



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT ON THE ACTIVATION OF PARAGRAPH 16.3 OF THE VIENNA
DOCUMENT

Delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen
at the 81st Special Joint Meeting of
the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation,
Vienna, 14 April 2021

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Chairs,

As Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs has recently made clear, Norway is seriously concerned by the rapidly deteriorating security situation in and around Ukraine. The minister called upon the Russian Federation to reverse its military deployment.

The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission has in recent weeks repeatedly reported sharp increases in the number of ceasefire violations in eastern Ukraine. This dangerous development is driven mainly by the armed formations, which the Russian Federation continues to supply with weapons, equipment and personnel.

On top of this come the reports of significant increases in Russian military deployments in and around Ukraine. Russia's occupation and militarisation of the Crimean Peninsula, including recent deployments, are clear violations of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity under international law. Furthermore, Russia's military deployments close to the border with Ukraine, constitute a deliberate escalation of tension and manifestation of force, and run contrary to Russia's commitments as an OSCE participating State.

The Vienna Document is the bedrock for confidence and security building measures in the OSCE region. We welcome Ukraine's decision to use the instruments in the document in line with its letter and spirit, to express concern over the military activity taking place along its borders and in the parts of Ukraine currently not under governmental control. We also express our disappointment with Russia's choice not to participate in these meetings, a decision we find to go against the spirit of the Vienna Document, explicitly calling for the States to endeavour in good faith to contribute to a mutually acceptable solution.

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

In addition to immediately reverse its military deployments close to Ukraine's borders, Norway calls on the Russian Federation to use its considerable influence on the armed formations it backs to curb the ceasefire violations in eastern Ukraine.

The Vienna Document encourages participating States to undertake measures to increase transparency and confidence. We recommend that relevant measures laid out in the Vienna Document to increase transparency are applied, thus contributing to stabilising the situation. The intensification of military contacts and establishment of cross-border communications networks would be of particular use.

Sadly, the progress achieved through the strengthened ceasefire of 27 July 2020 has now been reversed by the recent actions of Russia and the armed formations it backs. We urge Russia to return to the negotiating table and in good faith seek a peaceful solution, starting by a renewed ceasefire.

Chairs,

In a situation of increased tension, the SMM's presence and reporting is particularly important. We urge all parties to provide the SMM unhindered access in accordance with its mandate. We also underline that it is unacceptable to impede the SMM's use of UAVs, whether by signal jamming or other measures.

Let me conclude by reaffirming Norway's full support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

Thank you.