



## EUROPEAN UNION

### **OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°831 Vienna, 4 October 2016**

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#### **EU Statement on the security situation in and around Ukraine**

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The European Union and its Member States acknowledge the relative calm along the contact line in eastern Ukraine. However, the situation in general remains tense and unpredictable and we continue to be concerned by the ebbs and flows in ceasefire violations as reported by the SMM. The signing of the Framework Agreement on Disengagement on 21 September and the establishment of three initial areas for disengagement is an important step towards a lasting ceasefire and achieving a sustainable political solution to the crisis, based on OSCE principles and commitments, and in full respect of Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity.

As the situation continues to be volatile, we underline the need to respect the ceasefire and to consolidate the recent progress by ensuring full, swift and verifiable disengagement, strictly adhering to the ceasefire and verifiably withdrawing all Minsk-regulated weapons.

The SMM plays an important role to this end, including with regard to monitoring and verification of the disengagement process. We are therefore concerned that the SMM continues to be prevented from accessing the three designated areas for disengagement in Petrivske, Stanytsia Luhanska and Zolote. We condemn any obstructions to the SMM's work, majority of which continue to occur on the territory not under the control of the Ukrainian government, and stress the need for the SMM to have full, safe and unfettered access throughout the conflict area.

We call on all sides to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk agreements and honour their commitments in full. We underline Russia's responsibility in this regard and once again call on Russia to use its considerable influence over the separatists it backs to meet these commitments in full. We reiterate our deep concern regarding information about the presence of military equipment and personnel from Russia in the conflict zone. We call on Russia to immediately stop providing financial and military support to the separatists. The ceasefire must be respected. All Minsk-regulated weapons must be withdrawn. All foreign armed formations, military equipment and mercenaries must be removed from Ukraine. Re-establishing full Ukrainian control over its state border is essential.

We recall our unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine, and call upon Russia to do likewise. We urge Russia to strictly observe these fundamental principles that it has itself invoked many times and to contribute, by acts and public pronouncements, to stabilise the situation and reverse moves that contravene these principles. We reiterate our strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation and we will not recognise it.

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 countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members 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.