

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1132nd MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

2 February 2017

**On the situation in Ukraine and the
need to implement the Minsk agreements**

Mr. Chairperson,

The Ukrainian Government continues to use international forums to justify its inability to implement the Minsk agreements. The Ukrainian armed forces' attempt at mounting of an offensive near Avdiivka and other areas along the line of contact has once again confirmed that the Ukrainian Government has no need for peace in Donbas, at least not in the form envisaged in the Package of Measures. On the contrary, it needs to maintain tension with periodic escalations in order to distract attention from domestic problems. Reports that Ukrainian armed forces reserves are moving towards Avdiivka and other areas along the line of contact are cause for major concern.

The Ukrainian Government is also not concealing its efforts to organize offensive operations in late January and early February 2017. In a broadcast on the 112 Ukraine television channel, the Deputy Minister of Defence, Mr. Igor Pavlovsky, explicitly stated: "Today, no matter what, metre by metre, step by step, our valiant boys heroically moved forward."

Over the last two days, one woman has been killed in Makiivka and three men injured. Hospital No. 5 has suffered damage. One civilian has been injured as a result of an artillery strike by the Ukrainian armed forces on the Kuibyshevskiy district of Donetsk using a 122 mm calibre gun. The destruction of houses, outbuildings, electric power lines and gas pipelines has been documented in Irmino, Kominternove, Pervomaisk and Stakhanov. Alongside civilians, camera teams from several Russian television channels came under fire in the Kyivskiy district of Donetsk, and one journalist was injured. We expect an appropriate response from the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media.

On 30 and 31 January, in territory controlled by the Ukrainian armed forces, the monitors recorded in the security zone in violation of the Package of Measures and the Addendum to it four multiple-launch rocket systems (MLRS) in Ivanivka, three MLRS in Memryk, one MRLS in Spirne, one MLRS in Zaitseve, four self-propelled howitzers in

Aslanove, six artillery guns in Novookhtrytka, two howitzers in Talakivka, one artillery gun in Novoaidar, five tanks in Avdiivka, two tanks in Novobakhmutivka and two tanks in Karlivka. On 31 January, two airborne military helicopters belonging to the Ukrainian armed forces were seen in Novobakhmutivka. This is a gross violation by the Ukrainian Government of the Minsk agreements.

An end to the shelling of residential districts is long overdue. The threat to the civilian population should be eliminated. The Ukrainian Government should stop holding people living close to the line of contact as hostages.

We should like to take this opportunity to transmit once again the appeal made in the statement by the participants in the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG) of 1 February for a full and comprehensive cessation of fire in the area around Donetsk airport, Avdiivka and Yasynuvata and also along the whole line of contact. We trust that the Ukrainian Government, Donetsk and Luhansk will withdraw by 5 February all weapons types covered by the Minsk agreements to storage sites and to the distances defined in the agreements. The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) should have the chance to fulfil its mandate.

We appreciate the efforts of the SMM, the Joint Centre for Control and Co-ordination (JCCC) and the TCG to help restore the supply of electricity, water and heat not only to the population in Avdiivka but also Donetsk, Yasynuvata and Makiivka. We urge the parties to provide the services required to carry out repair and maintenance work. The TCG Working Group on Economic Issues in Minsk should resume its work immediately.

We are obliged once again to point out that we are still waiting for a detailed consolidated report by the SMM on the consequences of the shelling and bombardment of towns and villages in Donbas since spring 2014. We consider the information that the SMM provides in its reports to be important. We were, however, extremely surprised that the SMM failed to mention the statement made by Petro Poroshenko on 22 January 2017, in which he distorted the essence of the Minsk agreements considerably. In general, the Mission should pay greater attention to the domestic political situation in Ukraine, as this has a direct impact on the prospects for a settlement.

We recently heard praise in this room for the Ukrainian Government's plan of 11 January regarding militia-controlled territory. There was talk about the reintegration of the region, the restoration of economic ties and the freedom of choice of language, but at the same time the changes being proposed in the Verkhovna Rada to the language policy would place a ban on the Russian language. A group of deputies and so-called volunteers are blocking the railway tracks in one of the sections of the line of contact under the pretext of combating smuggling.

It is clear that the Ukrainian authorities do not wish to ensure a lasting truce in Donbas because then the Ukrainian Government will have to stop using ammunition and hardware and stop selling it on the side. It will have to lift the blockade and give up the profits from smuggling and extortion. It will have to investigate the sniper incident and the Odessa tragedy, carry out a proper investigation and not lose the evidence, as has happened now in Odessa.

Lastly, it will be essential to implement the political points of the Package of Measures, enact the law on special status, carry out constitutional reform, hold elections, declare an amnesty and release prisoners and detained persons.

Donetsk and Luhansk, which are interested in achieving peace, want this. However, this does not work for the Ukrainian Government, which is resisting a settlement with all available means.

Thank you for your attention.