



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation No 798 Vienna, 30 September 2015

EU Statement on the Security Situation in and around Ukraine

The European Union and its Member States remain encouraged by the continued relative calm along the contact line. We reiterate that the security situation remains fragile and unpredictable. The window of opportunity created by the recent progress on the ground should be seized without further delay.

In this spirit, we urge all parties to comply with the obligation to withdraw heavy weapons. We are encouraged by the latest news that an agreement on the withdrawal of weapons with a calibre less than 100 mm was reached in the TCG. We express our hope that this agreement will be finalised and implemented without further delay. We underline again the need for an effective verification regime which would allow the SMM to independently verify the withdrawal of heavy weapons as well as smaller calibre weapons from the respective exclusion zones

We reiterate our strong support for the work of the Normandy format and the Trilateral Contact Group in their efforts to achieve a politically sustainable solution based on OSCE principles and commitments, and with full respect for Ukraine's independence, unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We repeat our call on all parties to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk agreements and honour their commitments in full. The ceasefire must be respected in full, all heavy weapons withdrawn and foreign armed formations, military equipment and mercenaries removed from Ukraine. We underline the Russian authorities' responsibility in this regard. We are concerned by the large concentration of tanks in separatist-held areas along the contact line as recently reported by the Special Monitoring Mission. We recall our concern about the reports regarding continued inflow of military equipment and personnel into Ukraine from the Russian Federation. We also expect the Russian Federation to use its considerable influence over the separatists to meet their Minsk commitments in full. We note with concern the increase in casualties related to landmines and unexploded ordnance, as reported by the SMM. In this context, we reiterate our call on all sides to implement the agreement of the

Foreign Ministers of the Normandy format that no more landmines should be laid and that efforts to clear mines should begin.

We emphasise the vital role of the SMM in supporting efforts to consolidate the recent progress on the ground. The SMM must be granted free and unhindered access throughout Ukraine, including the Crimean peninsula and along the border with Russia. It is unacceptable that the mission continues to face significant restrictions in its monitoring activities in some areas close to the border with the Russian Federation. We are equally disturbed by the increased hostilities from the separatists towards the Special Monitoring Mission, as reported by the SMM. We note in particular that on 22 September SMM observers were threatened and weapons were pointed at them at a checkpoint close to separatist-controlled Zaichenko, north-east of Mariupol. Separatist members fired into the air as the SMM observers left the checkpoint. Such intimidation is unacceptable and must stop immediately. We also regret that SMM UAVs continued to be subject of jamming over separatist-controlled areas. The presence of a R330ZH Zhitel jamming communication station in the separatist-controlled area clearly indicates an involvement of the Russian Federation in that regard.

We deeply regret that so-called 'humanitarian convoys' from Russia continued to enter Ukrainian territory without the consent of the Ukrainian authorities and in clear violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as without fundamental international humanitarian principles being observed.

Mr Chairman, we recall our unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine, and calls upon Russia to do likewise. We urge Russia to strictly observe these fundamental principles that it has itself invoked many times and to contribute, by acts and public pronouncements, to stabilise the situation and reverse moves that contravene these principles. We reiterate our strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation and we will not recognise it.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ICELAND+ and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA country NORWAY, member of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.