	22-Mar, 10:46-10:55
	1-2km SW	Heard	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	22-Mar, 10:53
	1-2km WNW	Heard	11	Burst		HMG	22-Mar, 10:56
	1-2km SW	Heard	3	Shot		Small arms	22-Mar, 10:59
	1-2km NNE	Heard	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	22-Mar, 11:15
About 500m NE of Vesele (non- government- controlled, 9km NW of Donetsk)	2-4km W	Heard	4	Burst		Small arms	22-Mar, 12:12
Spartak (non- government- controlled, 9km N of Donetsk)	300-400m N	Heard	8	Shot		Small arms	22-Mar, 12:44

⁹ 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 regions¹⁰



¹⁰ 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).