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**STATEMENT BY MR. PIERRE COCHARD,
DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AND SECURITY
AFFAIRS OF FRANCE, AT THE 986th (SPECIAL) MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

3 March 2014

Regarding the situation in Ukraine

Madam Chairperson,

I thank the Chairmanship for taking the initiative in organizing this important meeting. I also thank Ambassador Guldemann for his detailed report on his recent mission to Ukraine.

France associates itself fully with the statement by the European Union and would like to underscore the following points in its national capacity.

1. The Charter of Paris for a New Europe adopted in 1990 by all the participating States reiterated our collective commitment to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. The recent decisions taken by Russia violate this principle, which has for almost 40 years, that is to say since the Helsinki Final Act, constituted the cornerstone of European security.

The OSCE cannot remain indifferent to behaviour that touches on the security of each of its participating States and undermines the principles of dialogue and trust, on the basis of which the Organization has since the Astana Summit been striving to create a genuine security community, with France being one of the key players in these endeavours.

2. The commitments undertaken in the agreement of 21 February 2014 remain valid although the fact that President Yanukovich has fled the country has changed the conditions for their implementation: restoration of the Constitution of 2004, constitutional reform, early presidential elections and investigation of human rights violations wherever they may have occurred. The constitution of the provisional government, which has received a large majority of members of the Ukrainian parliament, the Rada, satisfies the objective of national unity contained in the agreement, which should also be translated into respect for the ethnic and linguistic groups making up Ukraine.

The OSCE can contribute to the full implementation of these commitments just as it can play a role in support of international mediation aimed at putting a stop to the military operations under way in Crimea.

3. Ukraine should be provided with the clarification it has requested within the framework of the mechanism on unusual military activities, as should all of the participating States. Information should, in our opinion, also be provided on the movements of unidentified troops in Crimea.

We ask the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre to ensure through every means at its disposal monitoring the military movements under way on Ukrainian territory and to keep the Permanent Council informed of any developments.

4. As for the support to be given to the Ukrainian authorities, the priorities are to prepare for and supervise the presidential elections (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights), protect the rights of minorities (mission of the High Commissioner on National Minorities, Astrid Thors) and safeguard freedom of the media (mission of the special representative).

5. France supports the establishment of a contact group and the ongoing discussions on the OSCE observation mission. It calls on Russia to make the necessary gestures to prevent a further deterioration of trust and to enable dialogue to be resumed.