

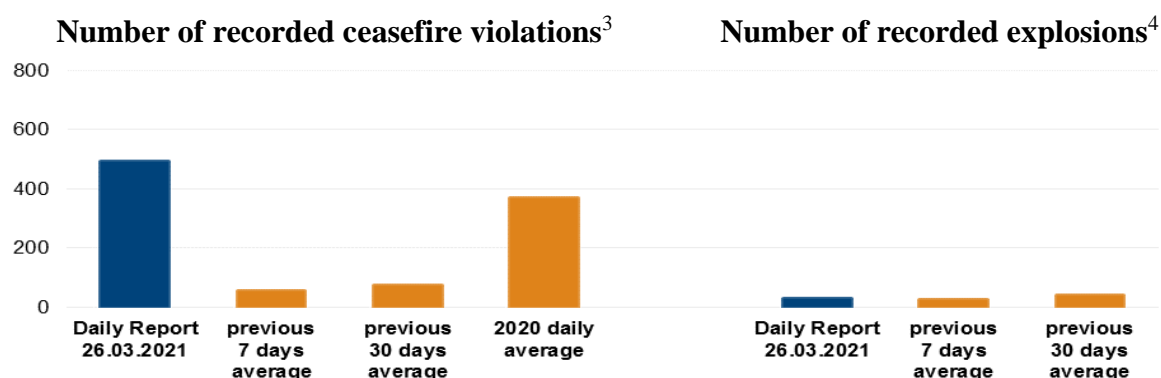
Daily Report 70/2021

26 March 2021¹

Summary

- In Donetsk region, the Mission recorded 493 ceasefire violations, most of them shots and bursts of small-arms fire. In the previous reporting period, it recorded 89 ceasefire violations in the region.
- In Luhansk region, the SMM recorded one ceasefire violation. In the previous reporting period, it recorded no ceasefire violations in the region.
- Small-arms were fired near an SMM patrol in government-controlled Pavlopil, Donetsk region.
- The Mission continued monitoring the disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske.
- The Mission facilitated and monitored adherence to localized ceasefires to enable maintenance, operation and repairs of critical civilian infrastructure.
- The SMM continued following up on the situation of civilians, including at three entry-exit checkpoints and three corresponding checkpoints of the armed formations in Luhansk region.
- The Mission's freedom of movement continued to be restricted.*

Ceasefire violations²



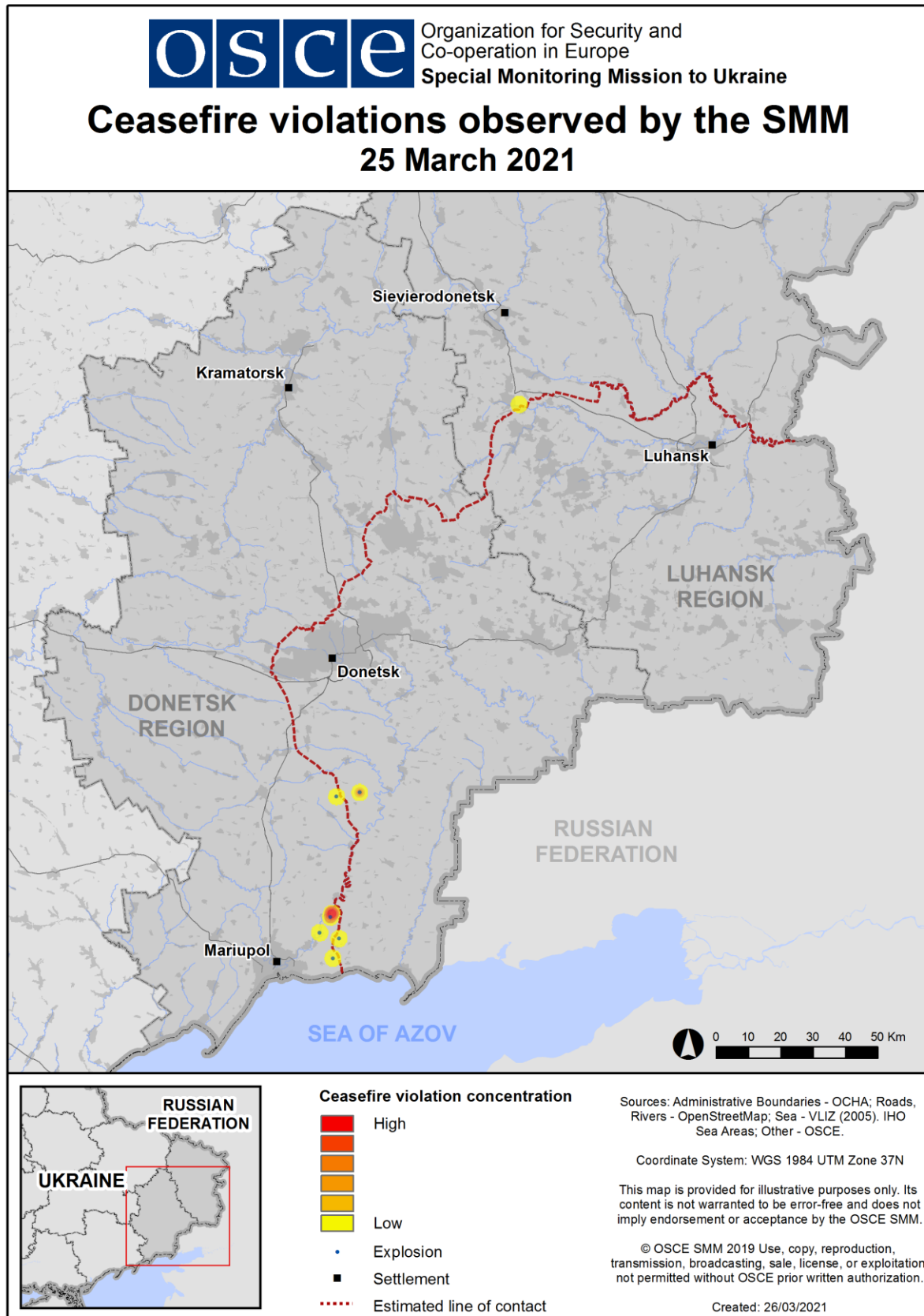
¹ Based on information from the Monitoring Teams as of 19:30, 25 March 2021. All times are in Eastern European Time.

² For a complete breakdown of ceasefire violations, please see the annexed table. During the reporting period, the SMM cameras in Petrivske and in the southern part of the Zolote disengagement area were not operational, and weather conditions limited the observational capabilities of some of the other SMM cameras.

³ Including explosions.

⁴ Including from unidentified weapons.

Map of recorded ceasefire violations



In Donetsk region, the SMM recorded 493 ceasefire violations, including 30 explosions (three outgoing and 27 undetermined), the majority of which occurred in an areas east of Pavlopil (government-controlled, 84km south of Donetsk), where the Mission heard 400 shots and bursts of small-arms fire (see below), and at northerly and southerly directions of Chernenko (government-controlled, 86km south of Donetsk). In the [previous reporting period](#), the Mission recorded 89 ceasefire violations.

In Luhansk region, the Mission recorded one ceasefire violation – an undetermined explosion in an area close to the disengagement area near Zolote (government-controlled, 60km west of Luhansk) (see below). In the [previous reporting period](#), the Mission recorded no ceasefire violations.

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 13,375 ceasefire violations in both Donetsk and Luhansk regions (including 4,692 explosions, 1,540 projectiles in flight, 154 muzzle flashes, 63 illumination flares and at least 6,926 bursts and shots).

Small-arms fired near SMM patrol in government-controlled Pavlopil, Donetsk region

On the morning of 25 March, while positioned on the north-eastern edge of Pavlopil, the Mission heard about 300–400 shots and bursts of small-arms fire at an assessed range of 300–400m east of its position. The Mission immediately left the area, relocating to a position in the centre of Pavlopil.*

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 two 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).

On 25 March, while positioned about 3km north of Pervomaisk (non-government-controlled, 58km west of Luhansk), the Mission heard an undetermined explosion assessed as outside the **disengagement area near Zolote** but within 5km of its periphery.

On the same day, inside the area, the SMM saw four members of the armed formations (wearing armbands with “JCCC” written on them), two of whom walked inside the area to about 350m north of its southern edge and then returned, accompanied by a civilian vehicle carrying two people in protective medical gear.

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 its southern edge, both on the western edge of road T-

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

1316. The Mission also observed two workers, who were reportedly installing a water meter inside the fenced perimeter south of the area's southern edge.

While positioned about 2km north of Petrivske (non-government-controlled, 41km south of Donetsk), the Mission heard 23 undetermined explosions, assessed as outside the **disengagement area near Petrivske** but within the 5km of its periphery.

On road C-051532 between Petrivske and Viktorivka (non-government-controlled, 42km south-west of Donetsk), about 280m west-north-west of the area's north-eastern corner, the Mission observed for the first time a piece of unexploded ordnance (UXO), assessed as a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG-7), lying on the northern edge of a road and a metal bar-shaped barrier lying across the road nearby. (Both not seen on 25 February 2021.)

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 ten howitzers, 15 tanks and a multiple-launch rocket system, all at three training areas in non-government-controlled Donetsk region.

Beyond withdrawal lines but outside designated storage sites, the Mission observed three surface-to-air missile systems and two probable anti-tank guns in government-controlled areas of Donetsk region, as well as 61 tanks and 11 pieces of artillery (howitzers, mortars and anti-tank guns) at two training areas in non-government-controlled Donetsk region. (For further information, see the tables below.)

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

The SMM saw infantry fighting vehicles in a training area in non-government-controlled Donetsk region. (For further information, see the tables below.)

Anti-tank mines at the destroyed Donetsk international airport

On 22 March, at the destroyed Donetsk international airport, an SMM mini-unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) spotted, for the first time, about 20 anti-tank mines laid in the grass about 10m south of a taxiway (assessed as not recently laid). The same UAV also again spotted 123 anti-tank mines laid in three rows across the width of the taxiway: 23 running north to south, 50 running west to east about 170m further north (most of the latter assessed as TM-62P) and 50 running north to south about 130m further east-north-east. All these mines were assessed as belonging to the armed formations. (For previous observations in the area, see [SMM Daily Reports of 7 July 2020](#) and [28 September 2020](#).)

On 24 March, in Chernenko, an SMM mini-UAV spotted about ten de-miners of an international organization conducting de-mining activities in a field north of road C-051220.

SMM facilitation of maintenance and operation of critical civilian infrastructure

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

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

The Mission also monitored adherence to localized ceasefires to enable railway track inspection, maintenance and vegetation clearance in Vilkhove (government-controlled, 22km north-east of Luhansk), and maintenance and repairs of sewage treatment installations near a government-controlled area of Dolomitne (53km north-east of Donetsk).

Situation at entry-exit checkpoints and corresponding checkpoints

In Luhansk region, the Mission noted that the entry-exit checkpoint (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 queueing to travel in both directions.

The Mission also noted that the EECPs near Zolote and Shchastia (government-controlled, 20km north of Luhansk) were open 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.

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, 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 [SMM Daily Report of 23 March 2021](#).) 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.

Other impediments:⁷

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 UAV's position.

- An SMM mini-UAV on three occasions experienced GPS signal interference, assessed as caused by probable jamming, while flying over areas near Holmivskiyi (non-government-controlled, 49km north-east of Donetsk).
- While positioned on the north-eastern edge of Pavlopil (government-controlled, 84km south of Donetsk), the Mission heard about 300–400 shots and bursts of small-arms fire at an assessed range of 300–400m east of its position. (See above.)

Table of weapons

Weapons in violation of withdrawal lines

Date	No. of weapons	Type of weapon	Location	Source of observation
Non-government-controlled areas				
24/3/2021	3	Self-propelled howitzer (2S1 <i>Gvozdika</i> , 122mm)	In a training area near Novoselivka (37km north-east of Donetsk) (See also below.)	Mini-UAV
	15	Tank (T-72)		
	7	Self-propelled howitzer (2S1 <i>Gvozdika</i> , 122mm)	In a training area near Ternove (57km east of Donetsk)	
	1	Multiple launch rocket system (BM-21 <i>Grad</i> , 122mm)	In a training area near Pokrovka (36km east of Donetsk)	

Weapons beyond withdrawal lines but outside designated storage sites

Date	No. of weapons	Type of weapon	Location	Source of observation
Government-controlled areas				
24/3/2021	3	Surface-to-air missile system (9K35 <i>Strela</i> -10)	In a compound in Berdychi (24km north-west of Donetsk)	Mini-UAV
25/3/2021	2	Probable anti-tank gun (MT-12 <i>Rapira</i> , 100mm)	In Pokrovsk (formerly Krasnoarmiisk, 55km north-west of Donetsk)	Patrol
Non-government-controlled areas				
24/3/2021	44	Tank (37 T-72 and seven T-64)	In a training area near Ternove (57km east of Donetsk)	Mini-UAV
	2	Anti-tank gun (MT-12 <i>Rapira</i> , 100mm)	In a training area near Pokrovka (36km east of Donetsk)	
	3	Self-propelled howitzer (2S1 <i>Gvozdika</i> , 122mm)		
	17	Tank (12 T-72 and five T-64)		
	3	Towed howitzer (D-30A <i>Lyagushka</i> , 122mm)		
	3	Towed mortar (2B9 <i>Vasilek</i> , 82mm)		

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

Date	No.	Type	Location	Source of observation
Non-government-controlled areas				
24/3/2021	8	Infantry fighting vehicle (BMP variant)	In a training area near Novoselivka (37km north-east of Donetsk)	Mini-UAV

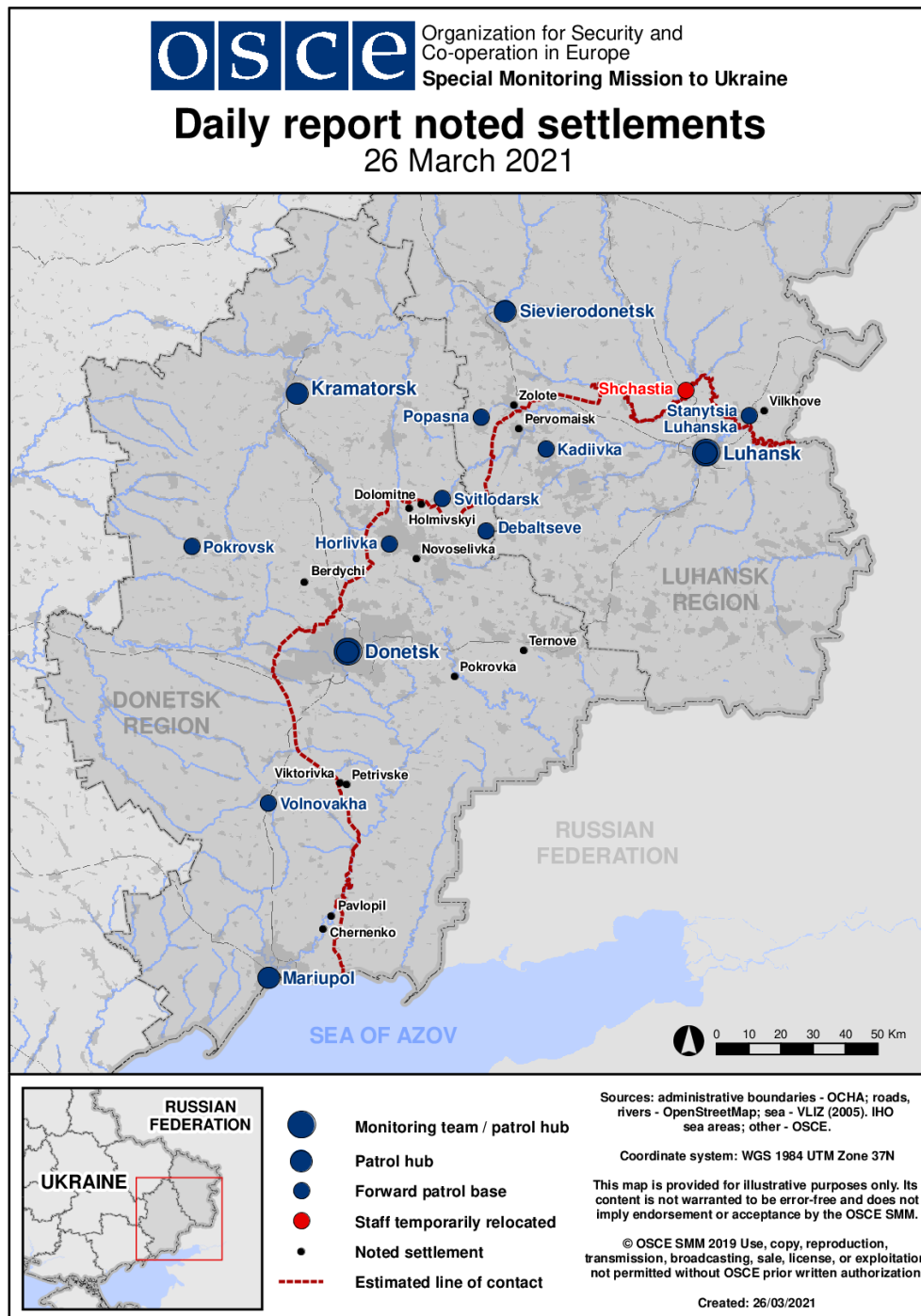
⁸ The hardware mentioned in this section is not proscribed by the provisions of the Minsk agreements on the withdrawal of weapons.

Table of ceasefire violations as of 25 March 2021⁹

SMM position	Event location	Means	No.	Observation	Description	Weapon	Date, time
About 2km N of Petrivske (non-government-controlled, 41km S of Donetsk)	5-8km SSW	Heard	3	Explosion	Undetermined (assessed as outside the disengagement area)	N/K	25-Mar, 09:16-09:22
	5-8km SE	Heard	15	Explosion	Undetermined (assessed as outside the disengagement area)	N/K	25-Mar, 09:25-09:29
	5-8km SE	Heard	5	Explosion	Undetermined (assessed as outside the disengagement area)	N/K	25-Mar, 09:49-09:51
About 500m NE of Pavlopil (government-controlled, 84km S of Donetsk)	300-400m E	Heard	400	Shots and bursts		Small arms	25-Mar, 10:45-10:53
About 2km NE of Chernenko (government-controlled, 86km S of Donetsk)	3km NNE	Heard	2	Explosion	Outgoing	N/K	25-Mar, 11:41-11:52
	3km SW	Heard	1	Explosion	Outgoing	N/K	25-Mar, 11:41-11:52
	5-6km SE	Heard	2	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	25-Mar, 11:41-11:52
	3km NNE	Heard	60	Shots and bursts		Small arms	25-Mar, 12:02-12:03
About 600m NE of Lebedynske (government-controlled, 99km S of Donetsk)	3km ENE	Heard	4	Burst		HMG	25-Mar, 12:45-12:50
	3km ENE	Heard	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	25-Mar, 12:58
3km N of Pervomaisk (non-government-controlled, 58km W of Luhansk)	3-5km NNE	Heard	1	Explosion	Undetermined (assessed as outside the disengagement area)	N/K	25-Mar, 13:14

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).