



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 781 Vienna, 25 February 2015

EU Statement on the Security Situation in and around Ukraine

The European Union and its Member States reiterate our strong support to the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk agreements adopted on 12 February 2015 in Minsk. Full and comprehensive implementation of the Minsk agreements offers a way forward to a sustainable political solution of the crisis which needs to be based on the respect for Ukraine's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. In this context we welcome the adoption of UNSCR 2202. The EU also welcomes the latest meeting of the foreign ministers in the Normandy format with a view of ensuring the full and effective implementation of the Minsk agreements.

We note that the ceasefire is largely holding. At the same time, we note with deep concern that despite the ceasefire in place fighting persists in several areas in Donetsk and to a lesser extent in Luhansk region due to continued attacks by the separatists militarily supported by Russia. We strongly condemn the actions by the Russia-backed separatists in Debaltseve which are a clear violation of the ceasefire and call upon all sides to stop the hostilities without delay.

The European Union keeps noting evidence of continued and growing support given to the separatists by Russia. This underlines Russia's responsibility. Russia and the separatists have to immediately and fully implement the commitments agreed to in Minsk, starting with the respect of the ceasefire.

Only words matched with deeds will in the end bring real hopes of a political solution to this conflict. The European Union stands ready to take appropriate action in case the fighting and other negative developments in violation of the Minsk agreements continue.

We call for immediate access of the SMM to assume their monitoring and verification functions in and around Debaltseve and to any other site the Mission needs to go. Enabling SMM to carry out their tasks of monitoring and verifying the ceasefire and the withdrawal of heavy armament as well as withdrawal of all foreign armed forces, military equipment and mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine, remains of crucial importance for the successful implementation of the Minsk agreements.

In this context, we recall the urgency of making full use, both in letter and spirit, of the OSCE politico-military instruments in order to ensure a tangible contribution to the peaceful settlement of the crisis in and around Ukraine through cooperative dialogue and

increased level of military transparency and stability, especially in the areas along the state border between the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

We reiterate the need for full and effective control by Ukraine of its border and permanent monitoring by the OSCE. We call on the Russian Federation to respect this.

We welcome the initial exchange of prisoners which took place on the 21 February in line with the Package of Measures adopted on 12 February.

We draw attention that the Package of Measures calls for humanitarian aid to be delivered through an international mechanism. In this context, we express our deep regret that yet another Russian so called humanitarian convoy entered Ukrainian territory on 20 February in violation of Ukraine's national legislation, recognised international practices, as well as previously agreed modalities with the ICRC. We recall our position that this act constitutes a clear violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. In addition, we call for respect of international humanitarian law and principles, notably in ensuring safe passage for all those who want to leave the area and for humanitarian workers to deliver aid.

The European Union reiterates its commitment to fully implement its policy of non-recognition of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation. We stand firm in upholding Ukraine's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and call upon the Russian Federation to do likewise.

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 EFTA and the European Economic Area.