



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°817 Vienna, 27 April 2016

EU Statement on the Security Situation in and around Ukraine

The European Union and its Member States remain deeply disturbed by the high level of ceasefire violations along the line of contact. We condemn the continued use of proscribed weapons, including mortars, which should have been withdrawn from the security zone. Close proximity of military formations further adds to our concerns as it poses a considerable risk of escalation. We urge immediate steps to de-escalate the situation and to ensure strict observance of the ceasefire and call on all sides to unconditionally and verifiably withdraw all Minsk-regulated weapons. These are necessary steps in order to move towards a sustainable political solution in line with OSCE principles and commitments.

We strongly condemn the continued systematic and frequent restrictions to the SMM's freedom of movement, the vast majority of which occur in areas not under the control of the Ukrainian government. Such actions are unacceptable and must stop immediately. Full implementation of the Minsk agreements requires that the SMM has full, safe and unhindered access throughout Ukraine, including along the Ukrainian-Russian state border. We regret the JCCC's continued lack of proper response to these cases of impediments to monitoring and verification by the SMM.

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

We remain firm in our call on all sides to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk agreements and honour their commitments, in order to achieve a sustainable political settlement of the conflict, based on full respect for Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity. We underline Russia's responsibility in this regard and once again call on Russia to use its considerable influence over the separatists it backs to meet these commitments in full. The ceasefire must be respected. All Minsk-regulated weapons must be withdrawn and foreign armed formations, military equipment and mercenaries removed from Ukraine. Re-establishing full Ukrainian control over its state border is essential. We reiterate our concern regarding information about the presence of military equipment and personnel from Russia in the conflict zone.

We recall our unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine, and call 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* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members 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.