Trends and observations
JUL-SEP 2020

13,977 ceasefire violations
203 explosions attributable to fire from MLRS, artillery, mortars and tanks
421 weapons in violation of withdrawal lines
130 freedom of movement restrictions*
1 recommittment to ceasefire
13 days with no ceasefire violations

Civilian casualties
In Jul-Sep 2020:
3 fatalities
14 injured

Main trends:
In the third quarter of 2020, the number of ceasefire violations recorded along the contact line decreased by 76 per cent, compared to the previous quarter. Moreover, the Mission observed an 85 per cent decrease, compared to the previous quarters in observed explosions attributable to weapons that should have been withdrawn in accordance with the Minsk agreements.

The sources of observations were SMM cameras, monitoring officers stationed in Forward Observation Poles (FOP) and patrols present on the ground.

Most of the armed violence recorded in the third quarter of 2020 was concentrated in four hotspots along the contact line, which accounted for about 80 per cent of all recorded ceasefire violations: 1) Freestyle in Donetsk region; 2) Poplar-Zolote-Pervomaisk area; 3) Areas east and north-east of Mariupol; 4) Areas south-west, south and south-east of Sloviansk.

Ceasefire violations occurred outside the security zone were largely concentrated in the Donetsk region. In the third quarter of 2020, the SMM recorded almost 400 such ceasefire violations (all recorded after 27 July). They account for about three per cent of all ceasefire violations observed by the SMM and about 25 per cent of ceasefire violations observed after 27 July.

In the third quarter of 2020, an agreement was reached in the TCG on additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire as of 00:00 on 27 July. It has become the longest-lasting recommittment to the ceasefire with the lowest level of armed violence since the beginning of the conflict. Moreover, for the first time since the mission began systematic data collection, it recorded no ceasefire violations on 13 separate days in both Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

In the third quarter of 2020, the SMM observed 420 weapons in violation of the agreed withdrawal lines. About 90 per cent of these weapons were observed in non-government-controlled areas, and about 10 per cent in government-controlled areas. About 60 per cent of these observations were made by unmanned aerial vehicles or revealed through other aerial imagery made available to the SMM, while 16 per cent were made by patrols.

During the third quarter of 2020, the SMM faced freedom of movement restrictions not related to mines or unexploded ordnance on 130 occasions. About 94 per cent of these restrictions took place in non-government-controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Such incidents were concentrated mostly in Oleksivka and Stanislawka Luhanska CPR, as well as in non-government-controlled areas near the unsecured border with the Russian Federation. COVID-19 pandemic continued affecting the SMM’s monitoring capacity.

* Excluding regular restrictions faced by the SMM related to mines and UXO.