



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations in Vienna

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Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 816th FSC Plenary Meeting

(20 April 2016 at 10.00, Hofburg)

(Agenda item 2)

Mr Chairman,

Let me start by reiterating that Ukraine continues to seek a political solution to the conflict in Donbas and remains committed to full and good-faith implementation of the Minsk agreements as the framework for peaceful resolution. Ukraine has shown political will and consistency in implementation since the signing of the Minsk agreements of September 2014 and the Package of measures of 12 February 2015.

Unfortunately, the immediate first steps, stipulated by the Minsk Package, notably the comprehensive ceasefire, withdrawal of heavy weapons, ensuring unrestricted OSCE monitoring and verification, release of hostages remain unimplemented by Russia and its proxies. All of these steps are crucial for placing the de-escalation process on a sustainable basis.

Russia continues to maintain military command and control of the illegal armed Formations in Donbas, to plan and coordinate their joint military operations, to support and train pro-Russian militants. The combined Russian-separatist forces continue to be fully procured with weapons, ammunition and fuel from Russia.

We find deeply worrying the continued build-up of forces and heavy weapons of the militants near the contact line, as reported by the SMM, and their use for provocations and escalation in breach of the Minsk agreements.

Distinguished colleagues,

Moscow's stance on fuelling the conflict remains unchanged as now we observe new attempts to escalate the situation on the ground. Only over the last week Ukrainian positions and the nearby residential areas were shelled 340 times along the contact line with the use of infantry fighting vehicles, 120mm and 82mm mortars, grenade launchers, heavy machine guns and small arms. During last week 5 Ukrainian servicemen were killed and 15 were wounded. These escalating attacks and provocations, also registered by the SMM, consistently prove that the combined Russian-separatist forces have not

withdrawn heavy weapons from the contact line to the appropriate distances, having in mind to deceive and have the necessary means to carry on hostilities.

The security situation in Donbas has been steadily deteriorating over the past weeks and remains extremely tense. Continuous ceasefire violations by the combined Russian-separatist forces have an upward trend. They continue to target crossing points at the contact line, further worsening the humanitarian situation.

In the epicentre of the fighting - Avdiivka the security situation has considerably worsened. The Armed Forces of Ukraine fought off the attacks and made the militants return to their former positions. The area of increased hostilities stretches along the contact line. The combined Russian-separatist forces resorted to multiple shellings, including with the use of battle tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, 120-mm and 82-mm mortars of the Ukrainian positions near Stanytsya Luhans'ka, Trohizbenka, Popasna, Zaitheve, Mayors'k, Avdiivka, Pisky, Mar'inka, Pavlopol' and Shyrokinе with an average intensity of 68 times per day. The toll of casualties continues to steadily grow.

As fighting continues the industrial potential in the occupied territory of Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts was significantly ruined, facilities destroyed and most valuable high-tech equipment moved to the Russian Federation. Over recent months 29 enterprises in the region effectively disappeared. At the same time in other cases we register attempts by Russia to set production of military goods at the seized Ukrainian enterprises. In particular, it concerns the "Luhansk Cartridge Plant" the main products of which are cartridges for SALW of different calibers. The repair of production lines at this Plant is taking place under Russia's supervision in order to restore production and also to export cartridges to other CIS countries. We assess such activity of the Russian Federation as a flagrant violation of the OSCE commitments and other international obligations, including in the sphere of export control regimes, as well as an indication of Russia's unwillingness to engage in good-faith in resolution of the conflict.

New facts of replenishment with military personnel, weapons and equipment, ammunition and fuel for the combined Russian-separatist forces in the occupied territories are constantly registered. Russia maintains the presence of its weapons in Donbas: artillery systems, surveillance and secure communication devices, drones and detection systems, air defence systems, battle tanks, armoured personnel carriers and others. Some of these weapons are in use only of the Russian military forces. According to available information, last week for the need of the so-called 1st and 2nd Army Corps of the combined Russian-separatist forces the following military equipment have arrived from Russia: - to Debaltseve an echelon with three battle tanks T-72, two 122-mm MLRS "Grad", two automobile vehicles "Ural", three fuel cisterns; - to Luhansk 12 battle tanks T-72 and 7 heavy trucks with ammunition.

We continue to register an unacceptable situation when significant limitations are imposed on the SMM in the occupied areas to impede monitoring and reporting on the real situation on the ground. Access of SMM observers is consistently denied or hindered, the SMM teams are imposed escorts on their visits, and demanded patrol plans in advance. Contrary to the SMM mandate and Minsk agreements, Russia and its proxies do not allow freedom of the SMM's movement in large part of the territory under their control, including along Ukraine-Russia state border.

The current worrying security situation proves that the initial security provisions of the Minsk agreements are yet to be fulfilled. Comprehensive and sustainable cease-fire has not been secured, the SMM cannot freely move to effectively monitor and verify. These must be accomplished as a priority and a basic requirement for the progress on other aspects of the Minsk agreements.

Mr Chairman,

The Russian military bear responsibility for the armed aggression and war crimes committed by their troops in Donbas.

As Moscow's decisions and actions led to the conflict in Donbas, it also requires Moscow's decisions and faithful steps to put an end to this conflict and peacefully resolve it based on the provisions of Minsk agreements.

We urge the Russian Federation and the forces under its control to halt military provocations, to withdraw heavy weapons in a verifiable manner, to stop provision of ammunition and logistical support to the militants.

We emphasise the imperative of full freedom of movement for the SMM, establishment of permanent and unhindered monitoring and creation of security zones in border areas of both Ukraine and Russia as envisaged by the Minsk agreements.

We urge Russia to return to the tenets of the international law, to cease its aggression against Ukraine and reverse the illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.