



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE
AT THE 988TH FSC PLENARY MEETING**
(13 October 2021)

Agenda item 2, General Statements, on the subject of “Russia’s ongoing aggression against Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea”

Mr. Chairperson,

On behalf of the delegation of Ukraine let me deliver a statement on the subject of Russia’s ongoing aggression against Ukraine and illegal occupation of Crimea.

On 11 October 2021, President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Federal Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel and President of the French Republic Emmanuel Macron discussed, during a video conference, further steps for a peaceful settlement in Donbas, as well as preparations for the next Normandy Four Summit. We note with satisfaction that the three leaders expect this summit to be constructive and to lead to agreements on coordinated consistent steps that will ensure the establishment of sustainable peace in Ukrainian Donbas.

We are grateful to Germany and France for their unwavering support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, as well as for their active participation in the Normandy format negotiations.

Against this background, we were disappointed but not surprised by the article by former Russian President and Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, published on the same day, in which the now Deputy Head of the Russian Security Council actually confessed about Russia’s unwillingness to negotiate a peace settlement to the ongoing armed conflict in Donbas with the leadership of Ukraine. Let me remind you that Russia is a party to this conflict, which it started and continues to fuel until this day. This article is yet another demonstration of an intent not only to maintain, but also to strengthen the course of confrontation.

Having said that, we reiterate that for its part, Ukraine remains committed to peaceful politico-diplomatic resolution of the conflict and declares its readiness to return to the negotiating table.

Distinguished colleagues,

Despite the additional measures to strengthen ceasefire agreed on 22 July 2020, the armed formations of the Russian Federation continued to violate the ceasefire on a daily basis.

The said violations during the period from 27 July 2020 through 10 October 2021, include the following:

- 2,497 provocative attacks by the Russian occupation forces on Ukrainian positions, during which the weapons prohibited by the Minsk agreements were used 635 times;

- 153 cases of the use of UAV by the Russian armed formations;

- 29 cases of additional equipment and improvement of their positions of the occupying forces.

- 54 cases of remote mining of the area with 239 mines employed.

Such reckless armed provocations on the part of the Russian illegal armed formations resulted in numerous combat losses: 59 Ukrainian military personnel were killed and 239 were wounded.

We regard these actions by the armed formations of the Russian Federation as a gross violation of the Minsk Agreements, cynical disregard for additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire, and deliberate steps to destabilize the situation in the temporarily occupied territories in Donetsk and Luhansk regions and adjacent areas in order to further escalate the conflict.

We continue to record new facts of illegal movement of Russian personnel, weapons, military equipment, fuel and lubricants and other material and technical means across a section of the Russian-Ukrainian state border temporarily uncontrolled by the Ukrainian government.

From 23 August to 16 September alone, 36 tank wagons with fuel and lubricants were observed entering Ukraine from Russia and heading for the railway stations at Rovenky and Chervona Mohyla, and for the city of Luhansk. Through the Diakove checkpoint, Russia transferred seven trucks with trailers loaded with RGO/RGN hand fragmentation grenades, and six Kamaz trucks with trailers loaded with 82mm calibre mines and ammunition for RPG-7. Five T-72 tanks were recorded to be delivered from Russia to the Illovaisk railway station and further transferred to the 5th Separate Motor Rifle Brigade of the 1st army corps in Donetsk region.

A significant part of the combat vehicles restored and modernized in Russia, have been returned to the occupation forces in Donbas. Arrival of sabotage and reconnaissance units has been observed. Simultaneously, the intensity of combat readiness training has increased, including in artillery and mortar units.

In this way, the command of Russian occupation forces is covertly preparing to intensify shelling of positions of units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in order to inflict damage and provoke return fire.

We consider such facts as evidence of a gross violation by the Russian Federation of the fundamental principles of the OSCE enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, in particular respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the borders of the OSCE participating States.

In violation of international humanitarian law, in particular the provisions of the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention, Russia continues to carry out conscription campaigns to serve in its armed forces and formations in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

At the end of September, the Russian occupation administrations in the temporarily occupied territories in Donetsk and Luhansk regions have launched a large-scale campaign to conscript the local population into military service in 1st army corps (Donetsk) and 2nd army corps (Luhansk). In the mass media of the occupiers, the volume of advertising for military service under contract has increased. There are also reports of the growing number of propaganda groups. Such groups are intended to work in the illegal military formations, in civilian educational institutions, and at recruiting stations.

At the same time, in order to prevent a decrease in the manning of units in the trenches, the Russian occupation command forces those whose contracts have already expired to stay in military service. In particular, such persons are prohibited from obtaining identity documents, including Russian passports that have already been issued in their names and are kept at headquarters of their relevant units.

In this regard, we would like to recall that the 1st and 2nd army corps of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic are classic Russian units formed according to the charters of the armed forces of the Russian Federation. They are fully integrated with the Russian military command and control system. This group of forces is subordinated to the Staff of the Southern military district with headquarters in Rostov-on-Don.

Both corps are part of the 8th Army and it is from that Army that they receive weapons, ammunition, fuel and lubricants, food. All positions from the commander of a company and above in these formations are subordinate to Russian officers. These units are also staffed with Russian "vacationers" and "volunteers", who are recruited by Russian military commissariats to participate in the war in Ukraine.

As per available data, currently in the temporarily occupied territories in Donetsk and Luhansk regions, there are about 3,000 regular Russian troops, including military advisers, instructors, specialists in operational support and logistics.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian side exerts every effort to restore living conditions and to ensure the proper operation of critical infrastructure facilities within both the government-controlled areas and temporarily occupied territories of Donbas, affected by the Russian aggression. During the first week of October, Ukrainian demining teams inspected around 44 hectares of territory, seized and neutralized 959 explosive devices. Since the beginning of the Joint Forces Operation, over 10,000 hectares of land area and over 30 hectares of water area have been inspected, with almost 89,000 explosive objects seized and disposed of. Almost 700 damaged civilian houses have been rebuilt since the beginning of 2021.

In the first week of October, Ukrainian side of JCCC and the SMM facilitated maintenance and construction works at five civilian infrastructure facilities damaged as a result of shelling by the Russian armed formations. In particular, the transmission lines were repaired in the settlements of Luhanskoye and Taramchuk, inhabitants of which had been completely disconnected from the power supply for a month. In addition; further repair works were carried out on the roof of the Donetsk filtration station and on sludge collectors near the settlement of Nelipovka; geodetic and geological survey was conducted along the gas pipeline in the village of Krasnohorovka.

Regrettably, 15 more requests for maintenance and repair works remain unaddressed due to the failure to provide security guarantees on the part of the Russian armed formations. We urge the Russian Federation to provide such guarantees to enable the repair and maintenance works at civilian infrastructure facilities.

In closing, we urge the Russian Federation to end its aggression against Ukraine, reverse its illegal occupation of Crimea, de-occupy parts of Donbas, and restore freedom of navigation in the Black Sea, through the Kerch Strait and in the Sea of Azov. Russia

must fully implement its commitments under the Minsk agreements, including the withdrawal of its armed forces, mercenaries, armed formations and weapons from the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.