

**EUROPEAN UNION****OSCE Permanent Council No 1059  
Vienna, 11 June 2015**

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**EU Statement on Russia's Aggression against Ukraine and  
Violations of OSCE Principles and Commitments**

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The European Union remains deeply concerned by the recent increase in heavy fighting near Donetsk airport. The Russia-backed separatists' attack on Maryinka last week constituted the most serious violation of the ceasefire since February. We also remain concerned about continuing fighting in other parts of eastern Ukraine, including in and around Shyrokyne. Adding to our concern is the apparent return and growing presence of heavy weapons in locations on both sides of the contact line not consistent with the Minsk agreements. We note the recent detailed observations by the SMM of concentrations of heavy weapons and equipment in separatist-controlled areas, including main battle tanks, armoured personnel carriers as well as artillery pieces. We reiterate that any attempts to gain control of additional territory will be a gross violation of the Minsk agreements and seriously undermine all efforts promoting a sustainable political resolution.

We once again underline the importance we attach to the Trilateral Contact Group of Ukraine, the Russian Federation and the OSCE Chairmanship. We deeply regret the announcement that Ambassador Tagliavini will terminate her position as the Chairmanship's representative. She has tirelessly and courageously worked for peace in Ukraine and the restoration of the respect for OSCE commitments and principles under very challenging conditions. We ask you Mr Chairperson to convey to ambassador Tagliavini our gratitude and our great admiration for her work. We agree with her message to the Permanent Council on 27 May that the Trilateral Contact Group must continue its work in its current format and continue to be the driving force behind the implementation of the Minsk agreements. We therefore call on the parties of the Trilateral Contact Group to redouble their efforts and to build on the progress made in its four working groups on security, political affairs, IDPs and refugees and humanitarian assistance as well as economic affairs and rehabilitation.

We continue to believe that the working groups through their contributions to the work of the Trilateral Contact Group should facilitate a political process towards the full implementation of the Minsk agreements by all parties, based on OSCE's principles and commitments and full respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. We also once again express our support to the efforts of the Normandy format in facilitating a full implementation of the Minsk agreements and welcome yesterday's meeting at the level of political directors.

Mr Chairman, in line with the Minsk agreements the ceasefire must be respected, heavy weapons withdrawn and foreign armed formations, military equipment as well as mercenaries removed from the territory of Ukraine. We underline Russian authorities' responsibility in this regard. We also expect Russia to use its considerable influence over the separatists to meet their Minsk commitments in full. We recall the European Council Conclusions of March 19-20 in all their elements, in particular those linked to the complete implementation of the Minsk Agreements.

We remain concerned about the build-up of Russian troops next to the Ukrainian border and information about continued inflow of military equipment and personnel into Ukraine from the Russian Federation. We recall that all hostages and illegally detained persons related to the conflict in and around Ukraine should be released as stipulated in the Minsk Package of implementation measures. We also reiterate the importance we attach to the provisions of the Minsk agreements concerning the political process. This includes the holding of local elections in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in accordance with Ukrainian legislation and relevant OSCE standards and monitored by ODIHR, including by providing ODIHR with secure and unfettered access. We underline the need for early agreement to enable the local elections to proceed.

We note with deep concern from the SMM's reports that the mission continues to experience serious security incidents and face restrictions in its monitoring activities. We note in particular that access remains fully or partly restricted in large swaths of separatist-controlled territory, including along the Ukrainian-Russian state border. We once again urge all parties to ensure safe, full and unhindered access for the SMM

and to provide the SMM with the full baseline information that would allow for credible verification of the withdrawal of heavy weapons.

Mr Chairman, 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 country NORWAY, member 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.