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**STATEMENT BY
AMBASSADOR VÉRONIQUE ROGER-LACAN, PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF FRANCE TO THE OSCE, AT THE 1131st
(SPECIAL) MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

31 January 2017

Mr. Chairperson,

I have the honour of speaking on behalf of Germany and France. I associate myself with the statement made by the delegation of the European Union.

We thank the Chairmanship for having convened this special meeting of the Permanent Council in the light of the security situation on the ground in Ukraine, which has deteriorated considerably.

We are very concerned at the eruption of violence, which has claimed several victims over the last few days. We resolutely condemn this escalation and call on all the parties to exercise restraint. We call on Russia, in particular, to use its powerful influence on the separatists. The ceasefire should be respected without delay and the parties should refrain from any action likely to aggravate the situation.

We support the efforts of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) and the Joint Centre for Control and Co-ordination (JCCC) to achieve a de-escalation as rapidly as possible. We urge the JCCC to guarantee the access and safety of the SMM monitors in Avdiivka and in all the other areas covered by its mandate.

The humanitarian situation is also very alarming. We urge the parties to act as quickly as possible to ease the plight of the people who as a result of the conflict are currently without water, heating or electricity in the depths of the Ukrainian winter.

We call on the parties to implement the Minsk agreements, the only way of achieving a peaceful resolution of the conflict. France and Germany remain fully committed in their diplomatic efforts and will continue to support this process within the Normandy format.