



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council Nr 1030 Vienna, 11 December 2014

EU Statement on the Violation of OSCE Principles and Commitments by the Russian Federation and the Situation in Ukraine

The European Union welcomes the initiative by President Poroshenko to hold a “day of silence” on 9 December and the fact that hostilities were largely suspended on that day. We hope this marks the beginning of a full adherence to the ceasefire agreed in Minsk in September.

The latest developments take place following heavy fighting in parts of eastern Ukraine with some of the most intensive shelling since the Minsk agreements were adopted in September. While our ministers were in Basel, we continued to receive alarming reports by the Special Monitoring Mission of ceasefire violations, heavy shelling and military build-up. We express our concern about the observation by the SMM that columns of over 100 unmarked green military vehicles were travelling west towards the city of Donetsk, in the pro-Russian separatists controlled area, on 5 December. That observation corresponds to reports about a similar number of military vehicles crossing the border from Russia on that same day.

We express our hope that the expected upcoming meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group in Minsk will advance the implementation of the Minsk agreements. We once again express our support for the work of Ambassador Tagliavini and the Trilateral Contact Group, which must continue to play an essential role. We reiterate our support for the Minsk agreements, as a step towards a sustainable political solution based on respect for Ukraine’s independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. We urge all parties to fully implement them without delay. We once again underline the Russian Federation’s responsibility in this context. We call in particular for a halt to the continuous violations of the ceasefire, a withdrawal of illegal and foreign forces, mercenaries and military

equipment, as well as for securing the Ukrainian-Russian state border with permanent monitoring by the OSCE. Recent developments have again underlined the need for full and effective control by Ukraine of its borders and we call on Russia to respect it. We also call for the immediate release of all illegally detained persons, including Nadia Savchenko and Oleh Sentsov, and other Ukrainian citizens illegally detained in Russia. We reiterate that a continued inclusive Ukrainian-led and Ukrainian-owned national dialogue will be important to consolidate Ukraine's unity and internal cohesion.

We follow with great concern the humanitarian, economic and social impact of the crisis, the root cause of which are the activities of the armed pro-Russian separatists. The impact on the civilian population should not be exploited for military or political ends. We deeply regret that Russian so-called "humanitarian convoys" continue to enter Ukrainian territory, without the consent of or inspection by the Ukrainian authorities and without fundamental international humanitarian principles being observed. The EU calls on all parties to support and facilitate access for national and international humanitarian aid, in accordance with these fundamental principles.

Mr Chairman, we are encouraged by the strong support to the efforts of the Chairmanship and the OSCE in Ukraine that we witnessed at the Ministerial Council in Basel. We should build upon this support to further strengthen the OSCE's engagement in and around Ukraine. We welcome the ongoing expansion of the SMM and stand ready to contribute with further financial support. We reiterate our call on all parties to ensure free and safe access for SMM monitors and UAVs, including in all parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts as well as along the border. We are concerned by further incidents where shots were fired at an SMM patrol and UAVs. We continue to call for a significant expansion and extension of the Border Observation Mission at two Russian checkpoints.

We reiterate our support for the efforts of the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine, including the conference on mediation in crises as part of the National Dialogue Project that is taking place in Odesa as we speak.

We note the public statements by President Putin and Foreign Minister Lavrov that every state, including Ukraine, has the right to choose allies and political regimes and ensure its security and that Russia will respect Ukraine's territorial integrity. We look to Russia to restore respect for fundamental principles and international law.

The EU recalls its unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine, and calls upon Russia to do likewise. We once again urge Russia to recognise by acts these fundamental principles that it has itself invoked many times and to contribute to stabilise the situation and reverse moves that contravene these principles. We reiterate our strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol to the Russian Federation and we will not recognise it.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ICELAND+ and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries LIECHTENSTEIN 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.

+ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.