

PC.DEL/1107/15
20 August 2015

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
MR. ANDREY RUDENKO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1064th (SPECIAL) MEETING OF
THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

19 August 2015

**In response to the report by Ambassador Ertuğrul Apakan, Chief Monitor
of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine**

Mr. Chairperson,

We note the timely convening of today's special meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council with its invitation to the Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM), Ambassador Ertuğrul Apakan. The assessment made in his written report and statement is consistent with our troubling impressions. There has been a dramatic escalation of the situation in the conflict zone.

The SMM's reports of a dramatic increase in firing on the line of contact and the increasingly frequent violations of the ceasefire are extremely worrying. According to our data, in the past few days, the Ukrainian armed forces have been not only bringing additional equipment and weapons to the line of contact in Donbas, but also deploying new control points and moving logistical support lines from deep within the territory closer to the front line. It seems that Kyiv is preparing another large-scale armed provocation in south-eastern Ukraine, like the one that took place in August 2014. The consequences of such steps may be unpredictable.

The Ukrainian security forces are continuing with their barbarous shelling of residential districts in Donetsk, Horlivka and other populated areas, which result in civilian deaths. It is only since the start of August that SMM monitors have been documenting the repeated shelling of Horlivka as coming from the direction of the Ukrainian armed forces' firing positions. We are well aware of that since there are Russian journalists and broadcasters reporting on air daily from the area. Time after time we have suggested that our partners send their television crews in order to get a sense of what exactly is happening there.

As before, large-calibre artillery, including multiple-launch rocket systems, which were withdrawn in accordance with the Minsk Package of Measures, continue to apparently disappear from the Ukrainian armed forces' depots. From 30 July to 18 August alone, SMM monitors were missing around 90 Ukrainian gun mounts. Clearly, it is those very same heavy weapons that supposedly vanished that are being used to kill civilians in Donbas.

Ukraine is primarily responsible for the failure to sign the agreements on the demilitarization of Shyrokyne that were reached within the framework of the Contact Group on 3 and 4 August in Minsk. Following the goodwill gesture of the insurgents, who unilaterally moved their units and military equipment under 100 mm in calibre three kilometres from the line of contact in Shyrokyne (as documented by OSCE SMM monitors), Ukraine not only made no response, but is building up its military forces even more. There are now regular troops reinforced by fresh marine units. The infamous volunteer units have also returned.

Having set out new conditions, Ukraine refused at the last minute to sign the agreement that had practically already been declared on the withdrawal of weapons under 100 mm in calibre from the line of contact.

All of this shows Kyiv's unwillingness to implement the military aspects of the Minsk Package of Measures and to begin implementing the political aspects of the agreements. Rather than seeking ways forward and dialogue with the representatives of Donetsk and Luhansk who signed the Minsk agreements, Kyiv is making a blatant mockery of the process and, moreover, placing blame for the breakdown of the agreements on the insurgents and Russia.

This could sabotage all the diplomatic efforts made to promote a peaceful resolution under the Minsk process, set the situation back significantly and lead to full-scale military action resuming. This cannot be allowed.

For us, as for Ambassador Apakan, security matters concerning SMM monitors are an absolute priority which must receive increased attention. We share the concern about continuing threats to the security of the Mission's employees. The immunity of monitors must be fully guaranteed by all parties to the conflict. All necessary measures should be taken to prevent the recurrence of incidents, which the SMM Chief Monitor addresses in his report. Ensuring the impartiality and objectivity of the Mission's work is the main way to guarantee the Ukrainian people's faith in it and, accordingly, the safety of its monitors.

Furthermore, security considerations should not become a hindrance to the SMM in fulfilling its main task of objectively monitoring circumstances in the sphere of security and overseeing the implementation of the provisions of the Minsk Package of Measures. The Mission's attention should also remain focused on the situation in other regions of Ukraine. This is particularly important today when the situation in the security zone has become seriously strained and, as the Mission itself documents, more volatile and unpredictable.

We should also like to draw attention to the political aspects of a settlement. It is already clear that the efforts to introduce changes to the Ukrainian Constitution, which were widely publicized by Kyiv, are not at all in keeping with the letter and spirit of the Minsk Package of Measures. Furthermore, in these steps taken purely for effect, Kyiv's strategy to dilute and distort the Minsk agreements can be discerned, thwarting a political resolution of the crisis and indeed violating the norms of international law.

The Ukrainian authorities not only have not begun, as provided for by the Minsk agreements, to discuss proposals to amend the Constitution of Ukraine with representatives of Donetsk and Luhansk, but have also masked their unwillingness to implement genuine

decentralization and give special status to certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk with flowery legal wording. Discussion of this matter has essentially been postponed indefinitely.

The decision of the Verkhovna Rada of 17 July on local elections in Ukraine is the latest demonstration of its disregard for its own citizens in Donbas. The population of certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions was essentially denied the right to elect its own representatives at the local level, and thus, Point 12 of the Minsk Package of Measures was disregarded. Against this background, our Ukrainian colleagues are hypocritically trying to prove that they are supposedly interested in conducting elections in Donbas and having them monitored by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

Arguably the only area where there have been at least some results can be said to be the agreements reached at the end of the discussions on 3 and 4 August on the reactivation of a pumping station and power plant in the Popasna district and a filtration plant in Yasynovata. In this context, we should like to note the efforts of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine to establish local ceasefires in order to carry out repairs on the Horlivka-Maiorsk water pipe and near the village of Spartak.

We call on the Mission's leadership to continue focusing its attention on the development of the humanitarian situation in Donbas, especially in the context of the intensifying social and economic blockade of the region. As before, people are forced to stand in queues day and night in the danger zone at Ukrainian armed forces' checkpoints. In light of the reduction under false pretences of the number of checkpoints on the line of contact and the blocking of commercial cargo, supplies of provisions and medicines for the population of Donetsk and Luhansk have been drastically reduced.

We support the scaling up of the SMM's role in monitoring the implementation of obligations under the Minsk Package of Measures by the parties to the Ukrainian internal conflict. We consider the main task to be to improve the quality of monitoring activities on the line of contact. It is imperative to establish permanent monitoring points in hotspots on both sides of the line of contact as soon as possible and ensure balanced monitoring and documenting of all cases of shelling, first and foremost, as well as their impact on civilians and civil infrastructure.

In conclusion, we should like once again to underline that the only way to reach a peaceful resolution of the Ukrainian internal conflict is for Kyiv to engage in direct dialogue with Donetsk and Luhansk, taking due account of their interests. This should be in the interests of the Ukrainian authorities themselves, who are striving to preserve the country's unity. Unfortunately, the latest developments show the reverse to be true.

Thank you for your attention.