



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation Nr 790 Vienna, 27 May 2015

EU Statement on the Security Situation in and around Ukraine

The European Union and its Member States welcome the meetings of the working groups under the Trilateral Contact Group and encourage the sides to contribute to a political process toward the full implementation of the Minsk agreements based on OSCE principles and commitments and full respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. In particular, we expect the negotiations within the Security Working Group to continue with a view to bringing about decisive de-escalation of the situation on the ground.

We remain however alert about the continuous ceasefire violations and their spill over along the line of contact. Furthermore, the SMM reports keep stressing the incomplete compliance of the sides with regard to their commitments under the Minsk Package to withdraw all heavy weapons from the exclusion area.

Such weapons continue to be deployed and used causing thereby considerable damage to civilian infrastructure and ever increasing death toll among the civilian population and the military. We strongly condemn the shelling of residential areas and their use as firing positions in breach of international law which further endangers the lives of civilians. At the same time, we reiterate that any attempts by the Russia-backed separatists to gain control of additional territory will seriously undermine all efforts promoting a sustainable political resolution of the conflict.

We note with deep concern that the SMM continues to observe concentration of troops and equipment on both sides of the contact line, in particular in separatist-controlled areas in and around Donetsk city and north-east of Mariupol.

We are therefore compelled to once again urge the sides, in particular the Russia-backed separatists, to swiftly and fully implement all provisions of the Minsk agreements. The sides must stop fighting and ensure full and comprehensive ceasefire as well as

unreserved support to the SMM de-escalatory efforts. We expect Russia to use its considerable influence over the separatists to meet their Minsk commitments in full.

Equally, foreign armed formations, military equipment, as well as mercenaries must be withdrawn from the territory of Ukraine as stipulated in the Minsk Package. In this context, we took note of the information provided by the Ukrainian delegation last week and mentioned in the SMM report of 21 May about two members of a unit of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation captured on 16 May. This reconfirms clearly once again the long-standing direct involvement of active military personnel of the Russian Federation in the crisis in eastern Ukraine. In this respect, we remind Russia of its responsibilities and commitments under the Minsk agreements.

We appeal for substantial and effective OSCE monitoring of the Ukrainian-Russian state border. Re-establishing full Ukrainian control over its state border with Russia remains essential.

We deeply regret that so-called 'humanitarian convoys' from Russia continue to enter Ukrainian territory without the consent of the Ukrainian authorities and in clear violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as without fundamental international humanitarian principles being observed.

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 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.