

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1101st MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

26 May 2016

**In response to the statement on foreign terrorist fighters in Ukraine**

Mr. Chairperson,

It is not the first time that the representative of Ukraine has accused Russia of supplying foreign terrorist fighters for the conflict in south-eastern Ukraine. We suggest that we explore this phenomenon in order to understand the absurdity of such accusations.

Pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolution 2178 (2014), which is applied regionally, foreign terrorist fighters are understood to be foreign individuals who travel to another State for the purpose of the perpetration, planning, or preparation of, or participation in, terrorist acts or the providing or receiving of terrorist training on its territory, including in connection with armed conflict, and use extremist ideology to promote terrorism.

There are no signs of terrorist activity in Ukraine in the context of the conflict in Donbas – no terrorist ideology, no terrorist groups, no politically motivated terrorist acts against civilians, no publicizing results (as compared with the methods of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and Al-Qaida).

Attempts to label the People's Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk (DPR and LPR) as terrorist organizations are absurd. Neither Ukraine nor any other State can decide to classify particular organizations as "international terrorist organizations" and call the DPR and LPR as such. The specialist committee of the United Nations Security Council is the only universally recognized international competent authority capable of recognizing individuals and organizations as terrorists.

Even in Ukraine, attempts to have the DPR and LPR recognized as terrorist organizations under national law have come to nothing – the draft laws in question were not approved by the Verkhovna Rada.

It should also be noted that representatives of certain areas of the Luhansk and Donetsk regions are signatories to the Minsk agreements, as is the second President of

Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma, and according to the Minsk agreements they consider themselves part of Ukraine.

Aberrations of this kind by Ukraine pose a significant threat of undermining the international community's capabilities to combat the real terrorist threat, including the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters.

Mr. Chairperson,

This is not the first time that the representative of Ukraine has done his utmost to keep alive the much repeated myth of so-called "Russian aggression in Donbas", trying in this way to camouflage the consequences of the punitive operation unleashed by the Ukrainian Government against the people of Donbas in April 2014. It resulted in more than 10,000 fatalities, tens of thousands of casualties, large-scale destruction and more than a million displaced persons. The Ukrainian Government used aerial bombs against Luhansk and shelled Donetsk, Horlivka, Stanytsia Luhanska, Metalist, Sloviansk and other towns in Donbas. We remember the tales about "shelling their own lines", about a "defective air-conditioning unit" at the Luhansk regional administration building, when on 2 June 2014 a Ukrainian air force combat aircraft shelled the city centre, resulting in the death of several civilians. The recent story about "shelling their own lines" in Olenivka is in the same vein.

The fabricated tales about a several-thousand-strong Russian army that nobody has seen are also of the same ilk. We have heard various figures from Ukraine, ranging from 3,000 to 40,000. On one occasion, Petro Poroshenko even put the figure at 200,000.

A destabilizing accumulation of weapons continues in Ukraine in violation of the fundamental principles of the Wassenaar Arrangement.

In addition to supplying weapons and materiel, a number of Western countries are actively involved in training units of the Ukrainian armed forces, special forces, national guard and territorial battalions. In April 2016, there were over 650 instructors in Ukraine, the majority of them from the United States of America. Some instructors not only help their charges learn how to use the equipment delivered, but also travel themselves to the combat zone and sometimes participate in combat activities. For example, in early March 2016, representatives of the United States Department of Defense set up two Trailblazer signals intelligence stations in the village of Kuryachivka in the Markivka district. On 3 April, Makiivka was shelled from the positions of the 16th battalion of the 58th Separate Motorized Infantry Brigade of the Ukrainian armed forces, while the American instructors worked at the signals intelligence stations recording shell bursts and adjusting the line of fire. The involvement in battles of mercenaries from a number of private military companies on Ukraine's side is an additional destabilizing factor.

We call for an end to the pouring of oil on the fire, the delivery of weapons and other military equipment to Ukraine and assistance in the military training of Ukrainian units and individuals, as well as other forms of military and technical co-operation until there is a political settlement of the situation in the south-east of the country and a complete normalization of the situation there.

In conclusion, we should like to point out that Russian military personnel are indeed currently present in Ukraine. If anyone is particularly interested, we are prepared to give their

names. Starting with Major General Igor Mishutkin, they are all members of the Joint Centre for Control and Co-ordination, whose task it is to facilitate a settlement of this non-international conflict, as it is described by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Thank you for your attention.