



**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 56-th joint FSC-PC plenary meeting
(30 April 2014 at 15.00, Hofburg)**

**Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished colleagues,**

I wish to start by thanking the Moldovan and Swiss Chairmanships for convening this joint meeting of the Forum for Security Cooperation and the Permanent Council. Since it the first meeting under the FSC Chairmanship of the Republic of Moldova let me warmly welcome Ambassador Andrei Popov to the Chair's position and wish him and his team every success during the second stage of the FSC annual session.

This meeting is convened upon request of Ukraine pursuant to the provisions of the Chapter III of the Vienna Document and in view of the fact that previous steps envisaged in its Risk reduction mechanism for consultation and cooperation as regards unusual military activities failed to produce satisfactory outcome.

We deeply regret that the Russian Federation decided not to participate in this meeting and thus again disengaged from dialogue that would allow to dispel serious security concerns.

Let me recall that on 24 April 2014, 15 hours CET, Ukraine issued the VD format F 10 (CBM/UA/14/0057/F10/O). In this notification it was stated, that the military activities covertly carried out by the Russian military alongside the state border with Ukraine had offensive nature. The intensity of flights of the aircraft and radio-communications between different headquarters substantially increased in the border areas. Crossing waterways exercises, deployment of pre-combat and combat orders, maneuver movements on the unknown territories were carried out. Accumulation of military goods was underway, development of logistical component took place, including deployment of medical facilities and field hospitals.

Against the background of annexation of the integral part of Ukraine – the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, continuous effect of the Decree № 48-FC “On the use of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine”, adopted by the Federal Council of the Russian Federation on 1 March 2014, support of subversive activities in the Eastern part of Ukraine and military activities of the Russian Federation are the sources of great concern and preoccupation for Ukraine.

In this context special concern arises from statements of the Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov, with unequivocal hints on possibility for the Russian troops to invade the continental Ukraine. Expressing its concern in connection with the stationing and military activities of Russian troops alongside its state border, Ukraine, in accordance with the paragraph 16.1 of the Vienna document, requested the Russian side to provide clarifications about the purposes and location of the military exercises, date of their termination as well as about number of troops and types of military units involved in these exercises. It was also proposed to the Russian side to host the voluntary visit to its territory under Chapter III of the VD.

In response to this Ukrainian format the Russian side on 26 April 2014 stated that activities carried out by the units of the Southern and Western military districts are not subject to notification in accordance with the VD-2011 and require no clarifications, taking into account the scope of the exercises (CBM/RU/14/0057/F41/O). Russian side also refused to host a voluntary visit to dispel concerns about its militarily significant military activities.

In this context let me share with you some available, obviously incomplete, information about Russian military activities close to its border with Ukraine on 24 April 2014, when original Ukrainian format was issued (CBM/UA/14/0057/F10/O).

According to this information, the units of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation substantially increased their military activities in the areas adjacent to state border between Ukraine and the Russian Federation directed towards Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv and Sumy oblasts of Ukraine.

- Two military convoys containing 50 armoured personnel carriers, 6 battle tanks, 8 multi-launch-rocket system GRAD and 300 military vehicles traveled from Rostov-on-Don to the state border with Ukraine (Donetsk direction);
- Military convoy containing up to 250 armoured personnel carriers, two battle tanks and up to one thousand troops were identified at 8-10 kilometers from the state boarder with Ukraine (Luhansk direction). Russian side closed the movement of people through border control point "Gukovo", the access of Ukrainian citizens to the Russian territory was denied;
- Military convoy containing of up to 10 armored infantry fighting vehicles, 3 heavy transportation vehicles "Ural" and 2 combat helicopters were identified as they moved from Vesele (RF) to the state border with Ukraine (Kharkiv direction);

Two armored infantry fighting vehicles were identified at 800 meters from the state border with Ukraine as they moved along the border (in Sumy region).

From Ukraine`s perspective these activities of the Russian Armed Forces are militarily significant and need clarifications about their purpose, locations and nature of troops involved in the exercises. MFA of Ukraine made a statement concerning the response from the Russian side and requested to hold a meeting with responding participating State on 28 April 2014 in OSCE premises in Vienna, activating thus the second stage of Risk reduction mechanism of the Chapter III of the VD (CBM/UA/14/0059/F12/O).

The Russian side informed that Chapter III of the Vienna Document is not applicable to the situation, described by Ukraine and refused to participate in the meeting (CBM/RU/14/0059/F12/O). The meeting, nevertheless, took place, its participants being from Ukraine, USA, Canada and Estonia.

In the statement of the MFA of the Russian Federation on 28 April 2014, which contains the refusal to participate in the meeting in accordance with paragraph 16.2, Chapter III of the VD, there is also reference to the number of military servicemen, weapons and military equipment, stationed in the eastern Ukraine. The statement contained unfounded allegations on the purpose of their presence, which I fully reject. In this context let me reiterate that the involvement of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the antiterrorist operation which has to be carried out in the densely populated urban area is not envisaged, the fight against terror being the task of internal security forces with the military playing an auxiliary role.

In relation to crimes already committed in and around Sloviansk I will recall that on 17 April 2014 member of Horlivka City Council Volodymyr Rybak was kidnapped and transported to Sloviansk. On 22 April his dead mutilated body and that of Yuriy Popravko – 19 year-old student from Kyiv were discovered in the river in proximity to Sloviansk. This atrocious crime prompted the continuation of the ATO on 24 April 2014 in which internal security forces of Ukraine cleared three illegal roadblocks to Sloviansk and 7 terrorists were killed during this stage of ATO. On Friday 25 April the terrorists fired at helicopter MI-8,

which belonged to the Ukrainian military and was stationing in Kramatorsk airfield. This attack was carried out by man-portable grenade-launcher. As a result helicopter exploded and two Ukrainian military servicemen were injured. This incident clearly shows one more trace of covert foreign military presence in Kramatorsk-Sloviansk city agglomeration. Private airplane AN-2 has also been destroyed by terrorists.

The Russian leadership was quick to call the fight against the terrorists carried out by Ukrainian authorities as “crime against the people”. Russian Minister of Defense informed about the start of the exercises of the battalion tactical groups belonging to the combined forces units of the South and West military regions of the Russian Federation. Russian minister of defense referred to the “acute situation in the South- Eastern Ukraine” as a reason to start such exercises, which also included the tasks for the Russian combat aviation in close proximity to the borders with Ukraine. As the MFA of Ukraine noted in its statement, “the Russian side de-facto confirmed that its military activities carried out throughout the last months close to its border with Ukraine are not planned but closely related to the developments in Ukraine”. This “coincidence” in time of the start of the military exercises with the relative success of the ATO in Sloviansk has demonstrated that the Russian Federation is interested in continuation of activities of the terrorists groups on the territory of Ukraine and reveals support to them on the top level.

By demonstrating its military power in the proximity to the border with Ukraine, Moscow attempts to influence the lawful actions of Ukrainian authorities, aimed at fighting armed criminal groups in some regions of eastern Ukraine, which commit terrorist crimes against peaceful citizens of Ukraine. We witness that the RF, which had suffered a lot from the terrorist threat, became now the exporter of terrorism and is even prepared to protect terrorists on the Ukrainian territory by its own armed forces.

Distinguished colleagues,

As you are aware, since 21 April 2014 Germany has been leading an observer mission in Ukraine under the terms of Chapter X of the Vienna Document. The mission team consists of eight people, amongst them four Germans as well as four international guest inspectors from Denmark, Poland, Sweden and the Czech Republic respectively.

The team departed from their hotel on the morning of 25 April en route to the Sloviansk area. According to the available information the masked armed men had appeared in two cars and took the team and their escorts into an administration building in Slaviansk.

On 25 April MFA of Ukraine issued the statement of condemnation regarding the seizure by armed militants of this international verification team. The capturing of unarmed military inspectors and their escort team confirms the terrorist methods of armed groups, perpetrating crimes in the Donetsk region.

While the Russian Federation concentrates its military units alongside the border with Ukraine and refuses to host a voluntary visit on its territory pursuant to Chapter III of the VD, the Ukrainian side demonstrated highest possible level of military transparency by hosting a sequence of extra quota inspections on its territory. The inspection team of military observers was captured in the area, which relates to apparent concerns of Russia, and where inspectors could objectively clarify the activity of the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

We regret that the Russian Federation has not yet clearly spoken out to condemn the hostage-taking and call for immediate and unconditional release of the military inspectors and their Ukrainian escort team.

The Ukrainian authorities continue their efforts in conjunction with the OSCE SMM to achieve release of the military inspectors and the Ukrainian escort team.

Distinguished colleagues,

In view of the ongoing violation by the Russian Federation of Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty, independence and unity, its disengagement from the negotiating process with a view to finding peaceful solution of the crisis, unwillingness to engage in the risk reduction mechanisms of the Vienna Document, we deem it necessary to consider what additional steps might be taken by our Organization to seek that the Russian Federation abides by its OSCE commitments and international obligations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.