



**Permanent Mission of Ukraine**  
to the International Organizations in Vienna

**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine**  
**at the 954<sup>th</sup> FSC Plenary Meeting on Russia's ongoing aggression against**  
**Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea**  
(16 September 2020, Hofburg, also via video teleconferencing)  
(Agenda item 2, General Statements)

**Madame Chairperson,**

On behalf of the Delegation of Ukraine let me deliver a statement on the subject of Russia's on-going aggression against Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea.

Despite the approval of the Additional Agreements on full and comprehensive ceasefire, which came into force on July 27, 2020, the armed formations of the Russian Federation, operating in the temporarily occupied areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine, continued violating ceasefire regime, withdrawal lines, conducting mining of territories in the vicinity of civilian settlements and resort to further armed provocations.

On 6 September, the armed formations of the Russian Federation severely violated ceasefire regime by unleashing fire from light weapons near Krasnohorivka, Prychepylivka and Shumy, leaving one Ukrainian serviceman wounded and one killed. While abiding by the ceasefire, Ukrainian Armed Forces stand ready to adequately respond to such attacks by Russian forces to suppress fire and save human lives.

For the period from 27 July through 6 September, the armed formations of the Russian Federation violated ceasefire on 70 occasions with the use of grenade launchers and light weapons, including heavy machine guns. Over 16 occasions the use of UAVs were observed and on 17 the use of additional equipment and reinforcement of positions were carried out by Russian forces in Donbas. Today we would like to show you some evidence of this activities.

**SLIDE PRESENTATION.**

The Russian Federation continued providing support to its armed formations during the ceasefire regime reached on 22 July. In addition to the so-called "humanitarian convoys", the SMM alone, although severely restricted by the Russian armed formations in the border areas, spotted military-type trucks, minivans, vehicles and cargo trains illegally crossing the Ukrainian-Russian border in violation of the norms and principles of international law, bilateral treaties and Ukrainian legislation. The SMM has also reported on numerous weapons in violation of their withdrawal lines, the overwhelming majority of which were observed in the temporarily occupied by Russia parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine.

We consider these actions by the armed formations of the Russian Federation as grave violation of the Minsk agreements and disregard of the Additional Agreements reached on 22 July and deliberate steps to destabilize the situation on temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions and adjacent areas.

As a gesture of good will, the Ukrainian side invited an OSCE coordinator accompanied by representatives of the TCG participants to hold a joint visit to the area of Shumy on 10 September, in order to finally dispel Russia's allegations.

Still, even this openness has not satisfied Russia, which sent through its proxies a number of additional requests (that is: new areas to visit, photo- and video recording, signing a joint protocol), which made the planned joint visit impossible. Moreover, the Russian armed formations opened fire at Ukrainian positions near Shumy, in the area where the joint visit was supposed to take place. At the same time, an SMM mini-UAV flying over that area was jammed and lost by the SMM (daily report of 11 September).

For six weeks since July 27, Ukraine has faithfully complied with all conditions. We are willing to continue on this path in order to move from "silence" in Donbas to sustainable peace. At the same time, we see that Russia pursues completely different goal, namely, PR instead of peace. Ukraine agreed for the OSCE representatives, in the presence of the representatives of the Russian side on the line of contact, to record the adherence to ceasefire by Ukraine. Accordingly, the Ukrainian party put forward a proposal to look at the areas where the armed formations of the Russian Federation are located, where the SMM recorded violations. However, we did not receive an adequate answer from the Russian side on these proposals.

The actual refusal of Russia to adhere to the agreements reached and work on the basis of common sense in order to confirm the true facts about the situation on the line of contact, the inspection in the area of Shumy, Donetsk region, cannot be conducted at this moment.

#### **Distinguished colleagues,**

**On 11 September, President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy had a phone conversation with OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Prime Minister of Albania Edi Rama in order to coordinate efforts for a peaceful settlement in Donbas.** The President thanked the Albanian Chairmanship of the OSCE for giving priority to the issue of restoring the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within the work of the Organization. They discussed the security situation in Donbas and important aspects of the negotiation process within the Normandy format. The President drew attention to the violations of agreements by the armed formations of the Russian Federation, including the shelling of Ukrainian positions on 6 and 10 September.

The importance of ensuring full, unhindered access of the SMM to the entire uncontrolled territory was underlined during the meeting. As the OSCE SMM's mandate is not limited to Donbas, President Zelenskyy highlighted Ukraine's expectations that the Mission would also pay due attention to the situation in the temporarily occupied Crimea.

**The delegations of the "Normandy Four" at the talks on 11 September took the most important decision to observe and continue the regime of silence.** If we are moving towards peace in the east of Ukraine, the first and foremost issue is the observance of the regime of silence. Such a long ceasefire in Donbas has been unprecedented in all years of war.

The Ukrainian delegation had returned from the talks with the main result - unequivocal support for the ceasefire from all participants in the Normandy format. The decision on the ceasefire was made in the framework of the Minsk process, and now this decision received support from the representatives of the "Normandy Four" countries.

It should be also noted that for the first time in recent years, OSCE representatives in the TCG, Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine and the TCG Heidi Grau and Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine Yaşar Halit Çevik were present at that meeting. This means the interaction and coordinated work of the Minsk and Normandy negotiation formats reached an even higher level. And we expect concrete results from this in the coming weeks.

An agreement was reached that by the end of this month, representatives of the ICRC would have unimpeded access to Ukrainian citizens in the temporarily occupied territories of Donbas. We expect that this will speed up the process of return of Ukrainian prisoners of war from the temporarily occupied territories.

**Madam Chairperson,**

Ukraine expresses its resolute protest and condemns the unlawful organization and conduct by the RF of the **so-called “elections” to illegal bodies established by the occupational administration of the Russian Federation in the temporarily occupied territory of the ARC and the city of Sevastopol, on 13 September 2020**. We consider these actions of the Kremlin as just another grave violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity, the Constitution and laws of Ukraine, fundamental norms and principles of international law. The holding of sham “elections” in the territory of the temporarily occupied by Russia Crimean Peninsula is not legitimate, and their results are legally null and void. We call on foreign countries and international organizations to condemn these illegal actions and state unequivocally their non-recognition of the results of the so-called “elections” in the temporarily occupied territory of the ARC and the city of Sevastopol, as well as strengthen the politico-diplomatic pressure on the RF, including by expanding the sanctions.

**We strongly condemn illegal military activities held by Russia on the temporarily occupied Crimean Peninsula and adjacent territorial waters** in July-September this year. We reiterate that stationing of Russian troops on the Ukrainian Peninsula and conduct of any military activities without the consent of Ukraine are illegal. Such actions contravene the fundamental OSCE principles and commitments and norms of international law, further aggravating regional stability and posing direct threat to security of Ukraine. Some of these activities also envisaged entering the Mediterranean basin, which further testifies to far-reaching security consequences of the militarization of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov area for the broader region.

**In conclusion**, we urge the Russian Federation to stop its aggression against Ukraine, reverse its illegal occupation of Crimea, de-occupy parts of the Donbas region of Ukraine and restore freedom of navigation in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov region. Russia must fully implement its commitments under the Minsk agreements, including withdrawal of its forces, illegal armed formations and weapons from the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

**Thank you.**