



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No 1076 Vienna, 12 November 2015

EU Statement on Russia's Ongoing Aggression against Ukraine and Violations of OSCE Principles and Commitments

The European Union welcomes the headway achieved at the meeting of Foreign Ministers in the Normandy Format in Berlin on 6 November in their efforts towards a sustainable political settlement in line with OSCE principles and commitments. We urge all sides to follow-up on this by taking further steps to implement the Minsk agreements, notably to make the cease-fire sustainable, to withdraw heavy weapons, to take action countering the danger of landmines and unexploded ordnances, to grant access for international humanitarian organisations and to work towards an agreement on modalities on local elections in accordance with Ukrainian legislation, relevant OSCE standards and monitored by ODIHR.

The recent worrisome rise in incidents along the line of contact involving further casualties and the use of heavy weaponry underlines the urgent need for concrete steps to consolidate the fragile ceasefire. To this end, we welcome progress achieved so far in implementing the withdrawal agreement of 29 September. This should be accompanied without any further delay by the full and unconditional withdrawal of all heavy weapons in accordance with the Minsk Package of Measures. To this end, we strongly support the SMM's recent introduction of clearer and more effective verification requirements and we urge the sides to engage fully and to comply with them. We join the Normandy Four Foreign Ministers in calling on the Security Working Group of the Trilateral Contact Group to reach a framework agreement by early December to step up mine action efforts from all parties in the conflict affected areas.

It is unacceptable that SMM monitors and UAVs, contrary to the Minsk agreements and repeated assurances by all sides, continue to face significant restrictions in large

swaths of separatist-held areas, in particular along the state border with Russia. Full, safe and unhindered access throughout Ukraine is crucial for the SMM to fulfil its mandate. We once again urge Russia-backed separatists to cooperate fully and without delay in setting up all planned SMM Forward Patrol Bases in separatist-held parts of Donetsk.

On 7 November, a UNHCR convoy delivered humanitarian aid to separatist-held parts of Luhansk for the first time in three months. Although some humanitarian assistance has been delivered, much more is needed, mainly in separatist-held parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, particularly in light of the upcoming winter. We call on separatists to take all necessary measures to facilitate access to all people in need and ensure immediate, unimpeded and sustained delivery of humanitarian aid in line with International Humanitarian Law and humanitarian principles. We urge the Humanitarian Working Group to agree on concrete steps to this end. We continue to 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, and without International Humanitarian Law and humanitarian principles being observed.

The European Union remains firm in its call on all parties to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk agreements and honour their commitments. We underline Russia’s responsibility in this regard and also again call on Russia to use its considerable influence over the separatists to meet their commitments. We recall that the duration of the EU economic sanctions against Russia is linked to the complete implementation of the Minsk agreements. The ceasefire must be respected. All heavy weapons must be withdrawn and foreign armed formations, military equipment and mercenaries removed from Ukraine. Re-establishing full Ukrainian control over its state border is essential. We reiterate our concern about reports regarding the continued presence of military equipment and personnel from Russia, including the presence of a Zhytel jamming communication station and a TOS-1 Buratino in separatist-held areas.

Mr Chair, the European Union recalls its unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine, and calls upon Russia to do

likewise. We urge Russia to recognise these fundamental principles that it has itself invoked many times, to contribute, by acts and public pronouncements, to stabilise the situation and to reverse moves that contravene these principles. We reiterate our strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol to 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.