



**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine  
at the 780-th FSC Plenary Meeting  
(18 February 2015 at 10.00, Hofburg)**

**Mr. Chairman,**

The agreements reached in Minsk in September 2014 and February 2015 must be fully implemented, and no action should be taken that would run contrary to the letter and spirit of these agreements. For its part, Ukraine strictly adheres to the implementation of these agreements as this is the only possible way towards the peaceful resolution in Donbas. In strict compliance with the agreement, reached in Minsk on 12 February 2015, the Ukrainian forces ceased fire along the entire line of contact since 00.00 hrs of 15 February. We proceed from understanding that achieving sustainable and comprehensive ceasefire would be a crucial step towards full implementation of the Minsk agreements of 5 and 19 September 2014 as well as the “Package of Measures” of 12 February 2015.

Regrettably, despite the certain decrease of hostilities, the situation in Donbas remains very tense and numerous violations of the ceasefire on the side of the pro-Russian militants have been registered. The total number of violations of the ceasefire by the illegal armed groups over 15 February reached 164. Just on the first day of the ceasefire, Ukrainian positions around Debaltseve were shelled with mortars, artillery and MRLS 88 times. The militants also used tanks to attack the Ukrainian forces.

The militants claimed in public that the Minsk agreements, in their opinion, did not relate to the situation around Debaltseve and declared that they would continue attacking the city for they have a “right to shell at Debaltseve as it is their own territory”.

**Mr. Chairman,**

On February 17, President Poroshenko conducted four-side phone talks in a “Normandy Format”, urging to take all necessary measures for the full and unconditional ceasefire, especially in the area of Debaltseve, and to start the withdrawal of heavy weapons under control and verification of the OSCE observers. The parties agreed to continue consultations aimed at implementation of the Minsk Agreements.

Today, all nations of the world are witnessing a rough offensive against Minsk agreements. Taking advantage of the full compliance by the Ukrainian side of the ceasefire, militants with the support of Russia are continuing their offensive in the area of Debaltseve. The Russian side has consistently blocked the implementation by the OSCE SMM of its mandate to monitor the situation. Russia continues its deliveries of weapons to the territory of Ukraine.

“This is a cynical attack on the Minsk agreements. Today, the world must stop the aggressor”, - stressed President of Ukraine P.Poroshenko. The President pointed to the need for immediate actions to stop the escalation and brutal violation of the Minsk arrangements.

We call on the countries-participants of the Minsk negotiations – Germany, France, Russia – and the countries of the EU and NATO that virtually provided them with the mandate to represent the common position for the achievement of peaceful resolution of the conflict in Donbas, the escalation of which threatens not only territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, but also security of Europe and the entire world, to make every possible effort to ensure the fulfillment of the Minsk plan based on the Minsk protocol of

September 5, the Minsk memorandum of September 19 and the documents adopted on February 12 in Minsk. We address all the countries of the OSCE with a demand to express a decisive protest against the blockade of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission's work.

Yesterday, the SMM Chief Monitor Ambassador E. Apakan expressed his concern about the civilian population of Debaltseve. He emphasized that: “The sides have a duty to them as well, and to each other to adhere strictly to the ceasefire. I condemn any attempts to create new facts on the ground, and so to change the basis on which the latest package of measures has been agreed. Thus far, the so-called ‘DPR’ and ‘LPR’ – citing security fears – have effectively denied access to the SMM to Debaltseve. We insist that they immediately cease the offensive. We insist upon unfettered access to Debaltseve and to the full security zone”.

Given that the Mission was not allowed by the militants to access the area of Debaltseve on Monday we urge Russia to exert its influence to prevent further impediments to Mission’s activities under the Minsk agreements.

### **Distinguished colleagues,**

On 10-11 February 2015 in accordance with the provisions of the section IX of the Vienna Document 2011 the inspection team of 4 officers of the Ukrainian Armed Forces inspected the specified area of the Southern Military District of the Russian Federation. The inspection area was chosen due to the information about a significant concentration of troops and military equipment of the Russian Armed Forces in this district.

In violation of the VD relevant provisions the part of inspection which was carried out by the Ukrainian side from air turned to be incomplete with significant limitations imposed by the Russian side. In particular, the escort team of the Russian Federation informed the Ukrainian inspectors that the inspection flight was prohibited closer than 25 km to the Russian-Ukrainian border. In addition, without the consent of the Ukrainian inspection team the Russian side changed during the flight the route which resulted in the exit from the inspected area for a considerable distance from the coast in the vicinity of the Gulf of Taganrog. The Russian side refused the Ukrainian inspection team’s demands to return to the specified area near the settlement of Sinyavskiy. Thus, the Ukrainian inspection team was unable to observe from the air the road and railway from Rostov-on-Don to Taganrog.

The Ukrainian team was also not able to examine these areas by a ground transport. Therefore, the Ukrainian side reserves the right to assume that in the area near the settlements of Veseloe, Kuzminki, Aleksandrovka and Kalmykov significant military activity is being conducted due to the fact that part of this area was prevented from being inspected.

The Ukrainian inspection team did not observe any military activities which were subject to prior notification of the Participating States during its visit to the inspection area at the sites which Russia allowed for the inspection. Some Russian media misinterpreted and distorted the preliminary report of the Ukrainian team, which changed the content of the message. For example, the Russian media referred to a false confirmation by the Ukrainian side about the Russian Armed Forces’ inactive units in the Rostov region.

In accordance with paragraph 135 of the VD the official report of the inspection will be circulated among the Participating States within 14 days upon the completion of the inspection.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The intensity of fighting in the area of Debal'tseve and settlement Shyrokinе near the city of Mariupol shows a sharp increase in the number of people wishing to leave the front-line cities. Over the past days 3108 people left the dangerous areas of Donbas. Usually, this figure was around 800 persons daily.

Let me bring to your attention some facts of continuous attacks by the pro-Russian militants after the signing of the "Package of Measures" on 12 February 2015:

-on 13 February despite the reached agreement in Minsk the intensity of terrorist attacks at the Ukrainian positions in the ATO area have increased. Pro-Russian militants were trying to move their troops towards Debal'tseve. A real battle took place near the city. Under the cover of tanks and armored vehicles the militant infantry stormed the ATO positions near the villages Troitske, Mius, Chornuhine and Kamyanka. Terrorists 6 times attacked Debal'tseve;

-on 14 February in the area of Novoazovsk (Donetsk region) the intelligence of the ATO forces recorded a movement of column of the Russian military equipment. There were no markings on the Russian equipment;

-on 15 February the pro-Russian terrorists regrouped their forces in the area of Horlivka. Now they have about 900 servicemen, 25 tanks, 32 armored combat vehicles, up to 20 units of vehicles, two mortar batteries, 2 batteries of cannon artillery - 6 howitzer D-30 and 6 anti-tank guns MT-12;

-on 16 February the militants not only violated the "ceasefire regime", but also tried to launch a large-scale offensive. They fired at the ATO positions 31 times with multiple rocket launchers, 4 times with tanks and 56 with artillery and mortars;

-on 17 February the fighters continued to test the "fragile peace" in Donbas near Debal'tseve.

Fierce militants' attacks with artillery and mortars on the village of Shyrokinе near Mariupol on 15 February left 5 Ukrainian servicemen killed and 22 wounded. Total death toll amounts 10 killed and 34 wounded over two days since the ceasefire came into effect.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Ukraine continues to see a political solution as the only way out of this conflict. We urge Russia and the militants it supports to stop their deadly hostile actions and fulfill their commitments under the Minsk agreements, as the only effective means for a peaceful sustainable solution based on respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We urge Russia to start implementing the Minsk agreements in their entirety as it committed to do in September 2014 and on 12 February 2015, including exerting its influence on the illegal armed groups to abide by the cease-fire regime, withdrawal of its regular troops from the territory of Ukraine, halting violations of the state border with Ukraine and ensuring the OSCE monitoring and verification.

**Thank you, Mr. Chairman.**